Charter School Application

Providing high-quality educational opportunities
for students in the state of Indiana

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A charter school is a public school that operates under a contract, or charter, entered into between the school's organizer and a charter school authorizer. Charter schools are established to provide innovative and quality choice options to serve the needs of the community. Education One at Trine University currently authorizes 11 schools in Fort Wayne, Gary, Indianapolis, South Bend, and Springville, Indiana.

Education One has developed an Application Process Protocol for all schools seeking authorization. The application process has seven major components: (1) Letter of Intent; (2) Initial Proposal; (3) Application Invitation; (4) Application Review; (5) Public Hearing; (6) Proposed School Board Meeting; and (7) Acceptance or Denial of Application. Education One follows an open application cycle. However, recommended guidelines for submission have been outlined to support quality school start up.

Education One is governed by its own board of directors separate from Trine University. The Executive Director makes a recommendation to the Education One Board of Directors regarding the acceptance or rejection of an application. The Education One Board of Directors meet and vote to accept or reject the application, based on the recommendation.

The application questions are organized to solicit information efficiently and to aid quality review and decision making by the Education One Application Review Team. Education One staff reserves the right to reject applications that do not adhere to the application specifications. Throughout the process, Education One staff will communicate important information to the charter school applicant's authorized representative.

Applicants who should use this application are those who are applying to open a new charter school. Existing charter schools applying to replicate their school(s) should complete the application as well as items marked for replication.

Education One utilized resources found from the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) to create this comprehensive charter school application. Information regarding NACSA and its resources can be found at www.qualitycharters.org.

Applicant Submits Letter of Intent:
Recommended Timeline for Submission: One Year Prior to Start of School
Interested candidates must submit a Letter of Intent to the Executive Director of Education One describing their desire to establish a school in conjunction with Education One. This Letter of Intent must also describe basic tenets of the proposed school structure, such as location, opening date, age range of students, and curriculum and management structures.

Applicant Submits Initial Proposal:
Recommended Timeline for Submission: One Year Prior to Start of School
Following the submission of a Letter of Intent, an applicant will submit an Initial Proposal, describing the structure of the proposed school. The Initial Proposal must include a Vision and Mission statement for the school, a justification of the school's expected effectiveness at enhancing the educational achievement of its students, and an in-depth description of the curriculum and management structures of the school. Specifically, the school's educational model must be stated, its curricular framework must be established in which specific educational objectives for each subject taught at the school are stated, and assessment procedures should be explained. Additional pages may be submitted with information regarding the applicant's ideas of innovation in education, if applicable.

Review/Feedback of Initial Proposal by Executive Director (Q & A):
Members of the Education One staff will review all Initial Proposals, utilizing a rubric to score each section. Additional questions may be asked as needed. As a courtesy to the applicant, the Executive Director will provide verbal feedback to the applicant based on the review of the Initial Proposal. Selected applications will then be invited to submit an Application. Application submission is by invitation only.

Applicant Submits Full Application and Participates in Capacity Interview:
Recommended Timeline for Submission: At Least Nine Months Prior to Start of School
Following the invitation to apply, applicants submit a full application to Education One. All completed applications are reviewed using a rubric by the Application Review Team consisting of Education One staff members, Education One's Finance/Facilities Consultant, and independent consultants with expertise in the proposed school's educational model. Legal counsel will also review applications, when necessary, at the request of Education One's Executive Director.

After an initial review of the application, the Executive Director will provide initial written feedback from the Application Review Team to the applicant. The applicant will have time to review the feedback and make any changes to the application they deem necessary. Revised applications will be resubmitted for review to the Application Review Team. The same rubric will be utilized to rescore the application as needed.

Application Specification and Submission Instructions
- The application must be typed and single-spaced utilizing the template provided by Education One. Utilize the provided text boxes, with a minimum of 11-point font, to answer application questions.   If a particular question does not apply, respond with a "Not Applicable."   Questions without text boxes indicate that the response will be incorporated into an application attachment.
- The application narrative should not exceed 75 pages. Attachments do not count toward the page limit.
- When submitting resumes, please label each document with the individual's affiliation with the proposed school (i.e., Founding Group Member, Board Member, School Leader, Teacher, etc.).
- Complete all pages of the Financial Plan and Charter Application Budget and Staffing Workbooks.
- Review your application for completeness before submitting. Each subsection provides a list of what should be included in an answer(s) to meet expectation standards.
- Upload a complete copy of the application as one PDF in your Application folder.

Following the final scoring of the written application, the applicant will meet with the Application Review Team for an Application Capacity Interview. The interview may include members of the Applicant Team, including but not limited to the proposed school's Governing Board, school leadership team, and proposed staff members. The interview will gauge the applicant's capacity to execute

the components outlined in the submitted application, in regards to academics, organization, and finances. The Application Review Team will debrief after the interview. If further questions exist, or additional clarification is needed, an applicant may be invited to a second interview with the Application Review Team.

School Board Meeting
Recommended Timeline for Submission: At Least Nine Months Prior to Start of School
Prior to recommending approval of an application, the Executive Director will attend a board meeting for the proposed school in order to monitor and measure the board's capacity to govern the proposed school in accordance with Education One's board governance skills matrix, which includes skills associated with business, community engagement, education, finance, and legal.

Public Hearing
Recommended Timeline for Submission: At Least Nine Months Prior to Start of School
Prior to recommending approval of an application, a public hearing will be scheduled. During the Public Hearing applicants will present their proposal to the community in a public forum. Applicants will be asked to answer questions from the Education One team, as well as members of the public. Opportunities for members of the public to speak in opposition or in favor of the proposed school will be given. Education One will also accept written forms of support/opposition from the public.

Education One Board Meeting
Recommended Timeline for Submission: At Least Eight Months Prior to Start of School
The Executive Director will make a recommendation to the Education One Board regarding the acceptance or rejection of an application. The Education One Board of Directors will meet and vote to accept or reject the application, based on the recommendation. Applicants will be notified of the Board's decision within 24 hours of the vote.

All information submitted as part of the application (including financial information) is subject to the Indiana Access to Public Records Act (IC § 5-14-3) and subject to disclosure to the public there-under, including disclosure to the media. **In the event that it is the applicant's position that certain information submitted as part of the application falls within an exception to disclosure under the Public Records Act, the applicant must obtain an advisory opinion from the State of Indiana's Public Access Counselor prior to submitting any application materials**. If the Public Access Counselor's opinion supports the applicant's position, then any such information contained in the application that is considered non-disclosable must be clearly identified in the application as confidential. The application must further be accompanied by (a) a written statement specifying the particular exception or exceptions to disclosure under the Public Records Act applicable to the information sought to be exempted from disclosure, and (b) the written opinion from the Public Access Counselor that supports the applicant's position that the information is exempt from disclosure under the Public Records Act.

The applicant acknowledges that if the foregoing procedure is not followed, and an application is submitted, all information shall be subject to disclosure to the public unless Education One, L.L.C. determines that it must withhold from disclosure certain information in the application pursuant to the Public Records Act. Each applicant, by the submission of an application, acknowledges its understanding that all application materials are subject to disclosure under the Public Records Act and may be subject to review and copying by the public. Each applicant and its representatives, employees and agents acknowledges and agrees that Education One, L.L.C. Board members and staff, Trine University, the Indiana Department of Education, and any official, agent, employee or representative of the State of Indiana shall not be held liable or legally responsible in any way for any such disclosure pursuant to the Public Records Act, and such parties hereby waive any rights to redress or claims of action pursuant to any such disclosure.

APPLICATION ATTACHMENTS

Education One utilizes Google Drive to organize each applicant's application and the required attachments, found in the table below. Each applicant group will have access to a Google Drive Folder that will include all the necessary templates to complete their application. A folder, titled "Application Attachments," will be used to save attachments in the following manner:

- Each applicable attachment for the school should be saved as one PDF and uploaded to the Application Attachments folder.
- Each attachment should be saved as the attachment number, along with the school name and attachment description (i.e Attachment 1: School Name Planned Curriculum).
- Link each attachment to the table below, following these steps:
  - Right click on the attachment PDF saved in the Application Attachments folder.
  - Click "Get shareable link."
  - Click the drop down arrow next to "Restricted" and choose "Anyone with the link."
  - On the right, make sure "Viewer" is chosen.
  - Click the blue "Copy Link" button.
  - Paste the link into the table.
  - Add a space after the link to activate for viewers to click and be directed to the attachment.

Application Attachment Table		
Attachment	**Description**	**Link**
Attachment 1	**Planned Curriculum** *Provide a sample course scope and sequence for one subject for one grade level for each division (elementary, middle, high) the school would serve.*	Attachment 1
Attachment 2	**Plan for Development of Program** *Provide a plan for how the program will be developed between approval and opening, including the person responsible and key stages for completion.*	Attachment 2
Attachment 3	**Exit Standards for Graduation** *Provide the school's exit standards for graduating students from the last grade served by the school.*	Attachment 3
Attachment 4	**Proposed School Calendar** *Provide the proposed school calendar for the first year of operation, including the number of days/hours of instruction.*	Attachment 4
Attachment 5	**Proposed Daily & Weekly Schedules** *Provide a sample daily and weekly schedule for each division (elementary, middle, high school) of the school.*	Attachment 5
Attachment 6	**Enrollment Policy** *Provide the school's proposed enrollment policy.*	Attachment 6
Attachment 7	**Discipline Policy** *Provide the school's proposed discipline policy.*	Attachment 7
Attachment 8	**Evidence of Community Support** *Provide evidence of support from community partners (i.e., letters of intent/commitment, memoranda of understanding, and/or contracts).*	Attachment 8
Attachment 9	**Principal/School Leader Information** *Provide the resume for the proposed principal/school leader.*	Attachment 9
Attachment 10	**Principal/School Leader Posting Information** *Provide the job description or qualifications for this position with a discussion of the timeline, criteria, and recruiting/selection process for hiring.*	Attachment 10

Attachment 11	**Additional Leadership Team Information** *Provide the qualifications, resume, and professional biography for any identified leadership team members.*	Attachment 11
Attachment 12	**Non-Profit Status Proof/Board Policies** *Submit Articles of Incorporation, proof of non-profit status and tax exempt status (or copies of filings), and any governing documents already adopted.*	Attachment 12
Attachment 13	**Signed Statement of Assurances** *Submit one completed and signed Statement of Assurances on behalf of the board. Use the template provided by Education One.*	Attachment 13
Attachment 14	**Organizational Charts for Governing, Managing & Staffing** *Submit an organization chart that shows school governance, management, and staffing structure for Year 1 and at full build-out.*	Attachment 14
Attachment 15	**School's Governing Board** *List the members of the school's proposed leadership team and governing board. Include full resumes that contain contact information for each individual listed.*	Attachment 15
Attachment 16	**Board Member Notice of Disclosure** *Submit completed and signed information sheets for each board member. Use the template provided by Education One.*	<mark>Attachment 16</mark>
Attachment 17	**Board Code of Ethics & Conflict of Interest** *Provide the board's proposed Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest policy.*	Attachment 17
Attachment 18	**Term Sheet for Contract** *Provide the term sheet, draft proposed management contract detailing limits and evidence that the service provider is authorized to do business in Indiana.*	Attachment 18
Attachment 19	**Complete Staffing Chart for School** *Provide a complete staffing chart with Year 1 positions, administrative, instructional, and non-instructional personnel, the number of classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, and speciality teachers, and operational/support staff.*	<mark>Attachment 19</mark>
Attachment 20	**Personnel Policy/Employee Manual** *Provide a personnel policy or an employee manual if developed.*	Attachment 20
Attachment 21	**Leadership Evaluation Tool** *Provide leadership evaluation tools that have been developed.*	Attachment 21
Attachment 22	**Teacher Evaluation Tool** *Provide teacher evaluation tools that have been developed.*	Attachment 22
Attachment 23	**Proof of Secured Facility** *Provide proof of commitment for the facility.*	Attachment 23
Attachment 24	**Facility Description** *Provide supporting documents that detail the facility (10 page limit).*	Attachment 24
Attachment 25	**Start-up Plan/Timeline** *Provide a detailed start-up plan for the school, specifying tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals.*	Attachment 25
Attachment 26	**Insurance/Levels of Coverage** *Provide a list of the types of insurance coverage the school will secure, including a description of the level of coverage.*	Attachment 26
Attachment 27	**Implementation Schedule** *Provide an implementation schedule that explains the strategy for executing each charter that is approved. Use the template provided by Education One.*	Attachment 27

Attachment 28	**Completed Budget and Staffing Workbook** *Use the workbook provided by Education One.*	Attachment 28
Attachment 29	**Budget Narrative** *Provide a detailed description of the assumptions and revenue estimates, including but not limited to the basis for revenue projections, staffing levels, and costs.*	Attachment 29
Attachment 30	**Historical Performance Workbook** *Use the workbook provided by Education One.*	Attachment 30
Attachment 31	**3 Years of Audited Financials for IN Schools** *Provide the last three years of audited financial statements for the school(s) and the most recent internal financial statements.*	Attachment 31 A Attachment 31 B Attachment 31 C Attachment 31 D
Attachment 32	**3 Years of Audited Financials for Whole Organization** *Provide the last three years of audited financial statements for the organization as a whole and the most recent internal financial statements*	Attachment 32 A Attachment 32 B Attachment 32 C Attachment 32 D
Attachment 33	**Litigations** *Provide a summary of the demand, any response to the demand, and the results of the arbitration or litigation.*	Attachment 33

APPLICATION COVER SHEET

Name of team or entity applying:	Phalen Leadership Academies, Inc. (PLA)

Name of proposed school:	PLA Elkhart
Primary contact person:	Johnny Jin
Mailing address:	2323 North Illinois Street Indianapolis, IN 46202
Phone number:	(818) 825-4407
Email address:	jjin@phalenacademies.org
Fax:	

Primary contact for facilities planning:	Earl Martin Phalen
Phone number:	(617) 818-1959
Email address:	emphalen@phalenacademies.org

Applicant Team

Provide the full name, current job title and employer, and the position to be held with the proposed school for all persons on the applicant team, adding lines as needed.

Full Name	Current Job Title and Employer	Position with Proposed School
Earl Martin Phalen	Chief Executive Officer, PLA	Superintendent
Andrea Robinson	Chief Academic Officer, PLA	Chief Academic Officer
Courtney Lumbley	Director of School Improvement, PLA	Director of School Improvement
Melissa Morris	Regional Director, PLA	Regional Director
JoAnn Gama	Chief Human Assets Officer, PLA	Chief Human Assets Officer
Amber Deckard	Director of Recruitment, PLA	Director of Recruitment
Arely Benavides	Chief Operating Officer	Chief Operating Officer
Enjuelle Livingston	National Director of Operations, PLA	National Director of Operations
Nicole Scott	Chief of Compliance, Legal & External Partners, PLA	Chief of Compliance, Legal & External Partners
Adrienne Page	Director of Special Populations	Director of Special Populations
Eva Spilker	Chief Financial Officer, PLA	Chief Financial Officer
Johnny Jin	Chief Strategy & Development Officer, PLA	Chief Strategy & Development Officer

Does this application team have charter school applications under consideration by any other authorizer(s) in the United States?

☐ Yes   ■ No

If yes, complete the table below, adding lines as needed.

State	Authorizer	Proposed School Name	Application Due Date	Decision Date

Proposed School(s) Information

Provide the proposed school(s) opening information, adding lines as needed. Please indicate the city/town and, if known, the potential address or neighborhood of location (Geographic Community). Virtual operators should indicate the relevant geographies intended to serve.

Proposed School Name	Opening Year	New Start, Phase-In/Takeover, or Replication	Geographic Community	Opening Grades	Grade Levels at Full Enrollment
PLA Elkhart Elementary School 1	2023	Replication	Elkhart	K - 2, 6th	K - 6
PLA Elkhart Middle School 1	2023	Replication	Elkhart	7th	7 - 8
PLA Elkhart Elementary School 2	2024	Replication	Elkhart	K - 2, 6th	K - 6
PLA Elkhart Middle School 2	2024	Replication	Elkhart	7th	7 - 8
PLA Elkhart High School	2025	Replication	Elkhart	9	9 - 12

Model or Focus of Proposed School:	Personalized learning model

Does the school intend to contract with a third party education service provider (ESP) to manage the educational program and operations of the school but not hold the charter directly?   ☐ Yes   ■ No

If yes, identify the ESP or other partner organization:

Does the school intend to partner or be affiliated with an existing or planned charter management organization (CMO) through which a single governing board governs or will govern multiple schools?   ■ Yes   ☐ No

If yes, identify the CMO or other partner organization: Phalen Leadership Academies

Enrollment Summary

Complete the following table, adding lines as needed.

Proposed School Name		Year 1 2023-24	Year 2 2024-25	Year 3 2025-26	Year 4 2026-27	Year 5 2027-28	At Capacity
PLA Elkhart Elementary 1	Grade Levels Served	K-2, 6th	K-3, 6th	K-4, 6th	K-6	K-6	K-6
	Total Enrollment	360	456	552	648	648	648
PLA Elkhart Middle School 1	Grade Levels Served	7th	7-8	7-8	7-8	7-8	7-8
	Total Enrollment	125	250	250	250	250	250
PLA Elkhart Elementary 2	Grade Levels Served	NA	K-2, 6th	K-3, 6th	K-4, 6th	K-6	K-6
	Total Enrollment	0	360	456	552	648	648
PLA Elkhart Middle School 1	Grade Levels Served	NA	7th	7-8	7-8	7-8	7-8
	Total Enrollment	0	125	250	250	250	250
PLA Elkhart High School	Grade Levels Served	NA	NA	9th	9-10	9-11	9-12
	Total Enrollment	0	0	125	375	625	875

Describe the rationale for the number of students and grade levels served in year one and the basis for the growth plan illustrated above.

The rationale for the number of students and grade levels served in year one at each school is based on the PLA standard of the number of scholars per classroom. For grades K-2, we are working under the assumption of 22 scholars per class, for grade 6 we

Mission and Vision

State the mission and vision of the proposed school. The mission is a statement of the fundamental purpose of the school, describing why it exists. The vision statement outlines how the school will operate and what it will achieve in the long term. The mission and vision statement provide the foundation for the entire proposal.

Replication Schools: Provide the mission of the school network, charter management organization (CMO), or education service provider (ESP), and explain how creation of the proposed school or schools fits within this mission.

Our mission is to ensure that our scholars meet high academic and social standards, and thrive as leaders at home, in their communities, and in the world. Our ultimate goal is that our scholars master key academic skills, and demonstrate strong character as exhibited by: honesty, service to others, a superior work ethic, and a strong vision for and belief in their futures.

With the support of Trine, we plan to replicate the evidence-based PLA educational model to positively impact the lives of children living in underserved communities. Through this educational model, PLA has been able to transform six F-rated schools to A-rated schools by providing children with both personalized academic support and whole-child development to help them achieve their potential. The vision for our schools is rooted in the following key pillars:

1. **Serving different learning styles and needs of scholars:** Our proposed schools will use evidence-based instructional strategies such as data-driven instruction and differentiated learning to deliver core subject curricula and address scholar needs. This creates a uniquely rigorous and personalized learning experience that empowers growth for every child. Through small-group rotations, for example, scholars will work through guided sessions that directly target their academic gaps based on dynamic performance data. Additionally, PLA's model is centered around cultivating a growth mindset to promote student ownership of learning and continuous improvement for our educators.
2. **Providing varied opportunities for educators:** We provide job-embedded professional development systems and supports for educators. The PLA Coaching Cycle consists of weekly observational walkthroughs, personalized coaching, and progressive goal setting aligned to scaffolded instructional domains. Teachers will systematically improve their abilities, receiving individualized coaching on specific, actionable strategies that strengthen classroom instruction. Educators will also participate in weekly collaborative Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). PLCs offer educators a chance to collaboratively: a) analyze student data and identify areas in need of improvement; b) compare and share instructional strategies and resources; c) design grade-level, subject-specific or school wide interventions, for example, the incorporation of content literacy strategies and supports across subjects; d) develop and refine curriculum mapping; and e) deliver model lessons covering specific strategies or standards. Together, these allow teachers to learn from their peers and improve their overall effectiveness in the classroom. Moreover, during the summer our teachers will participate in a Training Institute that will prepare them to deliver rigorous, data-driven instruction and scaffold learning to meet scholars' needs.
3. **Offering appropriate and innovative choices to support scholars' strong vision for their future:** Self-driven learning fosters a growth mindset and a vision for a successful future. PLA scholars will take ownership of their learning through the use of evidence-based instructional strategies, such as progress feedback cycles, structured reflection, and goal-setting. Furthermore, the PLA model offers daily enrichment opportunities, giving scholars a chance to apply their learning. Each day, scholars will take courses in art, music, theater or physical fitness. Scholars will hear from inspirational guest speakers; participate in educational field trips to college campuses, professional workplaces, museums, and cultural landmarks; and lead service projects for their community. Children learn best when they are engaged and able to see connections between school, their communities and their futures.

4. **Allowing for freedom and flexibility in exchange for exceptional levels of accountability:** The PLA educational model streamlines the operational components of running a school. With this model serving as the backbone of our new schools, our leadership and staff can fully focus on getting to know families and better understand the needs of the communities we serve. This will enable customizations such as tailoring instruction and services so that our scholars have the support they need to grow their abilities. By partnering with the central office at PLA, our schools teams will have more freedom and flexibility to align services to truly meet the needs of scholars.
5. **Facilitating opportunities for expanded community involvement:** To successfully launch in the communities of our proposed schools, our team will leverage the scientifically validated PLA family engagement model. We recognize the importance of family engagement, and we will robustly engage the strengths of our community in support of our scholars. Some elements of this process include training teachers to effectively communicate with parents; creating a welcoming environment for families; holding regular data meetings to help families understand their scholar's academic and behavioral progress; and hosting fellowship events to build community connectedness.

Thank you for considering our application. We are grateful for the opportunity to build on our partnership in service of children and families.

Education One is particularly interested in applicants that propose school models with strong potential to accelerate student success through dramatically different school designs, instructional strategies, use of technology, staffing models, governance arrangements, family and community engagement strategies, and/or other approaches.

Meets Standard Expectation
● Evidence that an educational need within the targeted community exists.
● Evidence that the school model is innovative and reflects the needs of the proposed community.

Educational Need and Anticipated Student Population

1. Provide a rationale, along with quantitative evidence, to summarize the educational needs of students within the proposed community(ies).

PLA has developed an educational model tailored to meet the needs of traditionally underserved scholars. Our vision is to empower scholars to achieve academic success through holistic support, personalized interventions and data-driven decision-making that allows our team to understand and meet scholars' individualized needs. PLA has achieved remarkable success working within communities of color and supporting children who have experienced chronic academic underperformance. Through our proposed schools, we hope to meet this educational need and provide access to high-quality public school options to children and families.

Based on the latest available state assessment data, no school in the Elkhart Community Schools (ECS) district is A-rated. Over 70% of all schools in ECS are rated C, D, or F. The need for high-quality public education is most urgent for scholars living in traditionally underserved communities. The following table shows all ECS schools with 65% or more scholars of color. All but one of these schools received D or F ratings according to SY2019-20 state accountability grades:

SY2019-20* State Grades for Schools in Elkhart Serving Primarily Scholars of Color				
School	**State Grade**	**Enrollment**	**% Scholars of Color**	**% Scholars eligible for F/RP meals**
Beardsley Elementary	F	388	82%	69%
Hawthorne Elementary	F	546	88%	61%
Mary Beck Elementary	D	299	85%	83%
Mary Daly Elementary	D	463	69%	73%
Monger Elementary School	B	393	84%	77%
Pierre Moran Middle School	D	542	67%	62%
Roosevelt STEAM Academy	F	446	91%	69%
*Due to the widespread impact of COVID-19, the US Department of Education granted Indiana a waiver from annual				

assessment and accountability requirements for the 2019-2020 school year. Information available on this site reflects assessment and accountability determinations from the 2018-2019 school year.

Low school ratings are also reflected in proficiency scores for these schools on the most recent state summative assessment, ILEARN. This is particularly true for historically underserved students. Below are tables highlighting ILEARN scores for ELA and Math at the schools listed above, broken down by student groups:

ELA Proficiency on the 2019-20* State Summative for Schools in Elkhart Serving Primarily Scholars of Color				
School	Overall Proficiency	Proficiency for scholars eligible for F/RP meals	Proficiency for Black scholars	Proficiency for Hispanic scholars
State Average	48%	33%	25%	35%
Elkhart Community Schools	32%	26%	17%	28%
Beardsley Elementary	17%	13%	14%	17%
Hawthorne Elementary	13%	12%	3%	17%
Mary Beck Elementary	17%	19%	22%	17%
Mary Daly Elementary	24%	21%	7%	26%
Monger Elementary School	44%	44%	38%	44%
Pierre Moran Middle School	33%	28%	22%	29%
Roosevelt STEAM Academy	7%	5%	8%	6%
Average of Schools	*22%*	*20%*	*16%*	*22%*

*Due to the widespread impact of COVID-19, the US Department of Education granted Indiana a waiver from annual assessment and accountability requirements for the 2019-2020 school year. Information available on this site reflects assessment and accountability determinations from the 2018-2019 school year.

Across the state, the ELA proficiency rate for all students was 48%, and across all ECS schools, the scholar proficiency rate for ELA was notably lower than the state, at 32%. Delving into the school data, it is clear that there is a significant achievement gap between underserved scholars and their peers. The average proficiency rate for Black scholars across these schools (16%) was half of the district-wide proficiency rate (32%) and 32 points below the state average. The average ELA proficiency rate for Hispanic scholars in these schools (22%) was 10 points below the district-wide proficiency rate and 26 points below the state average. The average ELA proficiency rate for scholars experiencing poverty (20%) was 12 points below the district average and 28 points below the state average.

Math Proficiency on the 2019-20* State Summative for Schools in Southeast Elkhart Serving Serving Primarily Scholars of Color

School	Overall Proficiency	Proficiency for scholars eligible for F/RP meals	Proficiency for Black scholars	Proficiency for Hispanic scholars
State Average	48%	33%	22%	34%
Elkhart Community Schools	33%	27%	15%	28%
Beardsley Elementary	21%	20%	14%	20%
Hawthorne Elementary	17%	16%	4%	21%
Mary Beck Elementary	15%	14%	15%	12%
Mary Daly Elementary	27%	25%	14%	28%
Monger Elementary School	52%	52%	41%	57%
Pierre Moran Middle School	24%	20%	14%	19%
Roosevelt STEAM Academy	6%	5%	5%	7%
Average of Schools	*23%*	*22%*	*15%*	*23%*

*Due to the widespread impact of COVID-19, the US Department of Education granted Indiana a waiver from annual assessment and accountability requirements for the 2019-2020 school year. Information available on this site reflects assessment and accountability determinations from the 2018-2019 school year.

Across the state, the math proficiency rate for all students was 48%, and across all ECS schools, the scholar proficiency rate for math was notably lower than the state, at 33%. Delving into the school data, it is clear that there is a significant achievement gap between underserved scholars and their peers. The average proficiency rate for Black scholars across these schools (15%) was half of the district-wide proficiency rate (33%) and 33 points below the state average. The average math proficiency rate for Hispanic scholars in these schools (23%) was 10 points below the district-wide proficiency rate and 25 points below the state average. The average math proficiency rate for scholars experiencing poverty (22%) was 11 points below the district average and 26 points below the state average. These stark contrasts continue to highlight the need for additional high-quality school options for scholars of color in the Elkhart area.

The need for high quality public elementary schools that provide culturally relevant instruction is made stronger by deep-rooted challenges facing scholars in Elkhart. Children and families face daily stressors through the prevalence of violent crimes. The crime rate here is 1.8 times higher than the U.S. average, and is higher than 96% of U.S. cities (City-Data, 2018). While the rate of violent crimes decreased between 2016 and 2018, it is more than three times the U.S. average (City-Data, 2018). U.S. Census Bureau data

shows that in 2019, 12% of children under 18 were experiencing poverty, comparable to the rate for the entire Indianapolis metropolitan area. According to Feeding America, 15% of children in Elkhart are suffering from food insecurity. These facts illustrate a stark reality: scholars living in Elkhart face growing adversity that threatens their ability to achieve overall academic success. Children who are already dealing with the challenges that accompany living in poverty deserve extra care and attention from adults who share their background and possess the expertise to guide them to success. PLA has developed an educational model tailored to meet the needs of traditionally underserved scholars. Furthermore, PLA is led by a highly diverse leadership team dedicated to serving children of color and has achieved remarkable success working within these communities, supporting children who have experienced chronic academic underperformance. PLA's organizational leadership reflects the community we serve: our organization is one of the very few public-school networks in the country serving children of color that is led primarily by people of color. We understand the needs of our community because we come from the neighborhoods we serve; throughout the PLA network, 89% of all scholars are Black or Latinx and 86% of scholars are experiencing poverty. The PLA educational model has repeatedly proven that it can raise academic proficiency for scholars from traditionally underserved communities by optimizing time spent in core subject instruction. To date, the PLA model has enabled six previously F-rated schools to transform into A-rated schools. Rigorous curriculum, high-quality professional development, an embedded coaching cycle that develops teachers, enrichment opportunities for scholars, and authentic partnerships with parents are core elements of the PLA educational model. We hope to launch our network of schools and implement these evidence-based strategies for the scholars in Elkhart.

Through our community outreach efforts, we have had the opportunity to better understand the potential student population and the need for the proposed schools. By speaking with community members and families we could potentially serve with these new schools, we have gathered over 200 signatures in support of our proposed schools. Community members are excited by the prospect of a school with a unique approach to education, different from that of a traditional school. They were particularly compelled by the innovative elements of the PLA model that current schools in the area may lack, including the focus on personalized learning, social-emotional development and built-in family engagement. Please see the next section for more specifics around PLA's innovative approach to education, and the Parent and Community Involvement section for additional details.

Innovative Approach to Education

1. Summarize the innovation(s) embodied in the proposed school design. How does this specific school model meet the needs of students within the proposed community(ies)? The summary should include, at a minimum, the following:
   - An explanation of how the proposed model is fundamentally different than typical school models, specifically those found in the district or community in which the charter school(s) will be located
   - Any available evidentiary basis for the efficacy of the model or for the ideas underlying the model and how it meets the needs of the anticipated student population

PLA aims to serve all students by creating a school environment that focuses on rigorous academic support and comprehensive social and emotional learning. Please find below a summary of key innovations in the PLA model:

Small-group, personalized learning: At its core, our model is intentionally designed to provide personalized, Tier II intervention for every child throughout the school day. Teacher's Assistants and Interventionists work together with classroom teachers to provide individualized guidance to scholars. We implement a rotational model to provide instruction in core academic subjects, which enables extensive small-group instruction and provides multiple learning modalities to target each student's zone of proximal development, combining research-based instruction with mastery-paced work on adaptive learning software. PLA has a proprietary framework for making use of adaptive learning technology to complement high quality instruction. Our program incorporates adaptive learning software and technology (such as Edulastic, Edgenuity, and more) to support data-driven personalized learning for our scholars. Through blended learning rotations, scholars work through both educator-guided interventions and self-paced adaptive learning modules all working in concert to target academic gaps based on real-time performance data.

Student ownership of learning: We recognize that we must empower our students and support their social-emotional health in order for them to achieve success in school and in life. For that reason, we frame tests and weekly formative assessments as a core

classroom learning activity, as opposed to a punitive activity, and offer students time to reflect on their growth. We place students in the driver's seat of their educational experience, working collaboratively with teachers to establish growth goals, develop a plan for achievement, and celebrate successes. During biweekly conferences, students work with teachers to: 1) know what high quality work looks like; 2) develop skills to objectively evaluate their own work compared to the standard; and 3) use strategies to guide improvement of their work. During these checkpoints, teachers will only discuss growth, not letter grades. At PLA, we believe in recognizing scholars for outstanding work and effort. While the structure of incentive programs varies from school to school, here are a few examples of strategies we have used at PLA schools: 1) Our Falcon of the Month program recognizes a scholar from each grade who has exemplified excellence in academics, behavior, and effort. 2) A grocery cart is pushed from class to class with fun treats for scholars who have demonstrated the greatest improvement in behavior and effort; scholars may access this incentive program bi-weekly. 3) School leaders host field trips for scholars who meet and exceed expectations. Trips have been to places like the Children's Museum of Indianapolis, the Interactive History Museum, and different colleges/universities. Our positive reward system encourages our scholars to live up to the highest expectations and to work hard at all times. This models for our scholars how to discuss and accept feedback, how to ask for help, and how to proactively manage their development. Using this structured scholar recognition program, we consistently and continuously celebrate students when they make progress towards their goals. As a result, students develop a sense of control over their educational journey.

Culturally relevant enrichment experiences: To further support student development and engagement, we have developed an enrichment program that fosters integrity-based leadership by nurturing pride in children's identities. As a Black-led organization we also intentionally recruit a culturally and experientially diverse staff with multiple talents and interests. We understand the value and importance of helping children develop a strong sense of identity, self-worth, and imagination for how they can fulfill their tremendous innate potential. At PLA, we know that it is important to cultivate well-rounded, highly engaged scholars so that they will be successful in the 21st century workforce and in the world. Our enrichment classes are aimed at increasing scholars' awareness of possible career paths and their awareness of themselves, their culture, and cultures around the world. In the past, enrichment course topics have included engineering, photography, character development, health and wellness, culture & citizenship, black history, entrepreneurship, public speaking, debate, ballet, West African dance, and drumming. In addition to these course offerings, high school students have the option to participate in a CTE Pathways program that is designed for scholars to receive knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for success in postsecondary education and economically viable career opportunities. These clusters are Education and Training, Human Services, Health Sciences, Architecture and Construction, and STEM. Specific pathways may include education services, pre-nursing, cosmetology, construction trades, and computer science. These culturally relevant enrichment programs and CTE pathways support our model based on providing high quality education and equitable access for academic achievement and career preparation of our scholars.

Proprietary program for educator development: We cannot effectively execute our personalized learning model without the leadership of high-performing educators. While professional development is often implemented as one-time events, or reserved for specific "Professional Development days", PLA's professional development program is comprehensive, ongoing, and woven throughout the school day, semester and year. Our proprietary PLA Coaching Cycle platform provides regular walkthroughs, progressive goal setting, and personalized feedback to educators. Coaches or instructional leaders review educator effectiveness in six key coaching areas to identify areas of strength, create professional growth goals, and provide the collaborative coaching that educators need to meet those goals. PLA has built a unique online platform, specific to the Coaching Cycle, that gives school leaders and network leaders the opportunity to highlight teacher strengths, as well as identify areas for growth through observations and walk-throughs. Feedback is given directly to teachers immediately after their observation in an effort to provide rapid and accurate feedback encouraging proactive change. The platform also includes resources for teachers that match up exactly with each coaching area, allowing coaches to pinpoint exactly which resources and strategies will provide the most efficient support based on teacher need. The Cycle rounds out with another observation, giving educators the chance to highlight the impact of those strategies in action. An especially innovative piece of the Coaching Cycle is that this platform keeps a record of all observations and evaluation cycles, accessible by leadership and teachers, to track goal setting and monitor educator professional development progress toward those goals. It also gives PLA a snapshot of how effective the Coaching Cycle is across the network, allowing us to calibrate it to ensure that it best serves our teachers and scholars. The Coaching Cycle is also an excellent tool to identify exceptional educators who can grow within PLA. One specific opportunity where that growth can occur is through our Principals-in-Residence (PiR) program, a 6-18 month, paid, extensive professional development program designed to transform participants into strong school

leaders. This program is open to internal and external candidates and represents one of the key innovative systems we have in place to attract excellent educators to our network schools and to further develop them into the world-class leaders our scholars deserve. Specifically, PiR activities consist of program elements that are altogether structured to create well-rounded residents and lead them in the foundational principles of PLA's model of school success. There are four key elements to this program consisting of; 1) **Practicum** which comprises hands-on experience at a school; 2) **Seminars/Webinars** designed to further strengthen the fundamental skills needed to be an effective school leader; 3) **Course Work** that is the foundation of critical school leadership skills and the completion of required assignments in the form of tasks that are aligned to essential foundational skills for the PLA principal; and 4) **Mentorship** through the process of receiving feedback and coaching from a high-performing mentor, school leader, and regional coach, as well as regular professional development facilitated by PLA's academic training team and outside experts to build their knowledge of the foundational principles of the PLA model. Through the implementation of PLA's innovative, proprietary professional development programs, we are confident that staff will receive the professional support and development they need to be effective so that scholars will receive the high-quality instruction that they deserve.

Authentic family engagement: To create a real and lasting impact on our students, we must address the needs of the entire family in our approach to transformation. In a traditional system, parents have minimal influence over key decision-making and often hear from school personnel only when negative instances arise. As part of the PLA model, teachers and families will delve into a scholar's progress toward academic and behavioral goals together, ensuring that we are working in partnership to support the development of scholars. We maintain an open-door policy and invite families not only to school events, but also to participate in the classroom where they can meaningfully engage with our scholars. Further, in order to develop relationships of trust with families, we give our parents consistent access to real-time feedback from educators through a variety of communication channels including regular calls home, social media, and newsletters. PLA also invites parents to participate in surveys and focus groups at the beginning of the year (BOY) and the end of the year (EOY) to determine the needs of our families and to receive constructive feedback. In addition to putting our families at the forefront of our campus decision-making process, we recognize that workforce development is an important way to increase engagement and advance equity by addressing systemic, structural, and institutional barriers that have traditionally held back our families. We have built a unique workforce development program, PLA University, an alternative educational program that offers career pathways to PLA alumni and their family members. This program provides opportunities for the parents and adult siblings of our scholars to obtain credentials in high-demand careers, and supports them in securing careers in those fields within 6 - 12 months. There are four key anchors that ensure participant success: mentorship, flexibility of online classes, a cohort model, and career readiness coaching. There are also four phases to PLA University: 1) Academic Onboarding: Students participate in an introductory seminar that teaches them how to be a successful student, refining their math and reading skills. By completing this program, students display their commitment to the full program; 2) Career Program: Students begin taking classes in their career area and commit to PLA U program requirements by meeting with an assigned mentor once a week; 3) Job Readiness: Students will complete job application, interview and finance literacy seminars. Students will complete all follow up steps until they land a job following completion of career path requirements; and 4) Career Success: Students will continue to meet with their mentor monthly, for at least 1 year following the completion of the career path, to ensure continued success. This program will help to improve access to economic opportunities and resources, support a steady income and stable home, and ensure overall increased communal well-being for our scholars and their families.

Our Founder and CEO, Earl Martin Phalen, founded PLA after 20 years of leadership in education. The PLA model grew out of Mr. Phalen's previous work, which produced two of the very few scientifically validated extended learning time models in the country. For example, Summer Advantage USA was rigorously tested in a comprehensive, well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study by APA Consulting. This study took place over three years and found that our model has a statistically significant positive impact on academic achievement. Overall, our innovative approach stems from providing extensive and personalized support to our students, educators, and families to empower them to succeed at their highest potential. The PLA educational model has produced strong achievement gains at schools across Indiana. Highlights from our track record illustrate the power of our evidence-based educational model, as we have:

- Transformed six (6) F-rated schools to A-rated schools in Indiana (4 in Indianapolis, 1 in Fort Wayne, 1 in Merrillville).
- Increased scholar passing rates on the state ELA and Math tests by 11% in just one year – the highest standardized test growth for all schools in Central Indiana.

- Earned school rankings of #4 and #5 in the district for strongest growth (with 8.2% and 8.1% increases in state test score proficiency growth, respectively).
- Accelerated progress towards grade-level proficiency with 72% of scholars showing standard to high annual growth on the state test.
- Achieved an average of 92% passing on the state third grade reading exam at our founding school.

Through our partnership with Trine Education One, we have also helped scholars at PLA Virtual achieve significant learning gains. PLA Virtual began serving students during the 2020-2021 academic year, and the results from the 20-21 ILEARN state assessment showed significant gains for our scholars:

- PLA Virtual was the number one school for student math proficiency out of all accredited Indiana virtual schools.
- PLA Virtual had the third highest percentage of students scoring proficient or above on ELA when compared to all accredited Indiana Virtual Schools.
- While PLA Virtual can enroll students across Indiana, compared to PLA's home district of Indianapolis Public Schools, PLA Virtual outperformed IPS in Math by nearly 20% for the percent of students scoring proficient or above
- PLA Virtual outperformed IPS by over 10% in ELA.

Through the innovative elements described above, including personalized learning, high-quality professional development, culturally relevant enrichment opportunities for scholars, and authentic partnerships with parents, our vision is to create opportunity and equitable access to high-quality education for traditionally underserved scholars.

Curriculum and Instructional Design

> **Meets Standard Expectation**
> - Framework for a rigorous, quality instructional design that reflects the needs of the school's target population and will ensure all students meet or exceed expectations of the Indiana Academic Standards (IAS).
> - Comprehensive, quality curriculum overview that includes a sample course scope and sequence for one subject for one grade for each division (elementary, middle, high school) the school would serve, and demonstrated alignment of course outcomes with applicable standards. Sound curricular choices, by subject, including reason evidence the curriculum will be appropriate and effective for the targeted students.
> - Sound instructional strategies and explanation of why they are well suited for the targeted student population, including effective methods and systems for providing differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students.
> - Evidence that the proposed educational program has a sound base in research, theory, and/or experience, and has been or is likely to be rigorous, engaging, and effective for anticipated student population.

Propose a framework for instructional design that both reflects the needs of the anticipated population and ensures all students will meet or exceed the state standard.

1. Describe the basic learning environment (e.g., classroom-based, independent study), including class size and structure.   If multiple schools/campuses are being proposed, explain any differences among them.

Our school's learning environment will be designed with scholar needs at the core. In our effort to provide scholars with an interactive, dynamic learning experience in the classroom, we will configure classrooms specifically to help facilitate teacher-student and peer-to-peer interactions in our rotational stations. Our rotational instruction model ensures that scholars receive grade-level instruction and personalized, small-group instruction within each class period. The first rotation consists of whole-group instruction, in which all scholars will receive Tier 1, direct instruction from their teachers. Next, by leveraging key instructional support staff, scholars will receive Tier 2 instruction in small-group rotations of no more than 8 students. These small-group rotations are designed to provide personalized learning to each scholar, whereby scholars will have the opportunity to fill in learning gaps or push their skills further, depending on the level of content mastery demonstrated by the student. Taken together, these rotations allow instruction to be delivered in a manner that is both grade appropriate and takes into account the unique needs of each individual scholar. Moreover, the PLA Academics team will carefully monitor student-to-teacher ratios to maintain appropriate class sizes that are optimized for student success. Typically, our class sizes are 20-25 students per class.

In addition to maintaining personalized class sizes, we believe that physical space, the space in which students learn, also matters. We will use PLA's design principles and prior experiences to create a safe, secure and sustainable learning space that meets the unique needs of our scholars. All classrooms will have defined classroom areas, such as reading, writing, and math focus walls, a word wall, and a classroom library. Additionally, the classroom management system – including the classroom rules/procedures, corrective actions, and positive reinforcement – will be clearly posted in each classroom. To align on consistent classroom organization processes, each classroom will display the daily agenda and the objective for the day's lesson stated in KUD format (what students will be able to Know, Understand, and Do by the end of the lesson). We will also ensure adequate space for hands-on, interactive learning experiences where scholars can engage in project-based learning and creative tasks that use various learning tools and approaches. For example, we will provide sufficient space for scholars to be able to use toolkits, math games, and manipulatives in their projects. The school facility will be equipped with wiring infrastructure to allow for high-speed internet throughout the building, which enables the use of laptops, adaptive learning software, supplemental curriculum, performance dashboards, the PLA Coaching Cycle web platform and other key systems. Additionally, we will ensure that the physical space reflects a high level of cultural awareness and celebrates the accomplishments of a diverse group of inspirational and historic figures. PLA schools all feature artwork, quotes and murals of Black and Hispanic leaders throughout history so that scholars can come to appreciate the vast contributions that leaders of color have made to our history. All spaces within the facility will promote safety, collaboration, and engagement for students and staff alike.

2. Provide an overview of the planned curriculum, including, as <mark>Attachment 1</mark>, a sample course scope and sequence for one subject for one grade for each division (elementary, middle, high school) the school would serve.

3. Identify course outcomes and components to demonstrate alignment with applicable state standards.

Course learning outcomes and components focus on promoting academic gains, which are measured against mastery towards meeting the IDOE state standards. Course components that PLA uses to ensure and support alignment with state standards are outlined as follows:
- Curricular materials audited for standards alignment
- Curriculum mapping and course pacing guides focused on priority standards
- Rigorous daily, weekly and modular scholar learning outcomes (objectives) that are measurable, specific, clear and describe what the scholar will be able to demonstrate by the end of each lesson; how it relates to the standard and how it relates to real world application (college/career readiness).
- Daily checks for understanding for daily learning objectives
- Weekly standards aligned common grade level formative assessments
- Standards align progress monitoring assessment (NWEA)

4. Summarize program choices by grade and/or subject, and the rationale for each. Describe the evidence that these programs will be appropriate and effective for the anticipated student population.

All curricula and programming choices are chosen based on which best support the following criteria:
- State standard-aligned
- Research-based
- Culturally responsive

English Language Arts: PLA will use Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's (HMH) *Into Reading* for grades K-5 and *Into Literature* for grades 6-8 as well as grades 9-12. Resources from Into Reading are utilized on a daily basis to deploy curricular units of instruction that are aligned to state standards. Unit and lesson plans are built into the curriculum, and all curricular components are easily accessible online for both teachers and students. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt is the tier one ELA curriculum which provides print rich grade level text to support grade level standards. Orton-Gllingham (OG) supports the science of reaching and teaches explicit phonics and phonemic awareness skills building the foundation of reading.

HMH *Into Reading* was built from the ground up to leverage the latest in literacy research to ensure every student has access to a proven path to success. According to EdReports, the instructional materials *Into Reading*, Grades K through 2, meet the expectations of alignment and usability, which represent the highest rating level. Texts included in the program are high quality and engaging, as well as appropriately rigorous and organized to support knowledge building. The materials include questions, tasks, lessons, and practice that support students' development of reading; writing; speaking; listening; and critical thinking. Materials include foundations for students to study topics and develop research habits, as well as practice different types of speaking and writing about different topics. According to EdReports, HMH *Into Literature* provides consistent alignment to expectations. Over the course of each grade level's materials, students read and listen to appropriately rigorous, high quality texts and are provided questions and tasks that support close reading and critical analysis. The materials support knowledge building as well as attending to growing vocabulary and independence in literacy skills. Teacher information includes guidance to support differentiation and implementation.

Orton-Gllingham is a structured literacy program. It introduced the idea of breaking reading and spelling down into smaller skills involving letters and sounds, and then building on these skills over time. Their approach combines direct, multi-sensory teaching strategies paired with systematic, sequential lessons focused on phonics. The OG approach uses structures such as phoneme awareness, morphology, orthography, semantics, syntax, and text structure to improve reading skills. By using the visual, auditory,

and kinesthetic centers of the brain, Orton-Gillingham aims to 'rewire' the neurological connections in the language centers of the brain.

Reading Interventions: We will utilize Fountas & Pinnell (F&P) Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI), a powerful, short-term intervention, that provides daily, intensive, small-group instruction. This instruction serves as a valuable supplemental tool for classroom literacy teaching. F&P LLI is an evidence-based, comprehensive approach driven by assessments, small group instruction, and personalized learning support. LLI systems are designed to advance the literacy learning of students not meeting grade-level expectations in reading, which is relevant to the population of scholars PLA will serve, especially as a direct response to pandemic-related learning loss. They do this through increasing the amount that students read, incorporating close reading to expand comprehension, and working with small groups to maximize growth. Ultimately, the goal of this program is to improve reading proficiency by at least 10% each year and support all PLA schools growth in outperforming the district and the state. The development of Fountas & Pinnell rests on more than 25 years of classroom experience with proven results and incorporates leading thinking around literacy instruction, as well as research about how literacy develops in children over time. F&P is deeply rooted in decades of research-based professional books and curricular resources such as Leveled Literacy Intervention and Benchmark Assessment Systems. All of Fountas and Pinnell's curriculum systems were developed from this research and are intricately connected to and complement one another for true instructional coherence.

Math: PLA has plans to adopt the Eureka Math curriculum for grades K-8. Eureka was developed by more than 120 teachers and mathematicians working together to create a rigorous, focused, Math curriculum that supports scholar mastery of core content. Eureka Math carefully sequences mathematical progressions in expertly crafted modules to build scholar understanding of key mathematical concepts. The curriculum is state standards-aligned, provides regular assessments for teachers to implement frequent checks for understanding, and also consists of manipulatives that can be used during lessons to support scholar comprehension. Lessons also include a significant number of practice math problems, giving students many opportunities to apply their knowledge. Rubrics help teachers evaluate the quality and rigor of their lessons. Eureka Math encourages analytical thinking, communication of mathematical ideas, and the development of problem-solving skills. The independent nonprofit Edreports.org gave Eureka Math top marks across the board for alignment to the Common Core State Standards and usability in the classroom — much higher rating than any other publisher, and Educators Evaluating the Quality of Instructional Products (EQuIP) recognizes multiple Eureka Math lessons as exemplars. For high school, PLA plans to adopt Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's Saxon Math, which weaves concepts from every math strand together and are connected throughout the year. Skills or concepts are reinforced throughout the years, helping students build a strong foundation of understanding. It offers differentiated instruction and frequent, cumulative assessments to ensure students stay on track.

Additionally, the Edgenuity Learning Management System works in tandem with the aforementioned curriculum at PLA to support the implementation of blended personalized learning. Edgenuity consists of bite-sized, packaged, spiraled curriculum pathways, providing scholars with self-guided modules for skill acquisition within each domain as they progress through the spectrum of mastery laid out by NWEA's MAP scores. When integrated with NWEA data via connections to a school's Student Information System, Edgenuity identifies a suggested Individualized Learning Path specific to each scholar's starting score in each domain that drives growth toward desired outcomes. Score groupings within each domain indicate a starting level of complexity, and align to a set of skills scholars are required to master before "leveling up." Edgenuity packages modules that address these skills within the Learning Path, across each specific domain, so that a scholar can have a clear understanding of what he or she needs to accomplish to meet score goals over time. Edgenuity provides PLA teachers with rich controls for sequencing and programming the Individualized Learning Plan assignments. Because NWEA MAP scores & Edgenuity modules transcend grade levels, both low-performing and high-performing scholars have access to practice that directly matches their level of understanding and guides them in mastering increasing complexity, and because the domains remain the same from elementary through high school, scholars can see a clear progression of how skills build upon each other over time. This is truly data-driven instruction, as the NWEA data informs Edgenuity in directly mapping out a specific progression for student growth.

Programs and curricula choices for the high school are made to align with state standards and Indiana HS Graduation Requirements and will be reassessed ahead of the high school launch planned for 2025.

5. If the programming is not already developed, provide, as **Attachment 2**, a plan for how it will be developed between approval of the application and the opening of the school, including who will be responsible and when key stages will be completed.

6. Describe the primary instructional strategies that the school will expect teachers to use and why they are well suited for the anticipated student population. Describe the methods and systems teachers will have for providing differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students.

PLA schools employ the following instructional strategies that incorporate rigorous, high-quality experiences and promote critical-thinking skills. Please find below a summary of our primary instructional strategies:

Individualized learning pathways: PLA's model maximizes the amount of time scholars spend in core instruction. We restructure core instruction using a rotational instructional approach, which provides up to two hours of instruction in each subject through a strategic mix of whole- group, small-group, and self-paced learning. Our model enables schools to implement a highly individualized learning model in which students have the opportunity to receive individualized instruction in small groups of no more than eight scholars. We leverage support staff to lead small-group time in the classroom on a regular basis during core reading and math instruction for students who need extra intervention. PLA's instructional coaches provide daily support to teachers and TAs in collecting, understanding, and utilizing data in differentiated instruction, improving teachers' ability to create personalized learning experiences for each child. Additionally, we utilize adaptive programs to help educators maximize instructional time. Edgenuity provides PLA teachers with rich controls for sequencing and programming the Individualized Learning Plan assignments. For example, teachers might assign the three modules as a "lesson," including the explanation, guided practice, and quiz modules. If scholars do not reach target proficiency scores for the guided practice, teachers can set up controls that compel the scholar to redo the explanation & guided practice modules once or as many times necessary before moving on to the quiz module. Once desired mastery is achieved, the next skill in the outlined progression will launch, and the cycle continues. From this, scholars learn the value of effort, hard work, and persistence in working toward goals, while at the same time learning the academic skill.

Rigorous, frequent, and standards-aligned assessments: Based on our scope and sequence documents, teachers will implement weekly benchmark assessments to align with curriculum to support retention, stamina, and rigor in student mastery of content in reading, writing and math. Assessments will be cumulative and aligned in substance and grading scheme with ILEARN to familiarize students with the format of this standardized state assessment. Assessment scores will be posted school-wide the following day, providing scholars and teachers with an instant look at children's proficiency, and classrooms will compete to earn the highest scores each week, consistent with our focus on creating a high-performing school culture. PLA schools also administer interim/benchmark assessments and standardized-state assessments. PLA utilizes Edulastic to provide these assessments. Edulastic is a digital tool that gives PLA teachers rich assessment design capabilities to create practice tests in the same format as state accountability exams. Formative assessments aligned to state standards typically integrate knowledge and skill for a specific desired application. Thus, scholar performance on a formative might be related to gaps in knowledge, skill, or even test-taking ability. Delivering formative assessments through Edulastic gives our teachers the ability to comprehensively and collaboratively monitor progress in one streamlined location throughout the school year. PLA teachers use Edulastic formative assessment data to group students for small-group instruction, maximizing instructional time to best meet scholars' intervention needs. With formatives delivered weekly, teachers have the opportunity to quickly see the impact of interventions and modify courses when necessary.

Extensive differentiated, small-group, and standards-aligned instruction: A unique core component of our model is that our small-group instruction will be differentiated based on weekly test results. Data points from curriculum-based quizzes, adaptive learning programs, weekly assessments, formal interim assessments (such as NWEA) and standardized state tests provide opportunities for teachers to track scholars' progress and rapidly adjust instruction to meet the needs of each scholar. Based on this data analysis, teachers will develop lessons that truly meet children where they are and support them to achieve at their highest capacity.

Multimedia, adaptive learning: Differentiation increases opportunities for scholars with diverse learning needs to access quality instruction. Adaptive learning software facilitates data-driven learning by providing customizations for easy differentiation as well as collecting ongoing scholar performance data. Multimedia learning modules present content through audio-visual representations.

This strengthens comprehensible input for EL students, students with disabilities, and struggling readers: scholars can see images, words or actions, then connect what they see to the audio track to reinforce comprehension, acquisition and fluency. Visual instruction, on the other hand, provides stimulation to engage students with autism or ADHD. Edgenuity, as another example, will allow PLA instructors to truly meet each scholar where they are based on their data. For one scholar, a 45-minute class period might be enough time to cycle through 3 skill modules and extend beyond grade-level expectations; while for a scholar who qualifies for additional services, the same class period might be taken up by one skill cycle. Both scholars are completing rigorous work, and both are making growth gains. Such individualized experiences could not take place in an exclusively whole-group setting, where one scholar might feel overwhelmed and give up, while the other might disengage from lack of challenge.

Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) framework: To ensure that every scholar receives interventions and support that empower them to be successful in the classroom and beyond, PLA will implement a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) framework. The MTSS framework is used to integrate instruction, evidence-based interventions, and assessments to meet the individualized academic and behavioral needs of all students. Student progress will be continuously monitored to allow for changes in instruction, goals, or implementation of services. The MTSS process begins with high-quality instruction and universal screening of all scholars in the classroom. Struggling learners will be provided with interventions at increasing levels of intensity to accelerate their rate of learning. These services may be provided by a variety of personnel, including general education teachers, special education teachers, behavioral specialists, counselors, or other key staff roles. Progress will be closely monitored to assess both the learning rate and level of performance of individual scholars. Educational decisions about the intensity and duration of interventions are based on individual scholar progress data. Progress will be closely monitored to assess both the learning rate and level of performance of individual scholars. MTSS is designed for use when making decisions in both general education and special education, creating a well-integrated system of instruction and intervention guided by scholar outcome data. Components of our MTSS Process include:

- **Tier 1—High-Quality Classroom Instruction, Screening, and Group Interventions:** All scholars receive high quality, evidence-based instruction provided by qualified personnel to ensure that their difficulties are not due to inadequate instruction. Scholars are screened on a periodic basis to establish an academic and behavioral baseline and to identify struggling learners who need additional support. Scholars identified as being at-risk through universal screenings and/or results on state- or district-wide tests receive supplemental instruction during the school day in the regular classroom.
- **Tier 2—Targeted Interventions:** Scholars not making adequate progress in the regular classroom are provided with increasingly intensive instruction matched to their needs on the basis of performance levels and rates of progress. Such scholars receive targeted, small-group intervention based on their scores on benchmark or formative assessments. This instruction and intervention is provided in small-group settings as supplementary to instruction following the general curriculum.
- **Tier 3—Intensive Interventions and Comprehensive Evaluation:** At this level, scholars receive individualized, intensive interventions that target each scholar's skill deficits. This one-on-one tutoring can happen within the core instructional block, but more frequently it takes place in the afternoon, where scholars work with teachers to catch up on key skills.

Evidence-based instructional strategies form the core of the PLA educational model, which was designed to support academic achievement and overall wellbeing for scholars living in traditionally underserved communities. The PLA model builds on best practices in personalized learning, effective teaching, and social-emotional development to create an individualized, rigorous, and well-rounded learning experience for every child. Their approach makes continuous use of data to select targeted, evidence-based intervention strategies to foster the growth of our scholars. PLA also offers varied, frequent opportunities for professional development to educators and school leaders throughout the school year.

7. **Replication Schools:** Explain the organization's approach to replicating and implementing the school model, including program and instructional design among multiple schools.

PLA has a proven track record of replicating and implementing our evidence-based model across multiple schools. Since PLA was founded in 2013, we are proud to have expanded our impact in the state to 12 schools serving 4,670 scholars. Quality is the key

driver of our approach to replication. The success of PLA scholars and partner schools can be attributed to the comprehensive, high quality services that PLA provides. We support our schools with:

- Collaborative, on-site support to improve instructional quality.
- Data-driven professional development during the school year.
- Dedicated support for teacher and school leader retention and development.
- PLA Coaching Cycle for educators and school leaders.
- Positive behavior management systems for improved school culture.
- Supplemental educational resources aligned with curriculum map.
- Parental engagement framework and strategic support.

Over the years, we have developed a comprehensive set of quality assurance mechanisms that help to ensure that all PLA schools deliver educational excellence to the scholars we serve. Below please find some of the key systems and processes essential to the replication of successful student outcomes:

Continuous, Data-Driven Professional Development: The PLA Coaching Cycle, our proprietary professional development program, implements weekly instructional observations to measure educators' ability to address the academic needs of scholars. On a regular basis, PLA's Academic Team works with instructional coaches and school principals to improve their ability to evaluate instruction and provide support aligned to the Coaching Cycle instructional domains. At regular opportunities, for example during the Leadership Institute or as part of weekly PLCs, the Academic team holds calibration workshops to build a common understanding among PLA instructional leaders of how to use the Coaching Cycle Evaluation Rubric. These calibration workshops help ensure that instructional leaders throughout the PLA network are supporting educators to work toward a common vision of instructional excellence and leveraging evidence-based interventions. The evaluation systems within the Coaching Cycle are re-calibrated in order to improve the quality of data made available to school and network leaders, therefore improving their ability to make decisions about the educational services provided to our scholars. Instructional experts hold collaborative observations, where participants discuss types of evidence they look for or the score range they give for that evidence. These learning opportunities support PLA's school leaders to efficiently and effectively support the instructional development of their educators, and therefore, the academic success of their scholars. Implementing these professional development methods across all PLA network schools allows for streamlined replication, ensuring that all teachers and leaders have the same training and are guided by the same processes. Please refer to the Professional Development section to learn more about these systems.

Talent Selection and Development: Our well-developed recruitment process also ensures smooth replication, as we are able to build a pipeline of exceptional teachers. Our recruitment process is codified in the PLA Recruitment Playbook which clearly organizes the timeline and processes to attract and hire the talent who will best serve our scholars. Through our staff referral program, we have built a robust pipeline of high quality educators who have proven themselves successful working with the PLA model and creating successful student outcomes. Our Talent Recruitment Team also works closely with our Human Assets Team to holistically manage the entire lifecycle of staff development, including sourcing, screening, coaching, and retention. Given the crucial importance of school leadership to the success of a school, PLA has developed a Principal in Residence (PiR) program, a 6-18 month paid professional development opportunity that cultivates leaders who can effectively execute our evidence-based model. The PiR program fuels PLA's commitment to building talent from within by facilitating the career advancement of our most devoted educators. It represents one of the key innovative systems we have in place to attract excellent educators to our network schools and to further develop them into the world-class leaders our scholars deserve. Please find additional information about what PiR has to offer in the Staffing section of the application.

Performance Management: The proposed schools will receive support from the PLA network office to ensure operational excellence, so that our school leaders and educators can focus on robustly supporting scholars and families. Support services include professional development, payroll, policy development, legal counsel, and grants management. PLA's functional teams— Academics, Recruitment, Human Assets, Operations, Finance, and more—will coordinate to support our school personnel in

ensuring strong educational and operational performance Please see below for a summary of our key performance management mechanisms:

Domain	Systems	Processes
Instructional Excellence	This includes PLA Data Dashboards, Custom-Built Assessments, Initial School Rubric, Onsite Comprehensive Analysis, Interview Rubric, Classroom Observation Feedback Framework, Comparative Analysis Matrix, and 30- 60- 90-Day Action Plans.	Goal-setting sessions, weekly meetings, quarterly stepbacks and annual planning sessions help the school internalize and implement a comprehensive strategy for achievement, including Small-Group Instruction and the PLA MTSS process.
Professional Development	This includes the PLA Coaching Cycle, PLA Teacher and Leadership Institutes, New Teacher Institute, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), Coaching Cycle for Leaders, Principal-in-Residence Program and PLA Learning Institute.	Bi-weekly observational walkthroughs are conducted, with observations and best practices captured in the PLA Coaching Cycle platform. Weekly Professional Learning Communities provide opportunities for peer support. BOY, MOY and EOY Reviews support progress monitoring.
Climate & Culture	This includes the PLA Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework, data-driven behavior management system; Climate and Culture-focused domains of our Training Institutes; enrichment experiences and scholar recognition program.	Daily enrichment courses in art, science, entrepreneurship, Black History, and more immerse scholars in dynamic interest-based learning. Black and Brown Speaker Series connect scholars to role models. Progress reflection cycles and scholar incentives reinforce positive choices. PLA Climate and Culture Staff Surveys and scientifically validated Parent Engagement process provide holistic support for scholars and families.

With these robust systems and processes in place, PLA is well-positioned to ensure that our evidence-based educational model is replicated with fidelity so that our scholars can continue to experience educational success.

Pupil Performance Standards

> **Meets Standard Expectation**
> - Clear, rigorous learning standards (provided for one grade for each division the school would serve) and exit standards aligned with the Indiana Academic Standards (IAS).
> - Thoughtful identification of and plan for development and adoption of any additional academic standards beyond state and authorizer that the school would adopt or develop, including explanation and evidence of how those standards would exceed the state standards.
> - Clear, rigorous promotion and exit policies and standards.

Responses to the following items regarding the proposed school's pupil performance standards must be consistent with state and authorizer standards.

1. Address the priority standards, skills, and/or knowledge each student will be expected to attain by the end of one grade for each division served (elementary, middle, high school).

Since not all content in any given grade (or subject) is emphasized equally in the standards, the standards that require more time to master; require a "significant depth of ideas", and the importance of supporting mastery of future standards are prioritized.

- **For ILEARN tested grade levels**, PLA uses the guidance provided by Indiana Department of Education BluePrint to support identifying high-priority standards for each grade level.
- **For non-tested areas/grade levels**, Indiana grade-level standards are used in collaboration with vertically aligned standards, to identify high priority standards that support future learning and mastery. This is ensured through IDOE professional development and PLA professional learning communities.

2. If you plan to adopt or develop additional academic standards beyond the state and/or authorizer standards, explain these additional standards, including the content areas and grade levels in which they will be implemented. Describe the adoption or development process that has taken place or will take place. Select one grade level and subject area as an example, and explain how these additional standards exceed the state and authorizer standards.

No adoption or development of additional academic standards beyond state standards is being planned.

3. Explain the policies and standards for promoting students from one grade to the next. Discuss how and when promotion and graduation criteria will be communicated to parents and students. Not applicable for those schools serving only 9th-12th grade.

Grade level promotion requirements for scholars in Grades K-2

Students in grades K, 1, and 2 must make satisfactory Indiana Standards benchmark progress in English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies with an emphasis on reading to be promoted. Scholars' reading progress toward grade-level reading achievement is determined by standards-aligned curriculum assessment, progress monitoring assessments, and teacher judgment. NWEA is administered three times a year to all kindergarten through second-grade scholars to monitor their progress. This assessment will determine which scholars are in immediate need of additional instruction in reading. Each such scholar is referred to the school's Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Team for review of the scholar's progress monthly. At the end of the year, the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Team reviews the scholar's records and determines whether the evidence indicates that the scholar is making progress towards mastery of standards and should be promoted.

Grade level promotion and elementary school exit requirements for scholars 3-8

Students in third through eighth grade must make satisfactory progress on Indiana Standards in English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies with an emphasis on reading and mathematics to be promoted. In addition, a scholar who scores below proficiency for reading on IREAD and/or below proficient on the ILEARN in math is considered to be below grade level. Each scholar who performs below proficiency shall be referred to the school's Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Team for a comprehensive review of the scholar's academic achievement. Supplement to state test scores; scholars' reading, writing and mathematics progress toward standard's mastery is determined in collaboration with standards-aligned curriculum assessments, progress monitoring assessments, and teacher judgment. NWEA is administered three times a year to all third to fifth grade scholars to help to monitor their progress. This assessment helps determine which scholars are in need of additional instruction in reading. At the end of the year, the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Team reviews the scholar's records and determines whether the majority of evidence supports that the scholar should be promoted. To be promoted from grade to grade, a scholar must demonstrate mastery of grade-level standards in at least language arts and mathematics. Scholars in grade three must meet the Indiana 3rd grade reading requirement to be promoted.

Each year, schools provide the parent/legal guardian(s) with a report of the progress of the student toward achieving state expectations for proficiency in reading, writing, mathematics, and where applicable, science. Reports of progress include the students' results on statewide assessments. This report accompanies the last report card of each year with notification of promotion.

4. Provide, in **Attachment 3**, the school's exit standards for graduating students. These should clearly set forth what students in

the last grade served will know and be able to do. Not applicable for those schools serving only 9th-12th grade.

High School Graduation Requirements (High Schools Only)

Meets Standard Expectation
● Sound plan for meeting state and authorizer graduation requirements (including credits, GPA calculation, transcripts, electives) and compelling explanation of any additional requirements beyond the state's and authorizer's requirements. ● Clear, persuasive explanation of how the school's graduation requirements will ensure student readiness for college and other post-secondary opportunities (trade school, military service, or entering the workforce). ● Effective systems and structures for students at risk of dropping out or not meeting graduation requirements.

High schools will be expected to meet the state and authorizer graduation standards.
1. Describe how the school will meet state and/or authorizer requirements. Explain how students will earn credit hours, how grade-point averages will be calculated, what information will be on transcripts, and what elective courses will be offered. If graduation requirements for the school will exceed state and authorizer standards, explain the additional requirements.

Earned Credit Hours

PLA maintains a one-half (.5) credit earned system; full courses reflect two .5 credit awards. A scholar enrolled in a full-year course will receive one-half (.5) credit if the scholar successfully completes either the first or second half of the course, but fails the other half and the averaging of the grades obtained in each half would not result in a passing grade. A student enrolled in a full-year course receives a full credit if the student successfully completes either the first or the second half of a full-year course, but fails to successfully complete the other half but the averaging of the numerical grades in each half results in a passing grade.

Grade Point Average Calculations

The established grading criteria for unweighted, regular, credit earning courses with corresponding grades indicator are as follow:

A = 90-100	Outstanding progress in exceeding learning outcomes and/or standards
B = 80-89	Above average progress in meeting/exceeding learning outcomes and/or academic standards
C = 70-79	Average progress in meeting learning outcomes and/or academic standards
D = 60-69	Lowest acceptable progress in meeting learning outcomes and/or academic standards
F= <59	Failure to meet learning outcomes and/or academic standards

Elective Courses

Our high schools offer a variety of elective courses including fine arts, world language, AP courses, and CTE Pathways programs. A majority of electives listed are leveled from freshman to senior year, for example beginning, intermediate, and advanced courses exist for all fine arts electives. The CTE Pathways program specifically is progressive; example coursework for that pathway is Principles of Business, Small Business Operation, Venture Development, and Business Management Capstone. Below please find an example of the current set of electives offered at a high school in the PLA network.

Fine Arts	World Languages	CTE Pathways	Other
2D Art	Spanish 1	Entrepreneurship	Student Media
Theater Arts	Spanish 2	Computer Science	Ethnic Studies

Chorus	Spanish 3	Construction	Creative Writing
Concert Band	Language for Heritage Speakers	Early Childhood Development	Entomology
3D Art	—	Health Science	AP History
Painting and Drawing	—	Computer Science	AP Biology

All high school electives will vary depending on which Pathways are developed at each school. However, all electives, AP, and Pathways options are aligned to state guidelines.

2. Explain how the graduation requirements will ensure student readiness for college and/or careers.

PLA follows the graduation requirements as outlined by the Indiana Department of Education for each year's graduating cohort. To ensure student readiness for college and career readiness requirements are met - credited, subject-area courses, that depend on chronological information or spirally academic standards, are taken in sequential order. A scholar who fails to pass, may not be allowed to select and participate in the next higher course level until the failed course has been remediated in an PLA approved program successfully.

At each of our high schools, we currently offer AP English Language and Composition and AP Literature and Composition. We are seeking to offer AP US Government and US History beginning in the 23-24 school year following teacher certification. AP courses allow scholars to earn college credits and reduce the number of credits needed for a degree upon entering their Freshman year. PLA also offers a variety of CTE Pathways, as described above, that provide dual credit opportunities for our high school scholars. Below is specific information about the ways these pathways can prepare scholars for post-secondary opportunities.

Cluster	Career Pathway	Dual Credit	Post Secondary Opportunities
Education and Training	Education Careers School Staff	Up to 9 college credits	Scholars have the option to transfer credits and enroll in an Elementary Education Teaching Program with a 4-year University
Health Sciences	Pre-Nursing Partnership	Up to 9 college credits	Scholars have the option to transfer credits and enroll in a Nursing Program with a 4-year University. **Certifications:** Medical Billing/Coding, Dementia Care, Certified Nursing Assistant, Certified Medical Assistant
Health Sciences	Exercise Science School Staff	Up to 6 college credits	Scholars have the option to transfer credits and enroll in a Health Science Program with a 4-year University to pursue a

			career in sports medicine
Human Services	Barbering Partnership	Up to 6 college credits	**Credentials:** Scholars finish the program as a State Board Certified Cosmetologist/Barber. Scholars are able to apply as a stylist in any salon with their certification. **Additional Opportunities:** Transferring credits to a two-year institution to become a certified Beauty and Culture Instructor.
Human Services	Cosmetology		
Architecture and Construction	Construction Trades - Carpentry Partnership	Dual Credit planned for the 2023-2024 school year	**Certifications:** NCCER Certifications ● NCCER Carpentry Level I ● NCCER Core Craftsman
STEM	Computer Science School Staff	Dual Credit planned for the 2023-2024 school year	Scholars have the option to transfer credits and enroll in a Computer Science Program with a 2 or 4-year University **Certifications:** CIW-Information and Web Technology **Planned 2022-2023:** Adobe Certified Associate Staff Members-Certified as Apple Educators
Marketing and Sales Entrepreneurship	Entrepreneurship and Business Education School Staff	Up to 9 college credits	Scholars have the option to transfer credits and enroll in a Business Management Program with a 4-year University

PLA understands the value of college and career readiness. It is essential that our children view education as a pathway to a better future, and that our community is able to provide our children not only with the high-quality K-12 education they deserve, but also with the motivation and skills necessary to succeed in college or begin a career directly after high school. Simply, to change the future for our children, we have to help students continue their education past high school and give them the tools to succeed in college and the workplace.

3. Explain what systems and structures the school will implement for students at risk of dropping out and/or not meeting the proposed graduation requirements.

A review of scholar academic and attendance records are conducted prior to the start of school and at the end of each semester by one of our certified guidance counselor(s) in collaboration with the administrative team.

PLA understands that scholars underperforming in high school are at risk of dropping out altogether because of the high number of credits they need to recover. The credit recovery program offers more opportunities for scholars to recover the credits they need to graduate on time and learn the skills and concepts they need to be successful. Scholars meeting the criteria listed below shall be considered for an opportunity to participate in a Credit Recovery program. Credit recovery is a requirement for scholars:

- who are not on schedule to graduate with their cohort – short in credits,
- with a GPA below a 2.0 – in danger of not graduating, or
- who meet the grade forgiveness criteria

Credit recovery programs allow the scholar to retake a course that they previously failed. These programs decrease the dropout rate and improve scholars' chances of being productive post-secondary. Credit recovery classes are offered in a variety of modes, timeframes, and duration. For example, virtual, evening, and summer credit recovery courses are offered to give students missing multiple credits flexibility in attendance. In the summer, multi-block schedules are used. The program ensures high school scholars stay on track to receive their Indiana Core 40 diploma designation. It is important to note that scholars get original credit for courses they need to meet graduation requirements, even if they engage in credit recovery.

School Calendar and Schedule

Meets Standard Expectation
- School calendar and sample daily and weekly schedules that meet minimum Indiana requirements, align with the educational program, and are conducive to significantly improving student learning.

1. Discuss the annual academic schedule for the school. Explain how the calendar reflects the needs of the educational program and/or anticipated student population. In **Attachment 4**, provide the school's proposed calendar for the first year of operation, including total number of days/hours of instruction. Instructional calendar guidance from the Indiana Department of Education can be found here.

Our academic year calendar reflects our desire to ensure that students and staff are performing at the highest levels by prioritizing both instructional time, enrichment experiences, and opportunities for professional development.

The vast majority of time is devoted to academic instruction. Below are the instructional hours that each student will receive and the total number of instructional hours by grade cohort:

Grade Levels	Instructional Days	Instructional Hours
K-6	180	1,035
7-8	180	1,095
9-12	180	1,095

The calendar also reflects the importance of and our commitment to develop staff. Below is a sample school calendar for Academic Year 2021-2022, including professional development days for teachers and testing days for scholars. We will update the calendar to reflect pertinent dates and events before school launch.

First Semester-87 days

Teacher Work Days/PD
Mon., Aug. 16, Tues., Aug. 17, Wed. Aug. 18
Wed., Sept. 1 (e-learning)
Wed., Sept. 29 (e-learning)
Wed, Nov 10 &Tues, Nov 23 (e-learning)
Wed, Dec. 1 & Fri, Dec. 17 (e-learning)

Parents in Touch
Wed., October 13 (e-learning)

Fall Break
Mon. October 18- Fri. October 22

Election Day
Tuesday, Nov. 2 (possible e-learning)

Thanksgiving Break
Wed., Nov. 24-Fri., Nov. 26

Winter Break
Mon., December 20 -Fri., December 31

Second Semester-93 days

Teacher Work Days/PD
Monday, January 3 (No Students)
Wednesday, January 12 (e-learning)
Wednesday, February 2 (e-learning)
Wed. March 2, Fri. March 25 (e-learning)
Wednesday, April 6 (e-learning))
Wednesday, May 25 (e-learning)

Parents in Touch (at-risk)
Wednesday, March 9 (e-learning)

IREAD Window
Monday, March 7 – Friday, March 18

Spring Break
Monday, March 28-Friday, April 1

ILEARN Window
Monday, April 18 – Friday May 13
ALL SNOW DAYS WILL BE REPACED WITH E-LEARNING

Legend:
- Teacher Work Days/ Professional Development (Full Day)
- P.I.T (e-learning/No Students)
- Teacher Work Days/Professional Development (e-learning/No Students)
- Holiday/Break
- Testing Windows (School in session)
- End of Grading Period
- New Teacher Institute

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2. Describe the structure of the school day and week. Explain why the school's daily and weekly schedule will be optimal for student learning. Provide the minimum number of hours/minutes per day and week that the school will devote to academic instruction in each grade.

The schedules at the proposed PLA schools are designed to maximize individualized learning and facilitate the instructional model described in the Curriculum and Instructional Design section of this application. Below are the detailed descriptions of the structures at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

Elementary School:

There are two options for elementary school daily structures dedicated to ELA, one which has a minimum of a 90 minute uninterrupted reading block, and the other with a minimum 120 minute uninterrupted English Language Arts and Reading (ELAR) block. The key difference is that the 120 minute block has a writing/grammar block built into it, and the 90 minute block has a writing/grammar block at a different time during the day. Generally, these blocks will be broken up using the following structure: The first 30 minutes of the literature block will be used for Tier 1 instruction. During this time, the classroom teacher will lead the class through the Tier 1 curriculum – Into Literature. Every scholar will participate in this session on a daily basis and no pull-outs will happen during this time. The remaining 60 minutes will be used for Tier 2 instruction using the Tier 2 curriculum - Into Reading, and Orton Gillingham (K-2), whereby scholars will participate in 20 minute, small group rotations of no more than 6 scholars designed to "coach up, keep up, or move up" based on each scholar's individual needs. During this time, support staff such as Instructional Assistants, SPED teachers, and ELL teachers may conduct push-in/pull-out instruction, as needed. Every scholar participates in this once a week, and tier 2 and tier 3 scholars participate 3-5 times weekly. Tier 3 reading instruction occurs in a separate block of time,

for scholars who are two years or more behind in reading, and that is for 30 minutes a day, using Fountas and Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention.

The math block follows a similar structure, with Tier 1 meeting for 30 minutes with the whole group on grade level standards and skills. Every scholar participates in this 30 minute block every day with no pull out during this time. Tier 2 scholars then break away for 60 minutes of small group instruction with 20 minute small group rotation built in. Tier 3 math instruction is a separate 30 minute daily block of time for scholars who are 2 years or more behind in math.

There are four options for how science and social studies can be structured in the schedule. Regardless of which option PLA schools select, the science and social studies block is required to be 30 minutes minimum every day. The options are as follow:
- Science every day, Social Studies every day
- Science and Social Studies on alternating days
- Science one week, Social Studies the next week; alternating weeks
- Science Q1 and Social Studies Q2; alternating quarters

Each day also has a 50 minute maximum for specials, where one special is selected per day and can include Music, PE, Art, Technology, or Media. Scholars also get 25 minutes for recess each day.

Middle School:

Each day has two 50-minute blocks dedicated to ELA instruction. Generally, these blocks will be broken up using the following structure: The first 30 minutes of the literature block will be used for Tier 1 instruction. During this time, the classroom teacher will lead the class through the Tier 1 curriculum – Into Literature. Every scholar will participate in this session on a daily basis and no pull-outs will happen during this time. The remaining 20 minutes will be used for Tier 2 instruction, whereby scholars will participate in small group rotations of no more than 6 scholars designed to "coach up, keep up, or move up" based on each scholar's individual needs. During this time, support staff such as Instructional Assistants, SPED teachers, and ELL teachers may conduct push-in/pull-out instruction, as needed. The second ELA block – the language/writing lock – will follow the same structure of 30 minutes of Tier 1 instruction followed by 20 minutes of Tier 2 small-group rotations. Additionally, at the discretion of the school leader and teachers, the two ELA blocks may occasionally be combined into one 110 minute block, whereby the first 50 minutes will be used for Tier 1 instruction and the following 50 minutes will be used for Tier 2 instruction. School staff will strategically utilize this combined option when longer, uninterrupted rotations are deemed appropriate for the day's lesson.

The Math, Science, and Social Studies blocks will follow the same structure as described above, whereby the first 30 minutes of each block will be used for Tier 1 instruction and the following 20 minutes will be used for small-group Tier 2 instruction. Finally, during the Tier 3 Intervention Block each day, scholars will receive individualized, targeted support based upon their unique needs. This structure will allow PLA Elkhart to ensure that every scholar is receiving grade-level appropriate instruction each day, while also allowing for differentiation in instruction based on current skill levels. PLA has had great success utilizing this daily structure at its schools and PLA Elkhart looks forward to building upon this success by implementing this equity-focused model.

There is also a 45 minute Tier 3 intervention block daily, that is a minimum of 4 days a week. This is structured as flex grouping so that scholars can receive support in different targeted areas, with scholars rotating to intervention rooms based on their needs.. The focus can rotate either by day or by week and include intervention in ELA, math, science, or social studies. Scholars also have 45 minutes a day to participate in electives such as music, fine arts, or PE and are encouraged to participate in exploratory rotations.

High School:

For students, grades 9-12, the structure is based around an 8-period day. This is broken down into seven academic periods which include; Core Content, Directed Elective, Choice Elective, as well as one lunch period. Each period is generally 50-55 minutes long. Teachers, grades 9-12, teach six blocks per day, have one planning period, and one lunch period. In high school, scholars are required to take electives, which are flexible courses, similar to elementary and middle school. These can be gained through a variety of options, but examples include Art, Creative Writing, Debate, Band, etc. Scholars are also required to take direct electives which are mandatory electives per graduation requirements. Direct Electives include Physical Education, Foreign Language, Health

and Wellness, and CTE courses attached to Concentrator Status. As outlined in Indiana Code §§ 20-30-2 and 20-33-2. every school should provide at least six hours of instructional time for students in grades seven through twelve per day. This amounts to 30 hours per week.

These structures allow for scholars to engage in extensive small-group instruction, which provides a valuable opportunity to create uniquely rigorous and personalized learning experiences that empower growth for every scholar.

3. As **Attachment 5**, include a sample daily and weekly schedule for each division (elementary, middle, high school) of the school that identifies the number of instructional hours/minutes in a day in core subjects such as language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Note the length of the school day, including start and dismissal times.

School Culture

> **Meets Standard Expectation**
> - Vision for school culture or ethos that will promote high expectations, a positive academic environment and intellectual and social development for all students, including those with special needs, English Learners, and students at risk of academic failure.
> - Coherent plan for establishing and maintaining the intended culture for students, teachers, administrators, and parents from the first day of school, and for enculturating students who enter the school mid-year.

1. Describe the culture or ethos of the proposed school. Explain how it will promote a positive academic environment and reinforce student intellectual and social development.

Our schools will serve all students by creating a school culture that gives scholars a sense of belonging and emphasizes academic rigor and comprehensive social-emotional development. As mentioned previously, one of the ways that PLA schools will support the intellectual and social emotional development of scholars is by cultivating a growth mindset through intentional strategies like Progress Feedback Cycles, Progress-Based Internal Incentives, and Explicit Reflection. These strategies are embedded into PLA's framework for climate and culture management, which is structured around the following four pillars:

Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS): PLA adopts the Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) model to shape its school culture and discipline practices, promoting positive behaviors. When implementing PBIS, teachers and other school staff consistently model, practice, and encourage positive behaviors and social skills. Children must learn social skills, just as they must learn academic skills; when these skills are taught effectively, the results include a positive culture, safe learning environments, and strong relationships between school staff and students. The use of PBIS reduces disciplinary incidents, including aggressive/antisocial behavior, substance use, and bullying behavior. PBIS also fosters in students improved ability to regulate emotions, academic engagement and achievement, and school climate (including higher rates of teacher retention). Finally, PLA offers structured recognition of student progress as an integral part of this approach, regular recognition addresses behavior and discipline from a positive, rather than punitive, angle.

Communication/family engagement: We view families as key partners in their child's success, and families play an integral role in facilitating our school culture. We will regularly communicate with families regarding their child's academic progress, behavioral needs, and successes at Parents-In-Touch days and throughout the year. Teachers will send home biweekly report cards that include test scores, teacher comments, and a rating of a child's effort and behavior each day during the previous week. Keeping families informed of their child's successes and challenges through this constant flow of information is key, and we ensure that families receive and discuss their child's progress by requiring parents to sign and return report cards each week. We will also distribute to families a regularly published newsletter containing important school updates, upcoming events, reminders, and links to resources in the community. Every other week, we will make encouraging and informative phone calls home to every parent to ensure that our communications are personal, friendly, and create a very welcoming culture.

Real-time behavioral management system: PLA's use of data for continuous improvement extends to school culture, as well. When we track behavioral data, we can ensure that we are praising children for improvement and adjusting interventions when necessary. One effective system that PLA schools have used is the online Kickboard behavior management system. Kickboard tracks student behavior, discipline incidents, referrals, and interventions. The system is aligned with leading behavior interventions such as PBIS and MTSS. The system offers an app for teachers to award points and make notes in real time. Students and parents can see this feedback immediately. Kickboard also offers a database system for school- and district level data; school staff can pull reports, track school culture trends, and use data to adapt practices to achieve desired behavioral outcomes. Kickboard's points system can easily be integrated with existing incentive programs. The online system also provides support and resources for teachers and other school staff, including live support, video libraries, and best practices resources. This tool helps schools to decrease the number of discipline incidents, promote better communication with families, and create student success. At the proposed schools, a behavior management system like Kickboard will be a primary mechanism for monitoring school climate.

Structured recognition of student progress: In PLA's current schools, the structured student recognition program has cemented a culture focused on progress, support, and teamwork. In biweekly check-in sessions, teachers will review with students their progress on weekly assessments, identify standards for further learning, and set a quantifiable goal for the next check-in. During these sessions, PLA teachers guide students in recognizing their own improvement and reflecting on the effort and hard work that created improvement. This is further facilitated by only praising growth during check-in sessions, not letter grades. PLA also explicitly and regularly rewards students for progress toward shared goals. PLA's structured recognition of student progress formalizes positive observations from monitoring sessions in order to improve student outcomes. PLA schools celebrate student achievement by displaying student work and teacher kudos in both hallways and classrooms; communicating regularly with parents about kids' successes; and honoring kids who do things for others. School incentive structures are most impactful when linked to student effort. Additionally, growth is best encouraged when students can select their own schoolwork; PLA consistently rewards students by encouraging them to improve on a favorite assignment. PLA's "caught-being-kind" strategy rewards students with a golden ticket to a tangible reward (for example, a fun, educational field trip); recognition serves as pro-social discipline, since students do not have to act out to get attention. Such approaches have been shown to increase regular school attendance and decrease suspension rates.

The PLA instructional model seeks to holistically address deficits in social-emotional learning by targeting the following three core competencies:

> 1) Scholars are creative, critical thinkers and have strong character as demonstrated by improvement in the areas of responsibility, teamwork, problem solving and managing conflict;
>
> 2) Scholars demonstrate strong understanding of social justice, foreign languages/cultures, and racial identity/heritage; and
>
> 3) Scholars demonstrate improved knowledge and familiarity with postsecondary education options and career paths. These competencies prove crucial as they prepare to transition to secondary education and then college and/or career and they encapsulate our holistic approach to learning and teaching, which seeks to educate and support our scholars on a spectrum of skills and competencies.

In addition, diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) is core to the climate and culture at all PLA schools. According to the latest available data, 60% of students in Elkhart Community School district are students of color and over half are from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. To that end, we will select culturally appropriate curricula that reflect themes and topics that are relevant to students of color, and we will acknowledge the life challenges faced by students living in poverty. We will connect scholars to positive adult Black and Latino role models; take them on field trips to culturally significant institutions; integrate Black and Latino literature into our academic curriculum; decorate our classrooms and hallways with pictures of minority leaders, inventors, and artists. For our children to feel they have the power and agency to transform their lives, they need access to experiences that build trust, self-esteem, and social capital. PLA has created an enrichment curriculum that fosters integrity-based leadership through nurturing pride in children's identities. Modules highlight Black and Latino role models, along with stories about how these individuals realized their dreams. This program allows scholars to envision themselves in a variety of career settings and connects them with mentors who reflect their heritage and ultimately help them achieve their potential. Research demonstrates the importance of role models for children of color. Researcher Sabrina Zirkel surveyed a group of middle school students over a period of two years. Her findings showed that, in comparison to students without role models of the same gender and race, students who did have matched role models earned

higher grades, spent more time planning their futures, and could articulate a higher number of life goals, particularly those focused on education and careers. As an organization, the proposed PLA schools will intentionally recruit a culturally and experientially diverse staff with multiple talents and interests. Underscoring PLA's organizational commitment to seeking staff who are culturally aligned to our students is the fact that a majority of PLA leaders are people of color, including the Founder & CEO and most members of the senior leadership team. To highlight the importance of the learning environment as it relates to school culture, PLA intentionally creates physical spaces that cultivate cultural awareness and encourage students to feel safe and at ease. At the crucial life stage our scholars are in, it is important that they know the life-changing potential of receiving a quality education and transition from their middle school educational experience to secondary and post-secondary options that will ultimately lead to successful adulthood. The intentional strategies that PLA schools implement to create a positive school culture, coupled with our overall approach to instruction, work together to create a positive school environment that is focused on student-outcomes and celebrates student achievement.

2. Explain how you will create and implement this culture for students, staff, and parents starting from the first day of school. Describe the plan for enculturating students who enter the school mid-year.

PLA believes that a strong school culture is paramount to creating an environment where all scholars succeed and feel welcomed. To this end, the PLA Academics team conducts a Comprehensive Analysis which includes specific measures for reviewing and building school climate and culture. First, they conduct classroom observations using the PLA Coaching Cycle scoring rubric to measure classroom culture, behavior management, and positive behavioral interventions and supports implemented by teachers schoolwide. Next, the Academics team will carry out scholar, teacher and school leader surveys and interviews to understand their needs. Finally, we analyze these results against the PLA Academic Priorities of Success, which prioritizes Climate & Culture as one of the six key domains. Together, these elements will enable us to establish a baseline understanding of where the school's climate and culture currently stands and identify specific improvements that are still needed. Using data-driven insights informed by this initial review process, the PLA Academics team works with the board, school leaders and educators to collaboratively set climate- and culture-focused goals.

In addition to the Comprehensive Analysis, which will help inform the goals for the upcoming school year, teachers will also have the opportunity to acclimate themselves to the core elements of PLA's Climate & Culture management framework prior to the start of the school year at PLA's Teacher Institute. Over the course of this three-day long institute in the summer before the school year, PLA teachers and leaders receive extensive training on how to create an inclusive and positive culture for the students, staff, and families. The support that school staff receives prior the school year starting is complemented by continuous support throughout the year. The personalized, ongoing professional development delivered through the PLA Coaching Cycle ensures that teachers at our schools are able to effectively implement evidence-based methods and best practices that reinforce a positive school climate. PLA's job-embedded coaching and professional supports that help our educators establish and reinforce a positive learning environment include the PLA Coaching Cycle, PLA Learning Institute, PLA Leadership Coaching Reviews, PLA Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), and PLA Teacher Institute. Please refer to the Profession Development section of this application for a comprehensive discussion of these proprietary professional development systems.

Moreover, as described in the Parent and Community portion of this application, PLA views strong community partnerships as a critical element to building a positive culture at its partner schools. During the planning year and summer months leading up to the opening of the proposed schools, PLA will work to identify community partnerships that provide meaningful services and support to our scholars and families. In partnering with schools in the past, PLA has engaged local community-based agencies to connect scholars and families to key services such as mental health, employment, afterschool, medical/dental services, and housing. Finally, prior to the start of the school year, we will host an open house for all scholars and families to allow parents to meet school staff personally, ask any questions that they have, and build a level of familiarity with the PLA educational model and the staff at the school. This open house will be critical in our effort to enlist our parents as partners in their child's education and establish a culture of collaborative family involvement from day one.

As students join each proposed school, our data-driven academic assessments, as well as social-emotional supports, allow us to identify where they stand and what their individualized improvement areas are. We then use this data to help each student

successfully complete the transition into our school culture. Our emphasis on personalized instruction, coupled with the strong systems described above, allow us to effectively assess and meet the unique needs of scholars transferring into our school after the school year has started. Our use of small-group and one-on-one instruction and frequent checkpoints with teachers ensures that our educators can effectively monitor how well transfer students are integrating into the culture of the school. Moreover, whenever a new scholar joins our school, teacher's will discuss this student individually in weekly PLCs to ensure that there is a plan for integrating the student into the climate and culture of the school.

3. Explain how the school will create an inclusive culture for the anticipated student population, taking into account student subgroups such as socioeconomic status, gender, race, ethnicity, English Learners, Gifted and Talented, Special Education, etc.

The proposed schools will embody PLA's philosophy about creating an inclusive culture for special populations students and ensuring that all students feel like valuable members of the school community. PLA's philosophy is to create an overall culture of inclusion where each student is celebrated for their unique gifts and students learn to work together and celebrate their differences. As such, PLA's approach to supporting special populations is to make these scholars an integral part of the fabric of the school to the greatest extent possible, while still providing them with the necessary support. Teachers are intentional about including scholars with developmental differences in classroom activities whenever possible to build a feeling of inclusion. A key component of PLA's professional development system is to provide teachers with the tools to collaborate and ensure that they are providing holistic support for students in special populations. For instance, in weekly Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), grade-level educators and special population teachers meet together to analyze data, plan for small-group instruction and intervention rotations based on data and discuss evidence-based strategies to help scholars raise their achievement. By providing scholars with this level of intentional and personalized attention, we will be able to ensure that all students, especially those from special populations, have the necessary support to allow them to thrive as integral members of our school community.

Structured recognition of student progress is central to PLA's climate and culture approach and this strategy is particularly beneficial for students in special populations. The emphasis on growth, rather than raw scores, creates a culture where students who may be starting from different places in their education are still recognized when they make progress. Not only does this keep students from becoming discouraged if they do not feel as though their hard work is being recognized, but it also bolsters our efforts to foster a growth mindset within our students. Many PLA schools employ key staff members like the Dean of Culture and Climate and Culture Specialists to build a culture of inclusivity and ensure that students in special populations are celebrated amongst their peers in the overall culture of the school. In addition to the cultural inclusion of differently abled scholars, our instructional strategies play a key role in their inclusion.

Supplemental Programming

Meets Standard Expectation
- Well-designed plans and funding for extracurricular and co-curricular activities, programs, and services that will meet anticipated student needs and provide enrichment experiences.
- Thoughtful, well-supported description of programs or strategies to address student mental, emotional, and social development and health, and any other student-focused activities and programs that are integral to the schools educational and student-development plans.
- Sound plan for implementation of remote learning, such as eLearning and/or extended learning.

1. Describe the extra- or co-curricular activities or programming the school will offer, how often they will occur, and how they will be funded.

We will work to provide extra-curricular activities that help to round out the learning experience for our scholars. At the foundational level, PLA is proud to offer a curriculum that embeds enrichment opportunities directly into the day-to-day experience of scholars. Some of the enrichment courses include Art, Robotics, Astronomy, Entrepreneurship, Creative Expression, Theater, and more. Additionally, scholars will have the opportunity to participate in activities that include, team sports, cheerleading, dance, track and

more. We will also be inviting guest speakers to share their life stories and professional experiences with our scholars, with a particular focus on Black and Brown role models. Scholars will also participate in educational field trips to college campuses, professional workplaces, museums, and cultural landmarks; and lead service projects for their community. Because enrichment opportunities are a core element of the PLA model, they are part of our standard staffing model and funded through a combination of the general fund and federal grants. With philanthropic support, we will be able to provide evidence-based summer learning to our scholars to help stem summer learning loss and ensure that they come back to school ready to excel in the following school year.

2. Describe the programs and/or strategies to address student mental, emotional, and social health and development.

PLA recognizes that mental health and social emotional learning are inextricably linked with academic achievement and, as such, we will prioritize this critical aspect of childhood development at our schools. Prioritizing mental health needs is even more important for students who are living in poverty. We will work with school-based mental health and wellness programs to provide services such as general screening/assessment, behavioral counseling, crisis intervention, health screenings, staff training, family counseling, and referral services. In addition to in-classroom behavior support delivered by student support personnel, we will look to partner with full-service mental health agencies in the community to provide wrap-around behavior support, including psychiatric evaluation, diagnosis, and on-going home- and school-based therapy. We also look for community partners such as social workers, mental health professionals and developmental therapists; family support organizations that help connect families with resources for basic needs such as food, employment, and housing; local universities that assist with scholar campus visits, guest speakers, or workshops to promote college readiness; and local businesses such as banks, technology companies, or health centers that can provide experiential learning opportunities.

As mentioned before, the MTSS process PLA utilizes will also consider environmental factors that may have a negative impact on the student's academics and/or behavior and identify additional supports to empower scholars to improve in areas where skill deficits may be impeding their progress. By aligning our mental health provider with our MTSS system, we will be able to effectively identify special needs and provide appropriate support based on our scholars' individual needs.

Socio-emotional supports embedded into PLA's educational model include structured recognition, training resources and coaching for staff, onsite support personnel, and structured curriculum. We will regularly monitor data for our school wide PBIS behavior management system for behavior incidents and positivity percentages. Our strong data systems, coupled with close collaboration between key staff members, allow us to anticipate and support the social-emotional needs of our scholars. Moreover, all school staff will be trained using the PLA Coaching Cycle and PLA Learning Institute modules to recognize the signs of mental health concerns and to incorporate social emotional learning directly into instruction. We recognize that student academic achievement and social emotional development are complementary aspects of a holistic education.

Remote Learning (Not Applicable for Virtual Model Schools)

Meets Standard Expectation
- Sound plan of how the school will incorporate remote learning days in their school calendar or use for inclement weather cancellations, including the resources and programs needed for implementation.
- Provide expectations for teachers and students on remote learning days.
- Description of how the school will provide continued services, track compensatory hours, and create IEP/ILPs with specific language regarding remote learning days.

1. Describe how the school will incorporate digital or remote learning into the regular school calendar or in place of inclement weather days that would cause a school cancellation. Include the types of resources and/or programs the school will utilize to ensure instruction and learning continues. Further guidance on Indiana's digital learning department can be found here: https://www.doe.in.gov/elearning

In the instance of a remote learning day, thoughtful contingencies have been built in key domains of school management including instruction; PBIS and behavior management; enrichment learning; and more. Our e-learning model provides children with 3 hours of daily ELA and Math instruction – 90 minutes of daily instruction in ELA, and 90 minutes of daily instruction in Math. Below you can find an overview of PLA's e-learning model in action.

E-Learning Rotation	Duration (3 Hours, Daily)	Description
ELA INSTRUCTION: 90 MINUTES DAILY Using an online platform, students will log on every morning into their "virtual homeroom." Scholars will be able to see their classmates, hear the standard morning announcements, and engage with others as PLA's traditional community-building activities take place.		
ELA Rotation I: Whole-Group Instruction	30 minutes daily	Through Zoom, scholars will receive 30 minutes of grade-level, direct instruction from their teachers. Special education teachers will push in and co-teach.
ELA Rotation II: Self-Paced, Adaptive Learning	30 minutes daily	Scholars will then participate in 30 minutes of self-paced learning on educational software. Scholars will progress through skill-based lessons using Edgenuity, which creates personalized, self-paced learning paths based on NWEA data from the school year. Other ELA programs, such as Reading A-Z and Writing A-Z, will complement core subject practice and keep scholars engaged.
ELA Rotation III: Guided Practice	30 minutes daily	Scholars will then participate in Tier 2, small group tutoring, in groups of 3-5 scholars.
MATH INSTRUCTION: 90 MINUTES DAILY Students will log on every morning into their "virtual homeroom." Scholars will be able to see their classmates, hear the standard morning announcements, and engage with others as PLA's traditional community-building activities take place.		
Math Rotation I: Whole-Group Instruction	30 minutes daily	Through Zoom, scholars will receive 30 minutes of grade-level, direct instruction from their teachers. Special education teachers will push in and co-teach.
Math Rotation II: Self-Paced, Adaptive Learning	30 minutes daily	Scholars will then participate in 30 minutes of self-paced learning on educational software. Scholars will progress through skill-based lessons using Edgenuity, which creates personalized, self-paced learning paths based on NWEA data from the school year. Other Math programs, such as MobyMax, will complement core subject practice and keep scholars engaged.
Math Rotation III: Guided Practice	30 minutes daily	Scholars will then participate in Tier 2, small group tutoring, in groups of 3-5 scholars.

Two of the key learning tools that teachers regularly utilize in the classroom that will make the transition to remote learning simple are Edgenuity and Edulastic. Edgenuity offers common core and state standards-aligned video-based curriculum for K-12 blended learning and e-learning environments that can be used at school and home. The program allows educators to customize the curriculum for their scholars and enables teachers to virtually monitor scholar progress while they are completing lessons and assessments, and participating in interactive activities. Edgenuity will give our teachers the performance data they need to design

relevant academic supports. This data empowers our team to support scholars in accelerating their academic growth. Teachers will be able to view course grades, percentage of work completed, assignments completed, time on task, and other essential information to hold scholars accountable. To empower data-driven instructional decisions, the Lesson Mastery report provides results on student and class achievement across an entire course. Edulastic assessment software gives PLA teachers flexible tools to track achievement and manage scholar growth. With Edulastic, our scholars build familiarity with a wide variety of question formats, all within a common platform. By leveraging Edulastic for all formative assessments, PLA teachers can be certain that classroom practice data is truly predictive of performance on end-of-year accountability assessments. Equipped with the most thorough and accurate performance data, our teachers can select, implement and test interventions for personalized academic growth. Together, Edgenuity and Edulastic tools provide a comprehensive web of instruction and support to robustly prepare our scholars to meet end of year state accountability expectations. While these tools are best utilized in a classroom setting, the digital features mean that remote learning days will not interrupt scholar learning and performance tracking.

In addition to meeting the academic needs of our students, we believe that it will be equally important to sustain our social-emotional programming – and even increase those touchpoints for our scholars. We plan to provide two, 45-minute daily enrichment blocks, including calisthenics, yoga, and art. Using Zoom, our scholars can even participate in physical education (delivered in a virtual manner). Scholars can also use Khan Academy for social studies and science enrichment learning.

We will hold virtual sessions so that our scholars can continue to meet regularly and avoid the negative impacts of isolation. In addition, each teacher will be assigned a small group of students for weekly 1:1 check-ins – the goal is three connections per week – just to gauge our scholars' well-being and ensure that 100% of our children are cared for during these difficult times. PLA will also provide PLA University online, used to train interested parents in providing encouragement and guidance to their children. Leveraging PLA's evidence-based family engagement model, we will guide parents to log on with their scholars and coach them on how they can support their scholars side-by-side during our math and ELA instructional blocks.

Finally, PLA teachers will also be available in the afternoon during virtual office hours for scholars who have questions or need additional guidance.

2. Outline the expectations for teachers on a remote learning day, including planning of activities, lesson delivery, communication with students and families, office hours, etc.

On the occasion that remote learning is required, there is a module on remote learning during the Teacher Institute to best prepare teachers to utilize their tools to create as seamless a transition as possible. This course is designed to support instructional staff and school administrators with the transition to remote learning. The course has resources that cover the implementation and use of Google Classroom and Zoom. This ongoing, personalized professional development will equip teachers with a strong understanding of effective remote instruction strategies through a strong use of technology so scholars can continue to learn and achieve. Firstly, PLA's job-embedded Coaching Cycle will promote the use of evidence-based strategies to build educators' expertise in distance learning. Through the proprietary PLA Coaching Cycle, teachers will receive live support through coaching conversations, personalized learning modules and progressive goal-setting. Lastly, teachers at partner PLA schools will continue to take part in weekly Professional Learning Communities, where they benefit from coaching, mentoring and live discussion opportunities. There are additional courses that provide resources that cover applying Edulastic, grading, reporting, assessment design, and rubrics.

For short-term remote learning, PLA expectations for teachers will remain constant. There are tools and resources in place to support the PLA model remotely, and planning should not be impacted by inclement weather days. PLA strives to ensure our scholars and teachers have 1:1 access to the devices and technology they need in order to make remote learning a success. This includes securing iPads for scholars in Grades K-2 to support interactive, hands-on learning; laptops for scholars in Grades 3+ to support their tech literacy and college/career readiness; and securing WiFi Hotspots for many of our scholars who do not have reliable internet access at home. Our evidence-based educational model also makes thoughtful use of adaptive learning software to truly personalize and differentiate instruction for each scholar. We hope to ensure that each scholar has access to adaptive learning software and supplies on their personalized learning devices, so they may continue to learn on the occasion of a short term school

closure. Strategic investments have also been made in robust online learning systems such as Blackboard Ultra, to ensure scholars have access to virtual learning classrooms where they can learn from their teachers and interact with their peers. Through PLA's strong efforts to secure necessary resources for remote learning, scholars and teachers should have the technology and infrastructure they need in order to continue learning when there is a remote learning day.

For our teachers, Edgenuity and Edulastic offer tools to remotely track scholars' performance and progress. As mentioned earlier, Kickboard is a great tool to communicate with families remotely. Just as teachers utilize Kickboard in the classroom to track and report student behavior, they will continue to use this resource on remote days. Teachers can also utilize the parent messaging piece built into the Kickboard app that contacts parents directly as a method of communicating during remote learning.

3. Outline the expectations for students on a remote learning day, including possible daily schedules, time spent on tasks based on grade level, etc.

When remote learning is required for a short period of time due to inclement weather or other school closure, the proposed schools will aim to maintain as similar of a schedule as possible to their regular in-person routine.

In a remote learning framework, our educational model has been modified as follows to ensure high-quality learning with 90 minutes each of ELA and Math instruction daily, despite school closures: **Rotation I: Whole-Group Instruction (30 mins daily)**: Through Zoom, scholars will receive 30 minutes of grade-level, direct instruction from their teachers. Special education teachers will push in and co-teach. **Rotation II: Self-Paced, Adaptive Learning (30 minutes daily):** Scholars will then participate in 30 minutes of self-paced learning on educational software. Scholars will progress through skill-based lessons using Edgenuity, which creates personalized, self-paced learning paths based on ILEARN data from the school year. **Rotation III: Guided Practice (30 minutes daily):** Scholars will then participate in Tier 2, small group tutoring, in groups of 3-5 scholars.

Scholars will be welcomed into their online class starting at 8:45am and begin ELA classes at 9:00am.
- K-6 students will attend from 8:45am - 4:00pm (5 hours and 45 minutes of instructional time per day)
- Grades 7-8 will go from 8:45am - 4:15pm (6 hours and 5 minutes of instructional time per day)
- Grades 9-12 students will attend from 8:45am- 4:30pm (6 hours and 16 minutes of instructional time per day)

K-8 students will receive 1 hour and 30 minutes of instruction in ELA, 1 hour and 30 minutes of instruction in mathematics, and 1 hour of either science or social studies. Students in grades 9-12 will receive 1 hour and 30 minutes of instruction in ELA, 1 hour and 30 minutes of instruction in mathematics, and 1 hour of both science or social studies. These schedules will put our scholars in the position to succeed by prioritizing time for small-group instruction and differentiated eLearning in ELA and Math, allowing students to continue with specials and electives, and providing built in time for brain breaks throughout the day.

4. Describe how the school will provide continued services, track compensatory hours should they be needed, or create IEPs and ILPs with specific language surrounding remote learning days.

During short term remote learning, there will not be interruption in the provision of continued services. Individualized intervention will continue on these remote learning days, which include progress feedback sessions for scholars with IEPs and check-ins about IEP goals, as well as teacher-student reviews of assessment data to determine appropriate interventions. Differentiated instruction also allows each scholar the individualized instruction needed for growth, customized to their current level of language acquisition. This is true both in the classroom and remotely. Scholars who are on IEPs and ILPs also have resources that can be included in language around remote learning days. Through a 1:1 computer-enhanced learning environment, educators have a vast set of accessibility tools that can unlock students' potential to learn. For example, laptops and web-based tools have read-aloud features to aid struggling readers or scholars with vision loss; online translators empower scholars to reference their native language to enhance their understanding; speech-to-text tools enable scholars to process and organize their thoughts and iterate their writing on essays; and closed-captioning tools allow scholars to both hear and read guided explanations or new content vocabulary. Our evidence-based educational model implemented through online learning will therefore provide additional support that help address

common barriers to access and empower the success of all scholars. These should allow teachers and scholars to move seamlessly back into the classroom after an unexpected virtual learning day.

Special Populations

> **Meets Standard Expectation**
> ● Demonstrated understanding of – and capacity to fulfill – state and federal obligations and requirements pertaining to students with disabilities, students identified as intellectually gifted, and English Learners (ELs), including appropriate discipline procedures for students with disabilities.
> ● Sound explanation of evidence from which the projection of anticipated special populations was derived.
> ● Comprehensive and compelling plan for appropriate identification of students who are performing below grade level or at risk of academic failure or dropping out and a detailed plan for providing services to such students.
> ● Comprehensive and compelling plan for appropriate identification of students with special needs to ensure they are served in the least restrictive environment possible, have appropriate access to the general education curriculum and school wide educational, extra-curricular, and culture-building activities in ways that support their development, receive required and appropriate support services as outlined in their IEPs and/or 504 plans, and participate in standardized testing.
> ● Comprehensive and compelling plan for providing services to ELs, including methods for appropriate identification, specific instructional programs, practices, and strategies the school will employ to ensure academic success and equitable access to the general education curriculum and core academic program for these students, plans for monitoring and evaluating student progress and success of ELs and for exiting them from services, and plan for including ELs in standardized testing and school wide educational, extra-curricular, and culture-building activities
> ● Plans describe evidence-based instructional programs and practices; effective design or adaptation of the educational program; qualified staffing; and support strategies and resources.

1. Explain the methods used to identify the following special populations of students:
   - Special Education
   - English Learners
   - Below Grade Level Performance
   - Gifted and Talented

Methods for identifying students with special education needs: Throughout the year, our team will implement the MTSS process previously described. Scholars who do not achieve the desired level of progress in response to these targeted interventions, after thorough consideration including both academic and non-academic factors, are referred for a comprehensive evaluation for special education services. Once parental consent has been obtained, the principal or special education coordinator will form the multidisciplinary team and conduct an evaluation. The team will consist of the child's parents and a group of qualified professionals who have training and experience specific to the needs or suspected disability of the child; the same group will serve on the child's IEP team. Following the evaluation, a case conference committee (CCC) will determine the scholar's eligibility, if any, for special education and related services. If a determination is made that a scholar is eligible, an IEP that meets the special education and related service needs of the scholar must be developed. Scholars with documented medical conditions that impact academic performance, but who are otherwise ineligible for special education, may qualify for additional supports in school delineated by a 504 plan. The IEP team, which includes the student's general and special education teachers, therapists, a public agency representative, and parents, will collaboratively determine the specific services the district will offer the student. The IEP will describe the student's strengths as well as academic, developmental, and functional needs. Annual goals will be established for the student which will determine the specific services the district will provide to help the student meet those goals. The IEP will be developed based on the needs of the individual student and will not be driven by PLA's costs in meeting those needs. Because our MTSS and evaluation processes are systematic and data-driven and take into account both quantitative and qualitative data from a variety of stakeholders, the chances of misidentification are very low.

Methods for identifying ELL students: Scholars who have been recommended for ELL assessment will be assessed using the WIDA standardized test to determine precise English language capabilities. If the scholar meets the definition of English Language

Learner, then the scholar will have access to services designated for English language learners, including auxiliary texts, supplemental curricular tools and time with staff members specifically trained in best practices to serve ELL scholars. The WIDA standardized assessment will allow school leaders to appropriately distinguish between a scholar's ELL status and any possible learning disabilities. If an ELL scholar is identified to have learning disabilities, an IEP will be created and implemented using the systematic and intentional process described above.

Methods for identifying below grade level students: With PLA's collaboration, we will strive to educate scholars in an academic environment that meets their individual educational needs. To that end, all staff members are tasked with monitoring scholars to identify those who may be at risk academically or behaviorally through MTSS. As described before, MTSS integrates instruction, evidence-based interventions, and assessments to meet the individualized academic and behavioral needs of all students. As part of the MTSS framework, we will provide Tier 2, small-group intervention whenever possible. Scholar progress will be closely monitored at each stage of intervention to determine the need for further research-based instruction and/or intervention in General Education, Special Education, or both.

Methods for identifying gifted students: In order to identify intellectually gifted students, PLA school leaders have typically used a combination of internal data-driven assessments and external specialized evaluations, such as the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT). School staff will triangulate data from external evaluations, such as the CogAT, with benchmark assessments and state assessments to develop a holistic understanding of a given student's abilities. Ultimately, the determination will be made by school leadership in consultation with the students' parents. School leaders will regularly assess the demographic makeup of students identified as intellectually gifted. If any disproportionalities present, particularly a racial disproportionality, school leaders will convene to assess the applicability of the methods of evaluation used for determining intellectually gifted status.

2. Describe the instructional programs, practices, and strategies the school will employ to provide necessary academic support and/or enhancements for the anticipated special populations of students being served.

Instructional practices and strategies for Special Education scholars: PLA's educational model emphasizes the frequent use of small-group instruction and personalized academic intervention. PLA's data-driven model continuously measures SPED scholars' proficiency, and educators directly align instruction to meet individual needs. Because PLA uses academic performance data to create a uniquely rigorous and personalized learning experience for every child, our approach maximizes the amount of time SPED scholars spend in the General Education classroom. SPED scholars are placed in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) based on their IEPs, ensuring that they consistently receive academic support from both General Education and Special Education teachers. Scholars receive push-in and/or pull-out services during small-group instructional blocks. Services and accommodations are tied directly to the scholar's IEP and delivered by the SPED teacher or anyone under the direction of the SPED teacher/teacher of record. Core subject instruction leverages the MTSS model to ensure that SPED scholars receive instruction that meets their needs. This begins with Tier 1 high-quality teacher-led instruction in state standards. Scholars then break out into small groups for Tier 2 differentiated instruction informed by NWEA or weekly formative assessment data. Additional Tier 2 or Tier 3 instruction is provided in the afternoon for scholars who need extended learning time to achieve proficiency. Instructional benefits of this framework for SPED scholars include:

- Scholars are exposed to the General Education environment and curriculum to the maximum extent possible, allowing scholars on the high school diploma track to have regular exposure to state standards;
- Scholars participate in instruction within strategic, varied groupings, allowing them to learn collaboratively alongside their peers to bolster their retention and promote social-emotional development;
- Scholars receive data-driven instruction through individualized academic support, allowing them to master required core subject skills and systematically achieve state standards;
- Special Education and General Education teachers collaborate to provide scholars with a variety of evidence-based instructional strategies that reinforce core subject concepts; and
- High-quality, personalized SPED services and supports are embedded into the daily instructional framework, ensuring that scholars are receiving support aligned to their IEPs.

PLA's educational model embeds powerful evidence-based strategies for data-driven, personalized instruction and educator

collaboration into the regular school day. These elements are designed to raise the achievement of all scholars and are particularly helpful for scholars receiving SPED services who may need extra support to master state standards. Examples include:

- *Small-group instruction and intervention:* Within the General Education classroom, scholars participate in small-group instruction and personalized learning rotations based on data from the nationally normed NWEA assessment in Reading and Math. As much as possible, scholars are grouped in a strategic mix of ability levels to maximize collaborative learning. This allows scholars to learn from one another, which can enhance academic achievement and retention. Additionally, this is an opportunity for SPED scholars to work with both SPED teachers and General Education teachers, exposing them to various instructional methods and representations of concepts. Grouping by data aligned to NWEA domains ensures that instruction can be more closely aligned to scholars' needs for areas of growth and more rigorous in areas of academic strength. When pull-out support is needed, this can happen during small-group learning so that scholars do not miss out on traditional teacher-led instruction in the General Education classroom.
- *Nationally normed NWEA benchmark assessments:* NWEA benchmarks are a powerful tool for PLA teachers in supporting SPED scholars, as these provide personalized, actionable data to drive instruction in the classroom. While standardized assessment questions often bundle numerous academic skills into one performance task, NWEA breaks apart different skills to accurately identify scholar capabilities. This gives educators an understanding of the gaps in each scholar's core-subject proficiency. For example, would a scholar benefit most from remediation on mathematical operations, number sense, or geometry and conceptualization? NWEA data breaks down scholar performance within these key domains, so that when teachers are creating small groups, they can target skills that will optimize achievement. This serves to align instruction in the General Education environment specifically to scholars' data-driven academic needs, so that SPED scholars receive the targeted support that enables them to make progress
- *Tutoring opportunities during the school day and extended learning time:* PLA's intentional master schedule maximizes opportunities for Tier 2 and Tier 3 instruction. Scholars have frequent opportunities for additional personalized tutoring and intervention. This happens both during core-subject instruction and also during extended learning time offered in the afternoon. SPED scholars benefit from additional time to practice academic skills as well as ample exposure to standards-based data-driven instruction. Following the MTSS framework, ongoing assessment data is used to select scholars for Tier 2 small-group or Tier 3 one-on-one support. Academic performance data as well as each scholars' IEP are used to inform the skills targeted and the academic scaffolding provided to bolster core-subject achievement. Scholars work with teachers, interventionists or instructional assistants to improve proficiency. For example, working alongside a SPED scholar (or a group of scholars), an educator might complete a think-aloud to make a problem-solving process more explicit; redo an exit ticket with probing questions to guide scholar thinking; review notes before a final assessment; or work through adaptive learning modules. Because extended learning time offers more chances for scholars to achieve, it provides encouragement and reinforces a growth mindset. When possible, we also provide opportunities for Summer Learning.

Instructional practices and strategies for ELL scholars: PLA has established a framework of evidence-based strategies for meeting the needs of English learner (EL) students. PLA schools provide EL services in the manner required by applicable law (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires schools to take steps to ensure that students with limited English proficiency can fully participate in school programs and services), and we will ensure complete compliance with federal and state standards for the education of EL students. Our EL scholars spend as much time as possible in the mainstream classroom environment in order to maximize academic and social exposure and achievement. Our teachers participate in extensive, ongoing professional development and job-embedded coaching on how best to serve EL scholars. PLA views the provision of services to English learners as culturally responsive and necessary to ensure the equitable provision of educational services to all students.

PLA's educational model maximizes the time scholars spend in small-group instruction. Educators strategically use this time to help EL scholars learn and comprehend content vocabulary so they can achieve core-subject standards alongside their peers. This ensures that, to the fullest extent possible based on individual needs, PLA's EL scholars are served in an inclusive classroom setting. EL scholars benefit from maximum exposure to the English language, for example through frequent opportunities to practice speaking and listening. PLA's approach emphasizes Content-Based English Language Development (ELD), which focuses on explicit instruction in content-specific vocabulary to help scholars access core subject skills and empower them to achieve state standards. Under this model, EL teachers collaborate with General Education teachers to support scholar comprehension in the traditional classroom setting. EL teachers provide additional targeted language acquisition support through varying degrees of push-in or pull-out instruction based on scholar abilities and needs. EL scholars use the same curriculum and resources as all PLA

scholars, with supplementary materials or evaluation as needed. Small-group instruction is a central vehicle for providing mastery-based academic scaffolding within the PLA educational model. For EL scholars, this is a strategic opportunity to provide support in the key areas of vocabulary acquisition and concept comprehension. Front-loading these pieces helps scholars access content and achieve core subject standards. Examples of how PLA's educators use the key elements of our educational model to intentionally meet the unique instructional needs of EL scholars include:

- *Small-group instruction:* For EL scholars, educators use small-group instruction time to activate prior knowledge and teach key vocabulary to improve scholar comprehension and address the language barrier. For example, General Education teachers or EL teachers might use small group learning time to focus on explicit vocabulary instruction; provide examples so scholars can make connections to what they already know; or guide scholars in breaking down assignment directions or complex sentence structure. Afterward, the EL scholars would rotate to a different teacher and topic and practice an academic skill aligned to the required standard.
- *Blended learning:* PLA's educational model also emphasizes the use of high-quality adaptive learning programs such as Reading A-Z or Edgenuity. These programs embed support for EL scholars; for example, videos that provide closed captioning in multiple languages, modules for practicing vocabulary that include audio-visual representations, and differentiated lessons aligned to scholar data to meet scholars where they are. Additionally, because these programs are accessed through scholar laptops, scholars can use online translation programs, text-to-speech or other innovative accessibility tools in real-time.
- *Monitoring and periodic evaluation:* We will use the World Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) as its annual ELP assessment. EL scholars are deemed proficient when they receive a 5.0 overall composite score on the annual WIDA Access assessment. Once a scholar reaches proficiency, they enter a 2-year monitoring period. Scholars will continue to have access to ELD resources and support as needed, but they will no longer have an ILP and are no longer eligible to receive state testing accommodations. PLA parents and families will receive a formal exit letter about their scholar's proficiency and continue to receive quarterly academic progress reports throughout the 2-year monitoring period.

Instructional practices and strategies for scholars performing below grade level: The MTSS process begins with high-quality instruction and universal screening of all scholars in the General Education classroom. Struggling learners will be provided with interventions at increasing levels of intensity to accelerate their rate of learning. These services may be provided by a variety of personnel, including General Education teachers, Special Education teachers, behavioral specialists, counselors, or other key staff roles. Progress will be closely monitored to assess both the learning rate and level of performance of individual scholars. Educational decisions about the intensity and duration of interventions are based on individual scholar progress data. MTSS is designed for use in both General Education and Special Education settings, creating a well-integrated system of instruction and intervention guided by scholar outcome data. As described before, components of PLA's MTSS Process include a multi-tiered system:

- Tier 1—High-Quality Classroom Instruction, Screening, and Group Interventions
- Tier 2—Targeted Interventions
- Tier 3—Intensive Interventions and Comprehensive Evaluation

Instructional practices and strategies for Gifted and Talented scholars: Once appropriately identified, PLA has a series of strategies in place for meeting the needs of gifted and talented students. First, the rigorous curricula that PLA has selected works to encourage the accelerated progress of these scholars. This model allows for a significant amount of individualized instructional time so that scholars who are performing above grade level will be able to explore challenging content and skill-development exercises. In addition to these opportunities for accelerated learning already built into the school day, PLA offers academically advanced scholars an extra enrichment opportunity, called GATE (Gifted and Academically Talented Education). This is a short pull-out period (approximately 30 minutes), twice a week, that exposes academically advanced scholars to subjects and topics that they may not be able to explore otherwise, for example astronomy, archaeology, or chemistry. This program begins in second grade. If a participating scholar falls behind in his/her regular classes, the scholar will not continue with the program. In addition, we will offer intellectually gifted students the opportunity to take accelerated high-school level courses while still in middle school, which helps to ensure that scholars are constantly engaging with material that will challenge them and accelerate their growth. As previously mentioned, gifted students are also encouraged to take on leadership roles within the school, such as tutoring younger students.

3. Identify how the success of the instructional programs, practices, and strategies, described in the question above, will be measured.

Monitoring and Evaluating Special Education Programs: At the beginning of each school year, SPED teachers share 'IEP At A Glance' summary sheets with the entire school team and with General Education teachers who will be supporting students in their caseload. This supports instructional collaboration, as it ensures that educators across the school know which scholars have IEPs. It also allows SPED teachers to conduct deep-dives into a scholar's IEP goals, services and accommodations so that scholars are provided with the individualized supports that help them achieve in the General Education classroom. If scholars with IEPs enroll during the course of the school year, this process will be repeated as needed. When IEP Case Conferences occur and scholar goals are updated, General Education teachers will receive refreshed, current IEP At A Glance documents.

PLA schools conduct Progress Monitoring activities for Special Education scholars at the end of each report card period. Teachers compile the progress data they have collected for the scholar throughout the term and put together a formal analysis of how scholars are performing against IEP goals. The results of this monitoring activity are sent home to families accompanying the report card, so that parents know how their scholar is progressing. SPED teachers also meet with parents during Parents-In-Touch days, providing a high-level overview of how the scholar is progressing across subjects, delving into a scholar's progress toward academic and behavioral goals, and addressing any concerns parents might have.

Annual IEP Case Conferences are held at a minimum of once per year. The objectives of this meeting are to 1) review the scholar's goals from the previous year to see if scholars have reached mastery; 2) update the scholar's performance data to see if the scholar is on track academically and behaviorally; and 3) realign IEP goals, services and supports to optimize scholar growth. The meeting will be attended by the scholar's IEP team, including the child's parents and a group of qualified professionals who have training and experience specific to the needs or disability of the child. A General Education teacher will also attend this meeting, as the success of the scholar and the provision of Special Education services is a shared responsibility in our inclusive learning model. The majority of scholar time is spent in the General Education classroom, so teacher collaboration at every level ensures that educators provide instructional services and supports aligned to scholar need to empower progress.

Monitoring and Evaluating ELL Programs: PLA's framework for data-driven professional development helps teachers improve their delivery of effective instruction that meets the needs of ELL scholars. Instructional Coaches conduct biweekly observational walkthroughs using the PLA Coaching Cycle scoring rubric. Coaches look for evidence-based instructional strategies that help ELL scholars access content and demonstrate their learning. Afterward, coaches provide targeted feedback based on the individualized needs of each educator. If a teacher needs to improve their ability to meet the needs of ELL scholars, coaching would focus on designing scaffolded learning activities and accessible Checks for Understanding to maximize comprehension for ELL scholars. Examples include word banks and word walls, diagrams and visual vocabulary, sentence stems, graphic organizers, or vocabulary notebooks. PLA's personalized approach to professional development also leverages specialized learning modules delivered through the PLA Learning Institute. Modules cover evidence-based strategies for customizing instruction based on the needs of ELL scholars; collaborative activities such as think-pair-share and jigsaw learning that help ELL scholars practice listening and speaking; and techniques for culturally responsive teaching and learning. Further, PLA Learning Institute provides links to online resources for ELL scholar instruction that educators can use while planning their lessons. While many of these best practices are designed to meet the needs of ELL scholars, they provide support for all learners in the classroom and serve to optimize core-subject achievement.

Monitoring and Evaluating Below Grade Level Performance: As described above, PLA will utilize the MTSS process to continually monitor and evaluate students below grade level. These schools will take advantage of the multi-tiered system of instruction and intervention to provide the necessary personalized learning to bring those scholars up to grade level. Scholars who do not achieve the desired level of progress in response to these targeted interventions, after thorough consideration including both academic and non-academic factors, are referred for a comprehensive evaluation for special education services. The data collected during Tiers 1, 2, and 3 are included and used to make the eligibility decision. However, MTSS is an effective strategy for providing personalized support to learners at every performance level, as data-driven instruction is at the core. It is designed to provide additional support in focus areas for all scholars, wherever they have need for improvement. Additionally, by leveraging the nationally

normed NWEA assessment which spans grades K-12, data can indicate specific growth areas across grade levels which are unique to each scholar's needs. For scholars performing below grade-level, NWEA data helps educators prioritize skills to get them back on track. Overall, this ensures that scholars at every performance level consistently demonstrate academic growth, a key strength of the MTSS framework.

Monitoring and Evaluating Gifted Programs: Cognitive and affective growth of intellectually gifted students will be measured using frequent academic assessments, as well as classroom behavior and self-reporting. When deemed necessary by school leaders, students may also re-take the CogAT exam to ensure that they are still appropriately classified, and that the school's gifted programming is meeting their needs. Similar to general education students, gifted students will partake in frequent adaptive learning assessments. Their achievement data will be monitored by teachers and school leaders and will be analyzed through both time-trend and peer comparison methods of analysis. As is our policy with all of our students, all achievement data will be readily available to parents and will be formally communicated on a quarterly basis. Just as MTSS is an effective strategy for scholars performing below grade level, for scholars performing above grade level, NWEA scores indicate areas for academic enrichment. Our gifted programming will be constantly assessed by school staff with the support of PLA's Academics and Compliance teams. The Academics team works on program design and implementation and, on an iterative basis, makes necessary adjustments to the gifted programming. PLA's Compliance team will ensure that we are following applicable local and federal laws.

4. Summarize the plans to have adequate, qualified staffing for the anticipated special populations listed above.

Staffing Special Education: PLA will implement a data-driven recruitment process to recruit and hire highly qualified Special Education teachers that meet the needs of our anticipated student body. The exact number of staff will be determined by the anticipated number of special education scholars. PLA's data-driven approach to educator professional development includes targeted support for meeting the diverse needs of SPED scholars, including the PLA Coaching Cycle, the PLA Learning Institute, and collaborative Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). As part of the PLA Coaching Cycle Process, Instructional Coaches conduct biweekly classroom observation walkthroughs. Coaches use a scoring rubric to measure educators' delivery of differentiated instruction to meet the individualized needs of SPED learners. Based on these observations, educators receive targeted feedback and coaching to improve their delivery of evidence-based strategies in providing instruction to SPED scholars. As another targeted learning resource, coaches can use the PLA Learning Institute to review training modules focused on areas of educator improvement. To help teachers effectively serve their SPED scholars, the PLA Learning Institute course includes best-practices for scaffolding academic practice; evidence-based strategies for customizing instruction; varied web-based resources for meeting the needs of SPED scholars; and applicable laws and policies. Furthermore, PLCs are held weekly to facilitate collaboration among General Ed and Special Ed educators, supporting their ability to provide instruction that allows scholars to grow their academic skills. Grade-level educators and Special Education teachers meet together to analyze data, plan for small-group instruction and intervention rotations based on data and discuss evidence-based strategies to help scholars raise their achievement. Special Education and English Learner teachers would attend PLCs to collaborate with general education teachers, and ensure lessons and instructional strategies are differentiated to address the different learning styles of all scholars. This will also be an opportunity to share ideas with how to adapt general education lesson plans to support small group instruction. These planning opportunities allow Special Education teachers to ensure that General Education teachers are putting in place the academic scaffolding that helps SPED scholars access grade-level content and achieve state standards. A SPED teacher might model instructional methods they use during pull-out sessions so that the General Education teacher can reinforce learning with similar strategies; a General Education teacher might give an overview of their lesson, and a SPED teacher can offer ideas for evidence-based strategies to make the lesson more accessible such as collaborative learning, visual thinking or mind-mapping, or providing sentence stems; or prior to benchmark or summative testing, a SPED teacher might work with General Education teachers to identify which standards to focus on to optimize scholar achievement using deep knowledge of a scholar's abilities. Scholars who are determined to qualify for related services such as speech only, speech secondary or occupational therapy receive these from a licensed service provider. PLA will work with our district and community partners to identify the most appropriate licensed service providers.

Staffing ELL: We will leverage PLA's data driven recruitment process (described in the "Staffing" portion of this application) to ensure that the most appropriate personnel are in place to meet the unique needs of our scholar population. PLA's framework for

data-driven professional development helps teachers improve their delivery of effective instruction that meets the needs of ELL scholars. PLA's personalized approach to professional development also leverages specialized learning modules delivered through the PLA Learning Institute. Modules cover evidence-based strategies for customizing instruction based on the needs of ELL scholars; collaborative activities such as think-pair-share and jigsaw learning that help ELL scholars practice listening and speaking; and techniques for culturally responsive teaching and learning. Further, PLA Learning Institute provides links to online resources for ELL scholar instruction that educators can use while planning their lessons. While many of these best practices are designed to meet the needs of ELL scholars, they provide support for all learners in the classroom and serve to optimize core-subject achievement. PLA understands that personalized, responsive instruction is a key driver for scholar success, especially for ELL scholars who must learn both a new language and new academic content at once. Grade-level educators and ELL teachers meet together to analyze data, plan for small-group instruction and intervention rotations based on data and discuss evidence-based strategies to help scholars raise their achievement. PLA understands that personalized, responsive instruction is a key driver for scholar success, especially for EL scholars who must learn both a new language and new academic content at once. Grade-level educators and EL teachers meet together to analyze data, plan for small-group instruction and intervention rotations based on data and discuss evidence-based strategies to help scholars raise their achievement. To support EL scholars, educators use this time to confer with EL teachers to identify key vocabulary and plan explicit instruction. Grade-level teachers might discuss their upcoming standards and find common vocabulary terms that can be reinforced across all subjects; for example, directional words such as compare and contrast or word parts such as re-, de- and pre-. An EL teacher might prepare a mini-lesson on how to incorporate listening and speaking standards into a lesson, ensuring that EL scholars get multiple opportunities to practice throughout the day; meet with the teachers of a specific scholar to discuss individual goals and specific actions for reinforcement; or share differentiation best-practices that help EL scholars demonstrate mastery without getting overwhelmed. In sum, PLCs ensure that educators throughout the building can work together to put in place a network of support for EL scholars to learn and achieve alongside their peers in the classroom.

Staffing for Below Grade Level Performance: Since a core component of PLA's educational model is personalized learning and the MTSS framework, all teachers will be tasked with monitoring scholars to identify those in danger of falling below grade level and working with those who are already below grade level. Many of our schools begin with scholars below grade level,so an integral part of teacher training and professional development is designed around programs that raise those students to grade level. To that end, PLA Elkhart will use PLA's robust recruitment process to ensure that the school is appropriately staffed to meet the unique needs of the school, using a staffing model of 20-25 scholars per class.

Staffing Gifted Programs: PLA's Gifted and Academically Talented Education (GATE) program will be led by a highly effective educator who has been specifically trained and licensed through local opportunities to provide this accelerated support. As previously mentioned, PLA's professional development system maximizes time for teacher collaboration in weekly PLCs, whereby general education teachers and those working with gifted students will be able to collaborate and share best practices for supporting gifted scholars.

Student Recruitment and Enrollment

Meets Standard Expectation
- Enrollment Policy complies with state law and ensures that the school will be open to all eligible students.
- New-Start Models: Sound and thoughtful student recruitment and marketing plan, timeline, and Enrollment Policy that will provide equal access to all interested students and families, including those in poverty, academically low-achieving students, students with disabilities, and other youth at risk of academic failure.
- Phase-In or Takeover Models: Plans for engagement of students, families and the community that are realistic and likely to foster student retention and community support.

1. **New Schools:** Explain the plan for student recruitment and marketing that will provide equal access to interested students and families. Specifically describe the plan for outreach to families in poverty; families with language barriers; academically low-achieving students; students with disabilities; and other youth at risk of academic failure.

Takeover Schools: Explain the plan for student and parent investment in the school turnaround, especially how the school plans to ensure parents and students do not opt out of the new school. Describe how this plan will successfully transition and retain students who currently attend or are zoned to attend the school being replaced. Provide a detailed description of the plan to gain parent and community support.

In our student recruitment and enrollment process, we will leverage the success PLA has had across its schools, working in predominantly economically disadvantaged communities, to deploy recruitment strategies that meet the needs of our specific communities. PLA is focused on providing exceptional educational options to families who otherwise might not have access to them. We raise achievement for students in historically underserved communities by providing rigorous, personalized, and well-rounded educational experiences to meet the unique needs of each scholar. We have a deep, authentic commitment to many of the most pressing educational challenges. This includes building relationships with families living in poverty; families with language barriers; students who are struggling academically; students with disabilities; and other youth at risk of academic failure. Our marketing and communications efforts work to break through information barriers that traditionally prevent parents and families from accessing high quality educational opportunities. Our marketing campaigns focus on communicating our spectrum of services and connecting families with additional resources and program representatives who can assist them. This includes PLA University, a free workforce development program dedicated to supporting adults within the PLA community as they strive to learn more and earn more. Our goal is to help PLA scholars' adult family members learn higher-earning skills in in-demand fields that offer competitive salaries plus benefits, and the opportunity for future career advancement.

Families in Poverty & Academically Low-Achieving Students

Every community has a host of service partners that provide services to families in poverty. Among them are local housing developments that provide affordable housing. PLA plans to partner with housing developments to provide them with marketing materials to share with residents that otherwise would not be reached by our digital marketing efforts.

Beyond digital marketing efforts, PLA employs the following marketing tactics to reach families and build relationships:

- Door-to-door recruitment efforts
- Postering in the community
- Attending community events
- Phone calls
- Block walking
- Yard signs
- Billboards and Bus Wraps

PLA also explores student lists from the district/authorizer to use to market our schools and programs to prospective families.

Families with Language Barriers

PLA recognizes that being mindful of students' cultural differences, including languages spoken with their families, is an essential part of creating a welcoming space that is optimal for learning. The PLA University program offers ESL classes for adults to bridge language gaps. Class sessions help PLA adult family members to master conversational English. Students who complete English language classes are then eligible for free career training and job placement assistance with PLA University. PLA also works to translate a large percentage of all marketing materials including, flyers, web and social media posts, videos and more. Outside of PLA staff, we also utilize a translation service to reach wider audiences and ensure that we can communicate with families. Most recently, we translated student enrollment applications in Haitian Creole, Somali and Chinese and continue to ensure we meet the needs of the community we aim to serve. Our future marketing plan includes the ability to translate in any language necessary.

Students with Disabilities

Our marketing techniques are inclusive and we provide education for students from all walks of life. We work to design campaigns that reach the parents and families of a disabled child including integrating students with disabilities in our campaigns as models. We also reach students with disabilities through mainstream advertising by targeting their allies. Allies include parents, friends, family members and acquaintances that support and are sensitive to the needs of the disability community. When these allies come across

our targeted marketing for enhanced educational experiences, they share that information with those students and their families. PLA's website is also accessible for disabled viewers so that it can be viewed, hassle-free.

Other Youth at Risk of Academic Failure

We connect and work with local organizations and businesses that provide services for at-risk youth including the local YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, Big Brothers, Big Sisters and more. Through these partnerships, PLA is able to expose these students and their families to enhanced educational opportunities.

PLA has a robust recruitment framework, which we will leverage to mount a successful recruitment campaign at the proposed schools. In addition to the targeted strategies described above, we will implement the following key strategies to ensure that we have a robust and equitable student recruitment and enrollment plan:

Data-Driven Student Recruitment System: Across its schools, PLA has employed the student recruitment system SchoolMint to provide staff with an online hub to empower data-driven decision-making in the recruitment and retention process. Leveraging automated, multilingual mobile capabilities, SchoolMint will help PLA schools in streamlining the recruitment process while equitably reaching a broad array of interested families. With predictive and real-time enrollment statistics, the enrollment system will allow us to implement strategic enrollment plans by setting and reaching KPIs through accurate, data-driven forecasting.

Evidence-Based Family Engagement: Leveraging PLA's scientifically proven family engagement model, the proposed schools will host community events that provide a more comprehensive view of our school, including the admission policy and the enrollment process. By inviting parents to community events, such as roller-skating parties and open houses, families will have the opportunity to connect, talk with staff, and learn more about the PLA educational model and enrichment programs. Fostering meaningful engagement with families in this way is essential to generating strong leads in the recruitment process and supporting retention after enrollment.

The chart below shows the general timeline PLA follows for scholar recruitment. This timeline describes the process for both new and continuing schools.

Month	Recruitment Activity
October	- Student Recruitment Kick-Off, an opportunity to review goals and norm on strategy - Recruitment application opens for the following school year
November	- Student recruitment events continue throughout the community - Engagement with parents that have filled out an application - Parent engagement event hosted at the schools
December	- Letters of Commitment for Principals with Recruitment goals - Student recruitment events continue throughout the community - Engagement with parents that have filled out an application - Parent engagement event hosted at the schools
January	- Student recruitment efforts continue - Engagement with parents that have filled out an application - Parent engagement event hosted at the schools
February	- Student recruitment efforts continue - If lottery is part of the school's recruitment process, lottery is

	conducted at the end of February ● Engagement with parents that have filled out an application ● Parent engagement event hosted at the schools
March - August	● Student recruitment efforts continue ● Engagement with parents that have filled out an application ● Parent engagement event hosted at the schools

Based on PLA's strong track record of serving families in traditionally underserved communities, we will ensure that our communication plan is appropriately customized to reach all interested students and families.

2. Provide, as **Attachment 6**, the school's Enrollment Policy, which should include the following:
   - Tentative dates for application period; and enrollment deadlines and procedures, including explanation of how the school will receive and process Intent to Enroll forms;
   - A timeline and plan for student recruitment/engagement and enrollment;
   - Policies and procedures for student waiting lists, withdrawals, re-enrollment, and transfers; and
   - Explanation of the purpose of any pre-admission activities for students or parents.

Student Discipline

Meets Standard Expectation
- Student discipline policy that provides for appropriate and effective strategies to support a safe, orderly school climate and fulfillment of educational goals, promoting a strong school culture while respecting student rights. Legally sound policies for student discipline, suspension and expulsion, as well as appeals, including proper processes for students with disabilities.

1. Describe, in detail, the school's approach to student discipline. Provide as **Attachment 7** the school's proposed discipline policy. The proposed policy must comply with any applicable state laws and authorizer policies. The description of the school's approach and the proposed policy should address each of the following:
   - Practices the school will use to promote good discipline, including both penalties for infractions and incentives for positive behavior;
   - A list and definitions of the offenses for which students in the school must (where non-discretionary) and may (where discretionary) be suspended or expelled, respectively;
   - An explanation of how the school will take into account the rights of students with disabilities in disciplinary actions and proceedings; and
   - Procedures for due process when a student is suspended or expelled as a result of a code of conduct violation, including a description of the appeal process that the school will employ for students facing expulsion and a plan for providing services to students who are expelled or out of school for more than ten days.

PLA places a high priority on maintaining an atmosphere of respect that is conducive to learning and is safe for all scholars, staff and guests. Scholars who engage in illegal, dangerous or disruptive behavior will be called upon to correct that behavior. Each scholar is a unique individual with unique personal, social, and educational needs. As a result, every disciplinary situation becomes unique in nature. Consequences for misbehavior provide the best learning value when matched to the unique scholar and unique situation. The odds of children learning from their mistakes increases dramatically when children see a reasonable connection between their behavior and the resulting consequence. PLA does expect all students to understand and abide by the PLA Code of Student Conduct, which applies in all environments - home and community, during the school day and at any school function that occurs

outside regular school hours. We hold all of our scholars to a high standard and are confident that they will observe the following expectations:

- Demonstrate honesty and integrity
- Respect the differences in people, their ideas and opinions
- Treat one another with respect and dignity especially when there is disagreement
- Respect and treat others fairly
- Respect the rights of others
- Demonstrate respect for others especially those in positions of authority

Practices the school will use to promote good discipline: Each proposed school will implement PLA's prosocial, progressive school discipline policy. Our goal is to keep students in the classroom, and whenever possible, rather than removing students, staff will show care and concern by talking with the student to find out the root of any behavioral issue. We will also keep in close communication with parents to help prevent behavioral concerns from escalating. If more support in the classroom is needed, we work with the school administration and mobilize school support staff to meet that need.

PLA believes strongly in incentivizing positive behavior rather than focusing on punishing negative behavior. To this end, there is a structured process in place for recognizing students who are contributing positively to the school environment, both through their academics and their behavior. Our prosocial behavior policy works in concert with our growth-based academic model to create an overall culture where students are motivated to contribute positively to the school environment, not simply to avoid negative outcomes. We call this Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports Plan The 5 P's; Be Polite, Be Positive, Be Prepared, Be Productive, Be Prompt. We teach and reinforce these essential characteristics in our scholars by setting the expectations, holding them accountable to these exceptions, incentivizing and providing positive feedback for the demonstration of "right" behaviors, and ensuring "natural" occurring consequences for wrong behaviors. Most importantly, we always demonstrate the characteristics we expect our scholars to display. PBIS is about educating the "whole" child. We can no longer assume that scholars understand appropriate behavior. We need to increase learning in the classroom and to do that, scholars need to be in the classroom. Teaching must occur in areas where negative behaviors occur. We must be proactive in our teaching and actively monitoring to make sure positive behavior is occurring. By being consistent in teaching, reinforcing and modeling expectations, scholars will learn positive behaviors and remain in the classroom.

Incentives will be used to reinforce appropriate behavior, academic achievement, social-emotional growth and academic growth. The incentive program is school-wide and would be the driver of the schools cultures. Character development will be captured, managed and evaluated using our Kickboard data management system.

Kickboard is a cloud-based platform to track student behavior, discipline incidents, referrals, and interventions as well as reinforce positive student behavior in real time. In addition to Kickboard, PLA employs a wraparound approach to behavioral management. Kickboard provides tools to create a positive school culture and achieve equitable outcomes that work to decrease disciplinary incidents. Kickboard's suspension module provides the only ESSA level II evidence-based software behavior platform and the only behavior platform with a proven quasi-experimental study under ESSA proven to reduce suspensions and referrals. One way this works is the tiered intervention plan described previously that specifically supports Tier 2 & Tier 3 students with individual behavior plans. Staff can monitor the effectiveness of these interventions and progress toward behavior goals directly through the Kickboard platform. Scholars also have the opportunity to provide feedback about the process and the climate using a monthly survey approach. Kickboard analysis tools provide teacher, group, and student-level data for analysis and reflection during culture data meetings or PLCs. Users can see behavior patterns over time and securely track data over multiple years.

Teachers and school staff participate in training on behavior and classroom management through the PLA Coaching Cycle, PLA Learning Institute, and pre-/in-service training. During weekly grade-level meetings, teachers can discuss concerns and get support from their colleagues and school leaders. During professional learning communities (PLCs), teachers can develop interventions and learn new approaches to implementing best practices. We will make sure that all forms, practices, and processes align with state and local standards.

Offenses for which students in the school may be suspended or expelled:

When we define behaviors, we are ensuring that all faculty and staff are responding to behavior with equality. Removing a scholar from the classroom for minor misbehaviors is not in the best interest of the scholar. Lost instructional time for both the misbehaving scholar and the rest of the class is not correcting the behavior. In fact it may be increasing the behavior if the scholar wanted to avoid the lesson. When teachers are clear which behaviors they can handle in the classroom, they can create a classroom behavior plan that allows for quick and efficient responses. It is also important to know which incidents should be handled by the office and which require removal of the scholar from the classroom. Classroom Managed are more minor disciplinary scenarios. They are discipline incidents that can be handled by the classroom teacher. These offenses do not warrant an office referral. Classroom interventions must be documented. Office Managed incidents are for major disciplinary issues. These acts of misconduct include those scholars' behaviors that very seriously disrupt the educational process in and on school grounds as well as any school function. These are discipline incidents that must be handled by the administration.

When does chronic classroom-managed behavior become office managed?
- Complete refusal to follow class rules and directions.
- The behavior continues after three attempts of the following:
- Teacher has redirected the behavior
- Teacher has allowed for a short time-out in class but away from the group; or in other teachers class
- Teacher re-teaches and the refusal continues after three attempts by the teacher to change.
- We refer any behavior that is disruptive and not safe

We place a high priority on maintaining an atmosphere of respect that is conducive to learning and safe for all scholars, staff and guests. Scholars who engage in illegal, dangerous or disruptive behavior will be called upon to correct that behavior. Each scholar is a unique individual with unique personal, social, and educational needs. As a result, every disciplinary situation becomes unique in nature. Consequences for misbehavior provide the best learning value when matched to the unique scholar and unique situation. The odds of children learning from their mistakes increases dramatically when children see a reasonable connection between their behavior and the resulting consequence. We will utilize a Behavior Management System that focuses on that connection and individualizes disciplinary measures.

That being said, there are certain behaviors that may present a serious threat to the physical or emotional safety of members of our school community. In these instances, a suspension or expulsion may be deemed necessary by the school principal, in accordance with each proposed school's discipline policy. These behaviors include: assault, excessive play fighting verbal or physical abuse, vandalism, theft, false bomb threat or false emergency alarm, use of drugs, alcohol or tobacco; gambling, leaving campus without permission; conduct which disrupts school or classroom activity or endangers the health, safety or welfare of others; repeated violation of behavior infractions; gross disrespect towards faculty; threatening or harassing students or staff; cheating, profane language; and/or any act which school officials reasonably conclude warrants a suspension. A student's parent or guardian will be notified of the incident by a representative of the school. In some instances, a suspension can be served in two forms: in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension. Students' disciplinary incidents will be tracked in their student records. The only time that we would expel a student is in the case that the safety of the student himself or other students was seriously compromised.

Students with Disabilities: Scholars with disabilities supported with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) will be addressed in accordance with special education Federal laws and state guidelines. A scholar whose behavior impedes the learning of themselves and/or others may be supported with one or all of the following: positive behavioral interventions, behavior improvement plan (BIP), social emotional learning (SEL) and other strategies. If a scholar's behavior constitutes a removal from the educational environment for a prolonged period of time and/or days, the scholar will be held to the same discipline standard as their general education peers for the first 10 (ten) instructional days of removal. Removals that reflect a consistent pattern of behavior and/or occur beyond a 10 (ten) day instructional period will be addressed via a Manifest Determination Review (MDR), which is a type of IEP Meeting that helps determine if the scholar's behavior is a direct result of the scholar's disability. Scholars will be provided with a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for removal days exceeding 10 (ten) instructional days.

Due Process Procedures: Every student facing suspension or expulsion will be afforded the due process that they are entitled to. For example, if a student has been referred by school personnel for suspension or expulsion, the first step will be to schedule a conference between the school leaders, the student, their parent/guardian, and the staff member who witnessed the behavior in question. After having this conference, if the school leader deems that the student violated the school code of conduct in such a manner that warrants their temporary or permanent removal from school, the school leader will make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian in person or over the phone before providing a written notice of suspension/expulsion. All students who have been suspended or expelled by the school will have the opportunity to appeal the decision to the school's board. As previously mentioned, we will take all steps possible to keep a student in school and to remedy the behavior without interrupting a student's academic progress. However, if a behavior or pattern of behaviors is deemed to warrant a suspension or expulsion, there will be clear systems and procedures in place for handling such situations in a way that protects the physical and emotional safety of the school community and the rights of all students.

The following due process actions will be conducted by the school, per each of the disciplinary measures as outlined below:

- Suspension (no more than 10 days)

  An informal hearing will be convened with the scholar, parent, school principal and other staff members as appropriate. At this hearing, the scholar will be provided all due process as required by law. The school principal will inform the scholar and parent of the charges. If the scholar does not admit to the charges, he or she will be provided an explanation of the evidence. The scholar will be provided with an opportunity to present his or her version of the occurrence. If the school principal determines that the occurrence justifies suspension, written notice will be sent to the scholar and parent.

- Suspension of an additional 10 days, or an expulsion

  If a principal believes that a scholar has committed an offense that might require expulsion, the principal may suspend the scholar for more than 10 days, pending a board hearing. During this time, the principal will request a board hearing to discuss the possible expulsion of the scholar. The parent(s) will be notified of due process rights by the principal, including the right to appear at the board hearing and to present the scholar's side of the case. The parent(s) will be notified of the date, time and place of the hearing in compliance with Indiana statute.

Parent and Community Involvement

> **Meets Standard Expectation**
> - Effective strategies for informing parents and the community about the school's development.
> - Sound pre- and post-opening parent engagement plan, including family-school partnerships, that is welcoming and accessible to all parents.
> - Community resources and partnerships that will benefit students and parents and that include a) description of the nature, purposes, terms, and scope of services of any such partnerships; and b) evidence of commitment from identified community partners.

1. Describe the role to date of any parents and community members involved in developing the proposed school(s). Include any opportunities parents and community members have had to provide feedback on the proposed school(s).

PLA deeply values the input and support of the surrounding community throughout the process of developing a new school. For that reason, PLA makes intentional efforts to engage with the community at existing events as well as creating the chance to receive feedback. PLA views strong community and parent partnerships as a critical element to building a positive culture at its schools. We are still in the early stages of the planning period and want to be thoughtful about using the planning period to continue to engage in ways that are most beneficial to the community and families. We want to be sure to create opportunities between the approval and the opening of the proposed schools in order to continue to develop relationships and encourage feedback from these key stakeholders throughout the process. Please see additional details below.

2. Describe what you have done to assess and build parent and community demand for your school(s) and how you will engage

parents and community members from the time that the school(s) is(are) approved through opening.

As mentioned previously, PLA prioritizes family and community engagement through the process of developing a school as a core tenet of the PLA model at every school. In addition to open houses, PLA has attended a number of community events and reached out directly to community members and businesses. PLA attends a variety of events so as to engage with as much of the community as possible. As you can see in the list of events below, there are events focused on potential scholars, women's focused events, public events, as well as events led by private companies.

- 2022 Bowl For Kids' Sake March Monday Open Play Day
- Lunch with the Mayor 2022
- Inspiring Women – Women's Council Luncheon
- Business After Hours hosted by J2 Marketing
- Black and Minority Business Networking Event

In addition to attending these events, we made an effort to meet families where they are, by setting up tables in high traffic areas in Elkhart, specifically populated by community members of color. It was through these efforts that we were able to most successfully connect with families and gain support through signatures and letters. During the planning year and summer months leading up to the opening of PLA Elkhart schools, PLA will work to identify community partnerships that provide meaningful services and support to our scholars and families. In partnering with schools in the past, PLA has engaged local community-based agencies to connect scholars and families to key services such as mental health, employment, afterschool, medical/dental services, and housing. Finally, prior to the start of the school year, PLA schools will host open houses for all scholars and families to allow parents to meet school staff personally, ask any questions that they have, and build a level of familiarity with the PLA educational model and the staff at the school. This open house will be critical in our effort to enlist our parents as partners in their child's education and establish a culture of collaborative family involvement from day one. Once schools open, there are several engagement opportunities for families, including but not limited to participation in field trips, classroom visits, and meeting with teachers to understand academic and behavioral progress and achievements.

3. Describe how you will engage parents in the life of the school(s) (in addition to any proposed governance roles described in Section III below). Explain the plan for building family-school partnerships that strengthen support for learning and encourage parental involvement. Describe any commitments or volunteer activities the school(s) will seek from, offer to, or require of parents.

PLA is one of the few Black-led organizations in the country, and authentic engagement with families is part of our organizational DNA. PLA has been able to build trust with families because PLA staff authentically engage and partner with families from the very start of a school partnership. We will implement PLA's evidence-based parental engagement framework to ensure that our parents become partners in our work. We will meet with families prior to the launch of our new school partnership to understand what they are looking for in their child's school. To create an inclusive and welcoming environment for our families, we will employ a mix of family engagement strategies throughout the school year, which meet the unique needs of our families. PLA's framework for engaging parents and families is designed to make sure that families understand the PLA educational model and how it works to strengthen student achievement. Our school's welcome families during Parents in Touch days, where teachers sit side-by-side and work to invest families in their scholars' academic progress data. Together, teachers and families will delve into a scholar's progress toward academic and behavioral goals, ensuring that we are working in partnership to support the development of scholars. We will maintain an open-door policy and invite families not only to school events, but also to participate in the classroom where they can meaningfully engage with our scholars. Hosting parent events is a signature component of our parental engagement strategy. Examples of family events PLA schools have hosted include:

- Late summer ice cream socials, which serve as an opportunity for parents to meet teachers and school administrators.
- Open houses to familiarize parents with the core school components as well as to expectations.

- One-on-one parent-teacher meetings, called Parents-In-Touch days where teachers provide an in-depth, customized look at each child's performance and behavior through an analysis of student data.
- All-Pro Dads breakfasts and Muffins with Moms, which provide a warm environment to get to know our parents, answer their questions and share how we will support their children.
- Events that showcase our children's accomplishments, including holiday celebrations, January Art Fair, Black History Month Expo, and basketball games.
- Schoolwide scholar recognition events, which serve as a chance for parents to see their children shine.

Further, in order to develop relationships of trust with families, we give our parents consistent access to real-time feedback from educators through multiple communication channels. At our proposed schools, we will communicate regularly with families through biweekly report cards, parent newsletters, and phone calls home-– not only to discuss challenging behavior, but also to praise examples of positive behavior. We will make sure that our families are able to voice their input on their child's academic needs and interests. In order to seek feedback and communicate with stakeholders, PLA's Communications team will leverage a wide variety of communication channels, including: a school web page and cell phone app; Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram accounts; print media, including brochures and targeted mailing lists; media campaigns; Infinite Campus; and PLA's network sources, which include the PLA web page as well as internal and external newsletters. Our school leadership team will meet extensively with parents, community-based organizations, and community leaders to listen through interviews, focus groups and informal conversations.

4. Discuss the community resources that will be available to students and parents. Describe any partnerships the school(s) will have with community organizations, businesses, or other educational institutions. Specify the nature, purposes, terms, and scope of services of any such partnerships, including any fee-based or in-kind commitments from community organizations or individuals that will enrich student learning opportunities.

During the initial Comprehensive Analysis process, PLA's team looks to identify current programmatic partners within key domains of support in order to understand gaps and needs. This will allow us to identify needs and surround our families with strong networks of support. We will look to excellent community partners who can collectively provide meaningful support to our scholars. In PLA's experience, it is not the number of community partners, or even the attractiveness of their services, but the quality of their outcomes, and how well they fit with one another that makes the biggest impact for our scholars. Beyond formal partnerships, we want our community partners to participate in the life of our schools. Specifically, we will look for partners such as: socioemotional support caregivers such as social workers, mental health professionals and developmental therapists; family support organizations that help connect families with resources for basic needs such as food, employment, and housing; enrichment opportunities such as theater, athletics, music, and dance; local universities that assist with scholar campus visits, guest speakers, or workshops to promote college readiness; and local businesses such as banks, technology companies, or health centers that can provide experiential learning opportunities. Additionally, we will continue to partner with local churches and neighborhood associations to help our scholars and families access community resources.

Furthermore, PLA's Communications Department deploys a strategic outreach process to ensure that the community is well informed through digital and traditional communication methods. Specifically, these methods include: 1) News and print media: PLA pitches two news stories to the press per month and collaborate with media on coverage within PLA schools; 2) PLA newsletters: Community members have the opportunity to register to receive PLA's e-newsletters. Twice per month, PLA sends out news about its schools; 3) PLA's online presence: PLA uses its network web page, social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and a YouTube Channel), and the PLA Mobile App to share news, updates, and events with the community; 4) Formal and informal community outreach: We will notify local churches, community organizations, and after- school programs about PLA Elkhart, send letters home, conduct phone blasts, and hold events. Each school partner is unique in its needs for key stakeholder engagement, and PLA's framework for family and community engagement is designed to be collaborative and flexible in order to best reach key community partners.

5. Include, as **Attachment 8**, existing evidence of support from intended community partners, such as letters of intent/commitment, memoranda of understanding, and/or contracts.

Educational Program Capacity

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Meets Standard Expectation

- Evidence that school leadership and management teams have the collective qualifications to implement the school design successfully, including capacities in areas such as school leadership, administration, and governance; curriculum, instruction, and assessment; performance management; and parent and community engagement.
- Evidence that organizations, agencies, or consultants that are essential to successful implementation of the plan are committed to have an ongoing role with the school.
- Evidence of the leader's experience in/ability to design, launch, and lead a school that effectively serves the target population, as well as evidence that the proposed leader is well qualified to implement the specific educational program being proposed.
- Evidence of the Board and/or network's preparation and plan to recruit and retain a leader with the ability to lead a school that effectively serves the target population.
- Appropriate responsibilities and qualifications of the school's leadership/management team (beyond the school leader).
- Individuals who demonstrate the qualifications, capacities, and commitment to carry out the designated leadership roles to ensure the success of the proposed school.
- Sound timeline, criteria, and process for recruiting and hiring leadership team members *(if applicable)*.
- Sound plan for leading the development of the school from post-approval to opening, including identification of a capable individual or team to lead the planning and start-up, as well as a viable plan for compensating this individual or team that is aligned with the budget.

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1. Name the key members of the school's leadership team. Identify only individuals who will play a substantial and ongoing role in school development, governance and/or management, and will thus share responsibility for the school's educational success.

PLA has a strong leadership team in place to ensure the success of our schools. Below please find some of our key leaders and their qualifications:

Earl Martin Phalen, Founder & CEO: Widely recognized as one of the nation's top social entrepreneurs, Earl Martin Phalen is the Founder and CEO of the George and Veronica Phalen Leadership Academies. While at Harvard Law School, Earl founded Building Educated Leaders for Life (BELL) in Boston, Massachusetts, which grew from a local community service project to a national non-profit educating 15,000 children annually and from an annual budget of $12,000 to $27.5M annually. Through his work in the out-of-school time sector, Earl and his team were encouraged to expand their 25-day summer program model to a year-round school model. The resulting network of K-12 public schools is called the George and Veronica Phalen Leadership Academies (PLA) in honor of his parents. Under Earl's leadership, PLA has grown from 1 school serving 300 students to a national network of 26 schools serving over 10,000 students, while helping our most vulnerable communities achieve exceptional educational outcomes. In addition to transforming multiple F-rated schools into A-rated schools, PLA has empowered its scholars to consistently demonstrate educational growth each year. Beyond academics, PLA scholars have created original plays, delivered theatrical performances, and constructed their own submersible robots. Earl has been recognized by MSNBC, TIME, New York Times, Education Week, IndyStar, Black Entertainment Television, and Presidents Clinton and Obama. He holds a BA in Political Science from Yale University and a JD from Harvard Law School.

Andrea Robinson, Chief Academic Officer: Andrea has 23 years of working in the field of education as an educator, instructional coach, building leader, and state DOE employee. She received her BA from Indiana University in elementary education and her master's degree from Indiana Wesleyan University. Andrea worked as a teacher in the intermediate grades in a Title I elementary building. She received the Sallie Mae First Class teacher award and Olin Davis Award. She was also recognized for her passion in teaching when she was honored with the district-wide Indiana Teacher of the Year award in 2009. She eventually became the instructional coach for her K-5 building where she used her knowledge of best practices to lead other educators in professional development, classroom management, differentiation, PBIS, tiers 1-3 instruction/intervention and data analysis to drive effective classroom instruction. As a building leader, she helped lead her building from an accountability grade of an F to an A in two years.

Andrea has also provided professional development for the University of Indianapolis' elementary education program and for educational webinars with Kappa Delta Pi. Andrea most recently worked at the Indiana Department of Education in the Office of School Improvement as an Outreach Coordinator for Marion County, working closely with schools and districts to develop best practices for schools in turnaround status. After conducting classroom walk-throughs and leadership/staff interviews, she worked with the school leadership team to develop the next steps that met the needs of each individual school. She often provided differentiated professional development for each school for this process. Andrea also served as the IDOE case manager for a district in the State Development Network (SDN) to ensure the development of district system alignment and improve student achievement.

Courtney Lumbley, Director of School Improvement: Courtney's educational pathway began with a B.A. in Elementary Education from DePauw University, an M.Ed. from Indiana Wesleyan University in Curriculum and Instruction, and an endorsement for administration through WGU's Educational Leadership program. Her twelve years of classroom experience span grades three through twelve including Title I language arts, high ability, and German language instruction. Courtney taught in MSD Perry Township and Bartholomew Consolidated County Schools before serving in Franklin Township Community School Corporation as a teacher, instructional coach, and building administrator where quality instruction and collaboration for student growth was her focus. Courtney worked with teams of teachers implementing a data-driven Tier 2 and 3 intervention plan to impact student achievement. Before her role as a building administrator in Franklin Township, Courtney received the honor of Teacher of the Year for the district and finalist for the Indiana State Teacher of the Year.

Melissa Morris, Regional Director: Melissa has over 13 years of experience in the education system, working as a classroom teacher, Instructional Coach and in the last 7 years, as a Principal. She was named Teacher of the Year in Indianapolis in 2010. Under her leadership, her elementary school was recognized as one of the IDOE's Schools for Best Instructional Practices in 2017. It was then ranked #5 out of 161 Marion County Public Schools on ILEARN ELA scores at a high poverty school in 2019. Through her various roles, Melissa has experience in supporting school improvement through the selection and implementation of robust curricula and student achievement supports, data-driven implementation of MTSS and PBIS frameworks, and facilitating the professional development of educators including developing and utilizing individualized growth plans for staff.

JoAnn Gama, Chief Human Assets Officer: JoAnn has more than twenty years of experience serving in various roles at educational nonprofits and school districts. In her most recent employment at IDEA public schools, JoAnn served in leadership positions including school leader, Chief of New Schools, Chief Operating Officer, Superintendent, and a CEO. As CEO for IDEA, JoAnn managed 130 schools and more than 68,000 students across Texas and Louisiana. Prior to IDEA Public Schools, JoAnn served as a classroom teacher at Aldine ISD, in Texas. As the Chief Human Assets Officer at PLA, JoAnn focuses on meeting data-driven KPIs for several key HR priority areas, which include recruiting and onboarding talented educators and staff; providing opportunities for ongoing teacher development and retention; and maintaining a strong school leadership pipeline. JoAnn graduated with a Liberal Arts degree in International Relations from Boston University, and obtained her Masters degree in Educational Leadership from the University of Texas.

Amber Deckard, National Director of Recruitment: Amber is an accomplished Executive in the nonprofit industry. She has over 20 years' experience in nonprofit leadership including human resources and talent management. Amber first joined the team in 2010 as a Regional Director for Summer Advantage where she was instrumental in helping the program reach thousands of scholars across the country. In 2014 Amber was called to serve as a Regional Vice President for a national nonprofit charged with improving birth outcomes and health equity for moms and babies in the US. During her tenure, Amber was successful in building teams across 26 Markets in the Midwest, supporting a reduction in both premature birth and health equity disparities – both critical focuses for the Foundation.

Arely Benavides, Chief Operating Officer: Arely has more than twenty years of experience in operations, strategy and logistics. While her work began as a management consultant with Accenture and Kurt Salmon Associates, she transitioned to lead operations with consumer products companies like Oakley and VF Corp. Over the last eight years, she has worked in education including five years at IDEA Public Schools as the Child Nutrition Director and then Senior Vice President of Operations. Arely graduated with a

Bachelor of Science degree in Operations Research and an MBA from MIT, and obtained her Masters in Administration, Planning and Social Policy from Harvard.

Enjuelle Livingston, Director of Operations: Prior to joining Phalen Leadership Academies, Enjuelle served as the Managing Director of Operations and Strategic Growth at KIPP Texas Public Schools-Houston. Since 2010, she oversaw regional campus operations, transportation and child nutrition services. She was also responsible for developing and leading district wide initiatives that targeted improving operational efficiency and productivity in alignment to the organizations' strategic growth and expansion plans. Prior to entering educational leadership, Enjuelle worked with Deloitte, specializing in consulting clients on process and procedure improvements. She graduated with a B.B.A. in Finance from the University of Notre Dame and M.B.A. from the University of Texas.

Nicole Scott, Chief of Compliance, Legal and External Partners: Nicole Scott has over 12 years of experience as an attorney and leader in the education/charter school industry. Most recently, Nicole served as Chief of Employee Solutions & Legal Affairs for KIPP Los Angeles Schools. In this role, Nicole served as General Counsel and led the human resources department for all school sites operated by KIPP LA. Nicole also managed the relationship between KIPP L.A. and Los Angeles Unified School District, the organization's authorizer. She was instrumental in getting a K-8 charter school approved through Compton Unified School District for KIPP as well. Prior to joining the KIPP team, Nicole worked with the Inner City Education Foundation as SVP of Talent and General Counsel where she was instrumental in getting the first charter middle school approved through Inglewood Unified School district. Before committing her career to education, Nicole was an associate at a leading law firm in Los Angeles and worked for various entertainment companies such as Sony Pictures and the William Morris Agency. Nicole is a proud alumna of Spelman College and the UC Berkeley School of Law, Boalt Hall.

Adrienne Page, Director of Special Education: Adrienne came to PLA with 9 years of experience in special education. At her previous position as Special Education Specialist with Indianapolis Public Schools, she increased academic achievement in special education students by providing direct support to classroom teachers and special education teachers. In this role, Adrienne would provide coaching to teachers in customizing classroom instruction as well as daily routines and procedures to accommodate the unique needs of special education students. Prior to this, she worked directly as a Special Education Compliance Monitor for Indianapolis Public Schools district, evaluating and ensuring IEPs, ACRs and other special education records and policies followed local compliance laws. Adrienne is a graduate of Marian College and Kentucky State University.

Eva Spilker, Chief Financial Officer: Eva has served as Controller and Finance Director at Diamondback Direct, an international division of Quadriga Direct Mail Holdings—a leading global provider of direct marketing services. Her responsibilities included all finance and accounting functions as well as short- and long-term forecasting, payroll and benefit management, internal and external reporting, executive team and board presentations, margin and audit management, and annual budgeting. Eva's career in finance began in the Corporate Financial Consulting Division of Ernst & Young in Baltimore, Maryland. She then transitioned to the Economics Group of CSX Intermodal where she developed long term planning models as well as all capital expenditure justifications and analyses. After CSX, Eva transitioned to a partner role in a regional advertising agency where she managed all finance and operations functions. Eva holds an economics degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Johnny Jin, Chief Strategy & Development Officer: Johnny brings over a decade of proven leadership in institutional advancement to achieve large-scale social impact. As a core member of the PLA founding team, Johnny helped grow a regional summer learning pilot into a high-performing school network serving over 10,000 children across the country. In this capacity, Johnny develops pathways to scale; oversees the procurement of grants and contracts; and facilitates the calibration of strategy to drive sustained growth and success. Johnny has consulted with companies and initiatives on projects concerning early childhood literacy, city-wide arts education, social studies innovation, and adult professional development. Johnny is a first-generation college graduate. He earned his BA in Economics from UC Berkeley (where he graduated early in two years), and a Master's in Education Policy and Management from Harvard.

2. Describe the team's individual and collective qualifications for implementing the school design successfully, including capacity in areas such as:
   - School leadership, administration, and governance;
   - Curriculum, instruction, and assessment;
   - Performance management; and
   - Parent and community engagement.

As described above, our leadership team has a wide range of experienced team members who possess expertise and skill sets in core functional areas that are instrumental to the educational and operational success of the school, including instructional leadership, professional development, nonprofit management, facilities, community engagement, business, and financial administration. As highlighted in our track record of success, our team knows how to succeed for children and families.

The success of PLA scholars can be attributed to the comprehensive, high quality services that PLA provides to its schools and scholars, including successful management of non-academic school functions. While some educational management organizations only offer human resources and accounting support, PLA provides a strong continuum of services, which include:
- An outstanding educational program (i.e., research-based curricular framework, pacing guides, and assessments).
- Recruitment of exceptional school leadership and outstanding teachers.
- Pre-service professional development and an on-going coaching cycle for teachers, as well as an online educator development portal.
- Operational support — including payroll, accounting, HR, policy development, legal counsel, and grants management — so that our educators can maximize their efforts in delivering a high-quality educational experience to scholars.
- On-site quality assurance monitoring and support.
- Behavior and classroom management systems.
- Parental engagement framework.

The qualifications of our team have been described in detail in question one of this section, and their specific roles and duties within the organization and within the proposed schools will be elaborated upon in question six. While all of our departments provide holistic support, we have highlighted the departments that contribute the most to the areas listed above:
- School leadership, administration, and governance
  - Academics, Human Assets, Recruitment, Legal
- Curriculum, instruction, and assessment
  - Academics, Programs, Recruitment, Human Assets
- Performance management
  - Human Assets, Academics, Operations
- Parent and community engagement
  - Operations, Communications, Academics

Additionally, PLA has in place strong systems and processes to ensure student safety; healthy school finances; federal, state, authorizer, and local compliance. PLA works collaboratively with our schools to ensure that our students are receiving the high-quality education and support they need and deserve.

3. Describe the group's ties to and/or knowledge of the target community(ies).

PLA is one of the few nonprofit school operators in the country led by a team composed primarily of leaders of color. Our leaders have devoted their adult lives to improving the lives of children in underserved communities. We have also served children and families throughout Indiana for the past 10 years. We have deep ties to and knowledge of the communities that we serve. Phalen is committed to serving children who may otherwise not have access to a high quality education. Network-wide, approximately 86% of the children we serve are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, and 89% are Black or Latinx. Our students often arrive at Phalen schools having spent years attending chronically underperforming schools, and as a result, children come to us performing on

average 2.5 years below grade level. A critical need we consistently see across our network is to help children catch up academically, and our model has a proven track record of raising achievement for the children we serve.

4. Identify any organizations, agencies, or consultants that are partners in planning and establishing the school(s), along with a brief description of their current and planned role and any resources they have contributed or plan to contribute to the school's development.

Not Applicable.

5. Provide, as **Attachment 9**, the resume for the proposed school leader. Below, provide and discuss specific evidence that the proposed school leader demonstrates the capacity to design, launch, and manage a high-performing charter school with the anticipated student population. If no candidate has been identified, provide as **Attachment 10** the job description or qualifications, and discuss the timeline, criteria, and recruiting and selection process for hiring the school leader.

Currently, no candidate has been identified for the school leader. Recruitment for the role will begin November 2022 and hiring season will begin in February 2023 for the first two schools. As referenced in the professional development section, PLA has developed a structured program, Principal-in-Residence (PIR), to train and develop promising new school leaders. While this role will be open to all applicants, PLA has a pipeline of potential strong candidates and are confident in our ability to fill these school leadership roles. Please see Attachment 10 for more details on the timeline, criteria, and recruiting and selection process.

6. Describe the responsibilities and qualifications of the school's leadership/management team beyond the principal/head of school. If known, identify the individuals who will fill these positions and provide, as **Attachment 11**, the resumes for these individuals. If these positions are not yet filled, explain the timeline, criteria, and process for recruitment and hiring.

PLA is a non-profit organization that was founded by educators. PLA's Central Office team includes 144 leaders who bring decades of classroom experience, school and instructional leadership track record, project management expertise, and substantial knowledge in key operational aspects, including compliance, reporting, and program management. The team supports our schools with instructional leadership and curriculum development; extended learning opportunities; talent selection; training and professional development; program and organizational development; evaluation and assessment; parent and community engagement; and budget and grants management. Please see the chart below describing the duties of each role, and please refer to Attachment 11 for their resumes.

Name	Title	Responsibilities
Earl Martin Phalen	Chief Executive Officer	Earl is responsible for maintaining the overall mission and strategic vision for the PLA network. He also ensures this mission and vision is realized through strong school partnerships, robust quality-focused systems and processes and a strong implementation of the PLA educational model.
Andrea Robinson	Chief Academic Officer	Andrea sets the strategic vision and direction for the instructional framework and pedagogical approach to PLA's academic programs. The CAO works to create authentic partnerships between the central academics team and network schools to ensure effective teaching in every classroom, and to create conditions for systemic improvement of practice over time across all schools.
Courtney Lumbley	Director of School Improvement	Courtney supports school leadership in overseeing school-wide improvement in instructional quality, educator retention and school climate & culture. She communicates frequently with school leaders to progress monitor the customized implementation of the PLA educational model.

		Courtney also facilitates year-round implementation guidance to support scholar- and educator-focused outcomes.
Melissa Morris	Regional Director	Melissa leads the region to accomplish all measures of student success, staff performance and retention, and operational stability. The Regional Director sets the vision for excellence with regard to academics, organizational culture, and long-term success across the region by implementing the PLA model with fidelity. Melissa reports to the Chief Academic Officer and partners closely with senior leaders and national teams across the organization to contribute to the overall success of our scholars. at the schools in her region. She provides real-time support to school teams and assists them in implementing the PLA model.
JoAnn Gama	Chief Human Assets Officer	JoAnn is responsible for guiding and managing human resources functions, which include: policies and programs, staff retention, employee orientation, policy development & documentation, employee relations, compensation & benefits, HR regulatory compliance, and collaboration on performance management, employee training and development.
Amber Deckard	National Director of Recruitment	Amber is responsible for talent sourcing, interviewing, and hiring of our national team, regional teams, summer staff and all school-based personnel including academy leadership, teachers, and support staff.
Arely Benavides	Chief Operating Officer	Arely focuses on meeting data-driven KPIs for several key priority areas which include attracting families, talented staff and community partners to PLA by increasing awareness and promoting PLA's portfolio of excellent services; providing opportunities for scholars to enroll at a PLA school; and offering quality services in technology, data management, facilities, transportation, child nutrition and health services.
Enjuelle Livingston	National Director of Operations	Enjuelle is responsible for implementing numerous school-wide systems and procedures, managing faculty and data as well as vendor relationships, and working side by side with school leaders to improve the overall functionality of our schools. She is also responsible for leading the day-to-day tasks and projects of the Operations team and ensuring the effective implementation of PLA's data-driven operational systems and processes to meet ongoing school needs.
Nicole Scott	Chief of Compliance, Legal & External Partners	Nicole is responsible for setting the overall vision and managing the Legal and Compliance department. Her duties include handling the legal business of PLA in a manner that supports senior leadership and school leadership in mitigating legal matters, so that their focus can remain on student achievement; protecting the interests of PLA and its students in both external and internal legal matters; providing advice and counsel across teams to achieve ongoing compliance in support of our organization's mission.
Adrienne Page	Director of Special Populations	Adrienne is responsible for managing all of PLA's special education services, including ensuring that all special education programming is in compliance with state and federal laws. She ensures that our special education teachers and teachers with inclusive classrooms are delivering excellent instruction and meeting the needs of PLA's students who have IEP plans and who receive special education services.
Eva Spilker	Chief Financial Officer	Eva is responsible for all aspects of our consolidated financial management including monthly financials, state and federal grants, cash management, budget creation and management, cash flow forecasting,

		board reporting and payroll. She is also responsible for audit management, vendor and bank relationships and all state, federal and philanthropic grant financial reporting.
Johnny Jin	Chief Strategy & Development Officer	Johnny provides leadership on strategic initiatives that drive sustainable growth and quality outcomes for the organization. In partnership with the CEO and cross-functional teams, Johnny guides the iterative process of institutional advancement; articulates theory of action and service models; manages federal funding for all network schools; oversees the entire cycle of proposal and RFP development; develops performance management systems; and helps ensure the effective use of resources for the mission.

Through this support system, PLA is able to manage the operational elements of running a school so that educators are empowered and supported in delivering high quality instruction to scholars.

7. Explain who will work on a full-time or nearly full-time basis following assignment of a location to lead development of the school and the plan to compensate these individuals

In addition to the support described above from the central office, there will be a robust regional team in place who will work full-time to oversee the region, help lead the development of the school, and provide ongoing support after the school is open. Please find a list of the roles and responsibilities of each member of the regional team below:

Role	Responsibilities
Regional Director	The Regional Director leads the regional team to accomplish all measures of student success, staff performance and retention, and operational stability. The Regional Director sets the vision for excellence with regard to academics, organizational culture, and long-term success across the region by implementing the PLA model with fidelity.
Regional Instructional Specialist	Key responsibilities of our Regional Instructional Specialist will include a) supporting the implementation of the observational walkthroughs of the PLA Coaching Cycle; b) facilitating weekly meetings for Professional Learning Communities, providing direct coaching to teachers; c) conducting regular evaluation visits to progress monitor and course correct to support instructional excellence, and more. Our Instructional Specialist will support teachers with effective lesson planning, utilization of supplemental resources, classroom and behavior management.
Regional Recruiter	The Regional Recruiter works on the ground to source and hire talent that helps address current gaps and improvement areas in each school's staff pipeline. The Recruiter works closely with the Regional Director and school leadership teams to identify current gaps and source candidates to fill these gaps.
Regional Operations Manager	The Regional Operations Manager will provide real-time support for current operational needs at each school. They will also help create and manage vendor contracts and relationships, as well as ensuring each school receives any required maintenance and renovations, as needed.
Regional Climate and Culture Specialist	The Regional Climate & Culture Specialist will support the implementation of PLA's climate and culture management systems and processes throughout the school year. They will work directly with school leaders and staff to ensure strong understanding of key systems and address any implementation issues as they occur.

PLA will offer competitive salary and benefits, commensurate with experience for each of these positions.

GOVERNANCE

Legal Status and Governing Documents

> **Meets Standard Expectation**
> - Proposed school's legal status and structure are in compliance with state law.
> - Governing bylaws, policies, and procedures are comprehensive and sound.

1. Describe the proposed school's legal status, including non-profit status and federal tax-exempt status. Submit Articles of Incorporation, proof of non-profit status and tax exempt status (or copies of your filings for the preceding items), and any governing documents already adopted, such as board policies, in **Attachment 12**. Submit, as **Attachment 13**, the completed and signed Statement of Assurances.

Phalen Leadership Academies is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Organization Charts

> **Meets Standard Expectation**
> - The organization charts should clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of – and lines of authority and reporting among – the governing board, staff, any related bodies (such as advisory boards or parent/teacher councils), and any external organizations that will play a role in managing the school.
> - The organization charts should also document clear lines of authority and reporting within the school(s).

1. Submit, as **Attachment 14**, organization charts that show the school governance, network management, leadership, and staffing structure in: a) Year 1; and b) at full build-out.

Governing Board

> **Meets Standard Expectation**
> - Effective governance structure for network and school governance, whether each school will have an independent board or there will be one or more boards overseeing multiple schools. Well-planned board(s) size, powers, duties, and current and desired composition that will foster school(s)/network success.
> - Clear division of duties if there will be multiple boards serving multiple schools.
> - Clear, appropriate plans for the board(s) to evaluate the success of the school(s) and school leader(s).
> - Proposed board members who demonstrate: (a) will, capacity, and commitment to govern the school(s)/network effectively; and (b) shared vision, purposes, and expectations for the school(s)/network
> - Evidence that the proposed governing board members will contribute the wide range of knowledge, skills, and commitment needed to oversee a successful charter school including educational, financial, legal, business, and community engagement expertise.
> - Sound, timely plan for creating or transitioning to the school governing board *(if applicable)*.
> - Sound plan for transforming existing board to assume its new duties or forming a new board *(if applicant is an existing not-for-profit organization other than a charter school governing board)*.
> - Other effective governance procedures, including planned frequency of meetings and standing committees.
> - Appropriate proposed Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest policy/procedures that will minimize real or perceived conflicts.
> - Sound plan and timeline for board recruitment, expansion, orientation of new members, and ongoing training for members. Plan should include a thoughtful identification of desired experience and capacities.
> - If there will be a network-level board, plan for clear identification and plan for addressing board development needs relative to growth.

1. Describe the governance structure and size of the proposed board and the plan for satisfying all applicable statutory and authorizer requirements for the composition of school governing boards. Explain how the governance structure and compositions will help ensure that a) the school will be an educational and operational success; b) the board will evaluate the success of the school and school leader; and c) there will be active and effective representation of key stakeholders within the proposed community(ies) being served, including parents.

PLA's governing board is made of members who possess expertise in core functional areas including education and instructional leadership, professional development, nonprofit management, facilities, community engagement, business, and financial administration.

The PLA governing board currently consists of five board members. The full board meets quarterly, and is active in supporting our schools. Key responsibilities include ensuring strong academic outcomes, financial oversight, fundraising and oversight of the CEO and management team. PLA's board uses a mix of operational mechanisms to monitor itself and ensure that it provides excellent leadership. This starts with PLA's policies and procedures. The board has clear conflict of interest policies and uses an equitable, transparent and fair voting process for decision-making. Additionally, our board is made up of expertise-driven committees which monitor strategic areas such as academics, finance, facilities and more. This provides regular quality assurance and monitoring throughout the year.

During quarterly meetings, the board conducts a comprehensive review of activities through financial reports and a balanced scorecard which illustrates our performance on measures such as educational performance, employee satisfaction, systems, and finance. The board reviews and votes to adopt the annual operating budget. The proposed schools will utilize the following systems to ensure that the school board can evaluate the success of the schools and school leaders: 1) PLA's Academic team will prepare student achievement reports for regular board meetings that are provided to Board Chairs and committee liaisons, and will facilitate school visits; 2) PLA's Finance team will share reports and updates regarding budgeting, significant purchases, partnership agreements, and more with the Board; 3) PLA's Communications team will share monthly e-newsletters including the latest, most important updates and events; 4) PLA's functional leaders and school administration will meet bi-weekly and share the most recent successes and challenges with each other; and lastly, 5) PLA's professional development processes, particularly Coaching Cycle and the PLA Learning Institute, provide a reservoir of real-time data points and resources that can be shared with board chairs and committee liaisons as needed. Through this governance structure, our educators are empowered to deliver excellence in instruction with clear accountability around data-driven outcomes. All board meetings are open to the public which encourages engagement with families and community stakeholders.

Our governance structure is one that intentionally includes key stakeholders through a variety of mechanisms built into our model. Primarily, we see this within our professional development system, scholar check-in sessions, and our evidence-based family engagement framework.

Our comprehensive educator professional development framework is data-driven and provides real time engagement with staff, scholars, and families. For example, the PLA Coaching Cycle will provide regular walkthroughs, observations, and live feedback to educators that is directly tied to scholar academic growth and achievement goals. In weekly Professional Learning Communities, educators will work together to conduct data deep-dives and select targeted, evidence-based intervention strategies that best support scholar growth and achievement goals. Through these learning communities, they will collaborate with other educators, and proactively engage with families and other stakeholders.

Another opportunity to engage stakeholders is to focus on the academic and personal needs of scholars. Through the professional development cycle, staff will be trained in providing additional support to scholars. Teachers will create opportunities to listen intently to scholar needs, actively involve them in understanding and pursuing personalized academic progress goals, support them in their learning process, and give shared ownership to our scholars in making academic progress. Examples of this extra support will include: Teacher lunches with groups of kids who are facing the same challenging situations (e.g. being homeless, having an incarcerated parent, or being in foster care) and check-in sessions. In biweekly check-in sessions, teachers will review with students

their progress on weekly assessments, identify standards for further learning, and set a quantifiable goal for the next check-in. During these sessions, PLA teachers guide students in recognizing their own improvement and reflecting on the effort and hard work that created improvement. This is further facilitated by recognizing growth during check-in sessions, not just letter grades. Students will be explicitly and regularly rewarded for progress toward shared goals. We will also display student work and teacher kudos in both hallways and classrooms, communicating regularly with parents about kids' successes, and honoring kids who do things for others.

PLA prioritizes family engagement and makes a concerted effort to deepen its relationships with families. Scholars and families also have access to outside support services to meet more intensive scholar needs, and families are involved in planning for the optimal growth and development of their child. Teachers are trained to authentically partner with families and understand scholar needs, and to support family success through events, parent workshops, and more. One example of this is Parents in Touch days at the school, where families and teachers can delve into a scholar's academic and behavioral progress towards goals. We will also invite families to visit their child's classes, participate in field trips, or support the school in any way they feel comfortable. Teachers also communicate regularly with families through biweekly report cards, parent newsletters, and making calls home not only to report challenging behavior, but also to praise examples of positive behavior. We will maintain an open-door policy and invite families not only to school events, but also to participate in the classroom where they can meaningfully engage with their children as well as the teachers and staff at the school. The PLA family engagement process ensures that families are able to a) voice their input on their child's academic needs and interests; b) understand the PLA model and how it works within the school to strengthen student achievement; and c) access real-time feedback from educators through regular communication channels. Through these specific strategies, PLA ensures that families are partners in achieving school success.

The key strategies described above show how many opportunities are built in to ensure representation for all key stakeholders, specifically scholars, parents, and teachers, to participate in the governance structure of the PLA model.

2. **Replication Schools:** If there will be both a network-level board and boards at each school, describe the organizational relationship between the boards, the legal status of each board, and the scope of authority of each. If each school will have an independent governing board but no network-level board, explain how the network will be governed and how decisions that affect the network as a whole will be made.

Not Applicable. The PLA Board will serve as the network-level and individual school board.

3. **Replication Schools:** Explain how the interests of individual schools will be balanced with network interests and how key stakeholders will be represented.

PLA schools start with educators—those who will have the greatest direct impact on the outcomes of our scholars. Educators will be supported by school leaders, who provide the necessary resources, tools, and feedback to ensure goals are achieved for all scholars. The principal will also provide instructional leadership by coaching teachers and fostering a performance-based culture centered around student outcomes. Instructional coaches provide support to our teachers in the effective delivery of classroom instruction through coaching and feedback. Additionally, the school is supported by the Director of Training and the Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Specialist in the development and implementation of data-driven professional development opportunities.

The evidence-based core elements of the PLA model are standardized across all schools in the network, but within that framework, school leaders have autonomy to make decisions. Some of these decisions include: (1) Instructional decisions, such as lesson planning, designing targeted interventions, and more; (2) Personnel decisions, such as staff selection, coaching, and retention; (3) Vendor decisions such as choosing partners for technology and wraparound services; and (4) Operational decisions such as staff assignments, school events, and scholar recognition and retention.

The highest levels of leadership within the organization are designed to support effective, data-driven decision-making at the school level. All school leaders participate in weekly team meetings with their Regional Directors and support teams. PLA school leaders meet with their school-level administrative team twice weekly and use this time to engage in robust and frank conversations about key priorities and challenges School leaders continuously gather data from sources including weekly curriculum-based assessments, NWEA interim assessments, scholar progress feedback sessions, teacher observations, and the results of adaptive learning software quizzes. These data sources are the tools that will empower school leaders to make evidence-based school management decisions.

The school administration staff and school leaders benefit from the full support of the central office. Support services include recruitment and marketing, professional development, payroll, policy development, legal, and grants management. Through this support system, the central office will be able to manage the operational elements of running a school so that our educators can focus their efforts on delivering a high quality educational experience to scholars. The school principal reports to the governing board, and the board holds ultimate accountability for the performance of the school.

Furthermore, we will utilize the following strategies to ensure that school-level interests are communicated and addressed in a structured process:

- The PLA Academic team, alongside School Leaders and Regional Directors, prepares student achievement reports for regular board meetings that are provided to Board Chairs and committee liaisons.
- The PLA Finance team, working collaboratively with Regional Directors, communicates regularly with Board Chairs, sharing reports and updates regarding budgeting, significant purchases, partnership agreements etc.
- The PLA Communications team, working collaboratively with School Leaders and regional Directors, shares monthly e-newsletters including the latest, most important updates and events.
- The PLA functional leaders and school administration meet bi-weekly and share the most recent successes and challenges with each other.
- The PLA Academic team, board chairs and committee liaisons communicate directly and regularly through school visits.
- The PLA professional development processes, particularly Coaching Cycle and PLA University, provide a reservoir of real-time data points and resources that can be shared with board chairs and committee liaisons as needed.

The national office's role is as a service center to all PLA schools, and since the needs of the schools are the priority, the network's interests and schools interests are indistinguishable. This model is designed to ensure that all schools are achieving their potential to succeed.

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4. As **Attachment 15**, list the members of the school's proposed governing board, network and/or independent, with the following information:
   - Summary of members' interests in and qualifications for serving on the school's board; and
   - Full resumes (including contact information).

5. As **Attachment 16,** provide a completed and signed Board Member Notice of Disclosure for each proposed board member.

6. If the current applicant team does not include an initial governing board, explain how and when the transition to the formal governing board will take place.

Not Applicable.

7. If this application is being submitted by an existing non-profit organization respond to the following:
   - Will the existing non-profit board govern the new school(s), or has(have) the school(s) formed a new non-profit corporation governed by a separate board?

The existing non-profit board will govern the proposed new schools.

- If the non-profit's current board will govern the school(s), what steps have been taken to transform its board membership, mission, and bylaws to assume its new duties? Describe the plan and timeline for completing the transition and orienting the board to its new duties.

The PLA board has a clear set of roles and responsibilities, and governs accordingly. The philosophy of the PLA board is that it holds the school principal and the leadership team accountable for fulfilling its mission. Ultimately, the focus of the PLA board will be to ensure that the proposed schools fulfill their mission and vision for children and families.

PLA is a non-profit operating as the CMO, and the PLA board has extensive experience governing schools. Taking this into consideration, we recognize the addition of these potential schools as an expansion of their current duties. The PLA board will continue to uphold all current responsibilities for new proposed schools including the governance and oversight process and performance management systems as described previously in this section. As part of the responsibility of governing a new school, we will ensure that the board has the opportunity to visit new schools and meet with key stakeholders and campus leadership as they are identified. Based on past experience and expertise, we are expecting a smooth transition for the board to expand their current roles.

- If a new board has been formed, describe what, if anything, its ongoing relationship to the existing non-profit board will be.

Not Applicable.

8. Explain the procedure by which board members have been and will be selected. Discuss how often the board will meet and the plans for any committee structure.

We are pleased to have a strong board already in place, with members who possess expertise and skill sets in core functional areas that are instrumental to the educational and operational success of the school, including instructional leadership, professional development, nonprofit management, facilities, community engagement, business, and financial administration. As shared above, the board meets quarterly. PLA currently has three active committees:
- Audit
- Academics
- Facilities

The process through which board members were selected is outlined below in question 10.

9. Describe the board's ethical standards and procedures for identifying and addressing conflicts of interest. Identify any existing relationships that could pose actual or perceived conflicts if the application is approved; discuss specific steps that the board will take to avoid any actual conflicts and to mitigate perceived conflicts. Provide, as **Attachment 17**, the board's proposed Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest policy.

Any Board member, officer of the Organizer, or individual who is to hold a leadership position in the operation of the Charter School, including any administrative position (together, "Interested Persons"), any family member of any Interested Person, or any organization in which the Interested Person has a more than a 2% ownership position, which has any direct or indirect financial interest in any party with which the Organizer contracts for services must disclose to the Board, or to a committee designated by the Board as having the authority to review potential conflicts of interest, the existence of his or her financial interest, and may be given the opportunity to disclose facts material to that interest to the Board or committee. A "financial interest" includes any current or potential ownership interest in, investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with such party. The term "family member" includes any spouse, parent, child, or sibling of the Interested Person. The disinterested members of the Board (that is, all members except for any Interested Person) or committee will evaluate the impact of the Interested Person's financial interest, assess whether a conflict of interest arises from the financial interest, and determine what action, if any, is appropriate with regard to the financial

interest and any conflict of interest. The Board or committee shall conduct whatever additional investigation is considered appropriate under the circumstances.

10. Describe plans for increasing the capacity of the governing board. The plan for training and development should include:
    ● Timetable;
    ● Specific topics to be addressed; and
    ● Requirements for participation.
    If there will be a network-level board, identify any board development requirements relative to the organization's proposed growth and governance needs.

We believe that capacity can be expanded by ensuring strong diversity in terms of representation, experience and expertise. Our board's current expertise is especially strong within the scopes of educational management, financial management, and nonprofit leadership. We recognize that our board could benefit from growth in a few areas of functional experience, specifically operational management, fundraising, and community engagement. We will continue to strengthen capacity with these goals in mind.

Governance training will be a continuous experience embedded into the school year. Some of the continuous learning experiences for PLA board members include:
● New member orientation covering policies, procedures, pre-circulated meeting agendas, executive sessions, regular self-assessments, bylaws review, conflict of interest policy, and board member duties.
● Use of the online e-learning platform, the PLA Learning Institute, to learn about PLA's educational model and implementation of best practices.
● School visits and classroom observations.
● Data-dives and best practices sharing from instructional leaders.
● Guest speakers from leading educational institutions.

Criteria for selecting training will be largely determined by a skills gap assessment. Training strategies include:
1. External experts who will provide workshops: Key topics include organizational strategy, strategic planning, gathering, and presenting stakeholder feedback, developing a decision-making matrix, and more. Experts will also bolster board member knowledge by sharing best practices from the field for each topic.
2. Board members with functional expertise will provide training to fellow board members: For example, a board member with a strong academic background may walk others through understanding and drawing meaningful interpretations from NWEA assessments. Similarly, a board member with nonprofit financial management may train others on processes and systems to continually refine resource allocation.
3. Internal experts who will provide training at board meetings: For example, our academic team may train board members to view scholar data using the student data warehouse. Similarly, our compliance team may provide an overview of applicable state federal and local laws that our school abides by.
4. Program partners: Will provide training on the specific ways they are supporting our school.

Through these strategies, we will ensure that each board member has a foundational understanding of key school components such as academics, finance, and professional development. The overall goal is for our educators and board members to work as a team in achieving academic growth for scholars.

Advisory Bodies

Meets Standard Expectation
● Clear roles, duties, and composition of any advisory bodies/councils, and effective relationship to the school governing board and leadership.

1. Describe any advisory bodies or councils to be formed, including the roles and duties of that body.

While PLA currently does not have any advisory bodies in place, we are open to exploring forming advisory bodies where needed.

2. Describe the planned composition of the advisory body; the strategy for achieving that composition; the role of parents, students, and teachers (if applicable); and the reporting structure as it relates to the school's governing body and leadership.

If PLA developed any advisory boards, the goal would be to include members from the educational community and beyond, selected for depth and range of knowledge in their field. In addition to having community members, this is an excellent opportunity to expand family engagement in an advisory capacity that provides insight and makes recommendations. Recognizing that all parents, guardians, staff members, and scholars are stakeholders in the school will have a distinct role in the development of the advisory board. The individuals represented on the board will include teachers, parents, and community members. Teachers could be selected to serve by their peers, and parent representatives would be nominated and voted on annually. The size of the advisory body will be dependent on need, scope, and interest. Since advisory boards are typically supplemental to the Board of Directors, the Board of Directors would oversee any advisory boards thare are formed.

Grievance Process

Meets Standard Expectation
- Fair, accessible grievance process for parents and students.

1. Explain the process that the school will follow should a parent or student have an objection to a governing board policy or decision, administrative procedure, or practice at the school.

PLA has adopted specific policies and procedures to address harassment (Title IX), discrimination and bullying concerns in its school environment. The specific grievance procedures for these issues can be found in the school handbook. If a complaint of this nature is made to a staff member, the staff member must follow the guidelines and procedures set forth in the aforementioned policies.

In regards to all other issues of concern, the PLA board, faculty and administration make every effort to avoid problems but parents and scholars will occasionally disagree with decisions that are made in regards to discipline, grades, school operations or procedures. PLA believes in open-door communication within its school community and we believe this facilitates problem solving and conflict resolution. If a scholar, parent, or other member of the school community wishes to raise a concern regarding a school policy, practice, or alleged misconduct by a scholar or staff member, or any other concern they should follow the process noted below.
- In most cases, issues can be resolved when parents or scholars speak to the person who is directly responsible for decisions that have been made concerning a scholar. Generally, this is the scholar's teacher. If the teacher cannot resolve the issue, he or she will direct you to the appropriate contact for assistance.
- If there is no resolution after the discussion or meeting with the teacher, the matter should be taken to the School Leader. If the issue or concern is about a teacher or staff member, the initial contact should be with the School Leader or the Director of Academics.
- If the matter is not resolved by the teacher or School Leader/Director of Academics, the scholar or responsible adult may contact the PLA Human Resources Department to initiate a formal investigation of the matter. If the complaint or grievance is against the School Leader or Director of Academics, the matter should be initiated with the Human Resources Department.

Formal Investigations

1. Any scholar, parent or school community member may contact the PLA Network Human Resources Department to lodge a formal complaint or grievance. The complaint should include contact information and as much detail about the issue as possible.
2. A member of the HR Department will be assigned to investigate the matter. The HR representative may interview witnesses, obtain written statements, and/or request the interested parties to present evidence. The investigator may provide the parents/guardians of the scholars who are parties to an investigation with information about the investigation to the extent permitted by law.
3. Investigations will be completed with written findings submitted to the Regional Director within 30 school days after receipt of the formal complaint.
4. A complaint may be made anonymously; however, disciplinary action will not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.
5. The investigative report should include the findings of the investigator and should include recommended resolution options. The Decision Maker should affirm or reject the findings and recommendations of the investigator. If additional action is deemed necessary, the Decision Maker will notify Legal, the CEO or the Board of Directors (Board).
6. If circumstances prevent the investigation from being completed within 30 days, the investigator must notify (Chief HR) and present the reason(s) for the delay. The investigator must also notify the interested parties of the delay and set a new date for completion of the investigation.

Resolution

The resolution or remedy will depend on the nature of the particular situation and may include positive behavioral interventions; a public statement by an administrator regarding applicable school policies; or opportunities for a complainant to explain, in writing or face to face, to an alleged perpetrator that certain conduct is unwelcome or inappropriate. Where applicable, disciplinary measures may also be taken.

Board of Directors

The Legal Department will maintain a record of reports received under this policy and shall provide a report to the Board on an annual basis summarizing the issues addressed and actions taken in response. If a matter is reported to the Department of Child Services or the local law enforcement agency, the Board President will be notified immediately of the report. An individual who (i) submits a report in accordance with this policy or (ii) is otherwise affected by the resolution of an issue, and is not satisfied with the resolution provided, may make a written request to the Board for reconsideration of the matter. The request should identify the specific reasons why reconsideration is sought. The Board (or at the discretion of the Board president, a committee of the board) may, in its sole discretion, hold a meeting to gather and consider such information as it deems appropriate to determine whether to grant the request for reconsideration. If appropriate under the Indiana Open Door Law, the Board or committee may elect to hold any such meeting in executive session.

School Management Contracts

Meets Standard Expectation
- Compensation is clearly articulated and includes a detailed description of the management fee, as well as all pass-through expenses.
- Clear process for choosing the identified ESP/CMO
- Effective relationship between the school governing board and the ESP/CMO to support the mission, vision, and educational programming of the proposed school.
- Includes a term sheet and draft of proposed contract detailing roles and responsibilities of the school governing board, the school staff, and the service provider; scope of services and resources to be provided by the service provider; performance evaluation measures and mechanisms; detailed explanation of compensation to be paid to the provider; financial controls and oversight; methods of contract oversight and enforcement; investment disclosure; and conditions for renewal and termination of the contract.

If the applicant does not intend to contract with an ESP or CMO, mark "Not Applicable" and move to the next section.

1. Describe the ESP/CMO founding year and current geographic footprint.

The George and Veronica Phalen Leadership Academies (PLA) is a nonprofit network of high-quality schools that was founded in 2013 to empower the academic achievement and overall well-being of children from traditionally underserved communities. We are proud to have launched our first school – George and Veronica Phalen Leadership Academy, an A-rated K-8 school – in Indianapolis. Since then, we have expanded our efforts to serve Indiana scholars through additional schools in Indianapolis, as well as schools in Gary, Fort Wayne and Merrillville. Today, we are honored to serve 4,670 scholars across 12 schools in Indiana. PLA also is proud to serve communities in five other states:

- Two (2) schools in Michigan
- Three (3) schools in Texas
- Three (3) schools in Ohio
- Three (3) schools in Alabama
- One (1) school Washington D.C.

Across our network, 86% of our scholars come from families experiencing poverty, and 89% are scholars of color.

2. Explain how and why the ESP/CMO was selected and the due diligence conducted (including a list of other entities assessed during the diligence process, if any).

The proposed schools will act as independent charter schools and their own LEAs, whose charters, if approved, will be held by the PLA board.

3. Provide, as **Attachment 18**, the following:
   - Term sheet setting forth a proposed duration of the contract that aligns with the charter term; roles and responsibilities of the school governing board, the school staff, and the service provider; scope of services and resources to be provided by the service provider; performance evaluation measures and mechanisms; detailed explanation of compensation to be paid to the provider (both management fees and all pass-through expenses, such as for curriculum licensing or technology); financial controls and oversight; methods of contract oversight and enforcement; investment disclosure; and conditions for renewal and termination of the contract;
   - Draft of the proposed management contract detailing all the above limits; and
   - Evidence that the service provider is authorized to do business in Indiana.

4. Summarize the relationship between the school governing board and the ESP/CMO, specifying how the governing board will monitor and evaluate the performance of the provider, the internal controls that will guide the relationship, and how the governing board will ensure fulfillment of performance expectations.

The PLA Board of Directors has set a clear conflict of interest policy, which will be included in staff training for each proposed school. In accordance with the policy, PLA's legal counsel will review all documents and monitor all procedures to ensure there is no real or apparent conflict of interest when selecting potential providers for supplemental services. Furthermore, in line with IC 20-4-24-3-4, new PLA schools complete Charter School Board Member Statement of Economic Interest Conflict of Interest Forms. This process helps us bolster our efforts to ensure no conflicts of interest with our board members. As a network, PLA will ensure that the proposed schools maintain their autonomy by employing these processes for avoiding conflicts of interest. The governing board will ensure fulfillment of performance expectations as described in the Governing Board section, specifically the board's oversight responsibilities for the school and CMO.

5. Disclose and explain any existing or potential conflicts of interest between the school governing board and proposed provider or any affiliated business entities.

Not Applicable.

STAFFING

Staff Structure

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Meets Standard Expectation

- Sensible five-year network staffing that will support high-quality replication at the scale proposed, while continuing success at existing schools *(if applicable)*.
- Sensible staffing rollout plan for the school model(s) aligned with the educational program and conducive to school success.
- Effective structure and strategies for managing the administration-staff relationship.

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1. Provide, as **Attachment 19**, a complete staffing chart for the school(s). The staffing chart(s) and accompanying notes or roster(s) should identify the following:
   - Year 1 positions, as well as positions to be added in future years;
   - Administrative, instructional, and non-instructional personnel;
   - The number of classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, and specialty teachers;
   - Teacher-student ratio, as well as the ratio of total adults to students for the school; and
   - Operational and support staff.

2. Explain how the relationship between the school's network leadership (if applicable), senior administrative team, and the rest of the staff will be managed.

Our proposed schools will be independent charter schools and their own LEAs, with a strong governing board in place. Our school governance plan will center educators—those who have the greatest direct impact on the outcomes of our scholars. Educators will be continuously supported by school leaders, who provide the necessary resources, tools, and feedback to ensure goals are achieved for all scholars. The principal will also provide instructional leadership by coaching teachers and fostering a performance-based culture centered around student outcomes. Instructional coaches work with teachers on a daily basis, providing data-driven coaching and feedback to support educators in the effective delivery of classroom instruction. Furthermore, Instructional Specialists monitor instructional progress to develop and implement data-driven professional development opportunities. School leaders will have the autonomy to make decisions for the school. School leaders will be supported by the central office; support services include professional development, academic guidance, student enrollment, operations, financial management, compliance, and grants management. Through this support system, the central office will be able to manage the operational elements of running a school so that our educators can focus their efforts on delivering a high-quality educational experience to scholars. From an operational perspective, school leadership reports to the PLA Academic team, led by the Chief Academic Officer. PLA as the CMO will also plan on supporting the schools with a regional support team consisting of a Regional Director, Instructional Specialists and Operation Managers. Additionally, year-round progress monitoring tools embedded in the PLA educational model support data-driven decision making. PLA's Academics team helps develop our school leadership through data-driven systems such as the Coaching Cycle for Leaders, Leadership Reviews, while cultivating future leaders through the Principal in Residence program. Educators receive robust support from school and instructional leadership.

Through biweekly all-staff meetings, weekly grade-level meetings, and weekly PLCs, our educators collaborate to analyze trends in scholar performance, share evidence-based strategies and more. During PLCs, our educators meet with our SPED teachers and our EL teachers to better understand scholars with specialized learning needs and implement cross-curricular academic scaffolding that empowers their achievement. PLA guides goal-setting across the network by working with staff to develop key performance indicators for each key position. Throughout the aforementioned meetings, staff will discuss these goals for their position and the KPI's, target goals, and the time frame for accomplishing these goals. Staff can strategize with their supervisors on how best to meet these goals. Our educators see our school staff as a team. Within that larger team, many peer supports are in place. For example, our instructional support staff members help our teachers provide personalized academic support aligned to the data-driven, individualized needs of students during small group instruction. Additionally, to facilitate the ongoing academic assessments

delivered year-round, we establish an Admin Team at the beginning of the school year. Members manage assessment logistics including scheduling, establishing testing protocols, identifying proctors, and evaluating testing systems so that our teachers can continue teaching. This ensures timely turnaround for assessment results. Our school leaders demonstrate collaboration to intentionally empower teachers through many other day-to-day actions, such as setting and upholding consistent policies; involving educators in major decisions by seeking and considering their input before making changes; providing time for peer collaboration meetings; and offering support during challenging times, whether challenges are professional or personal. Additionally, our school staff regularly participates in team building events or social team gatherings, such as a staff dinner. We know that when our educators are performing well, so too will our scholars.

Staff Plans, Hiring, Management, and Evaluation

Meets Standard Expectation
- Compensation packages, systems, and strategy that are likely to attract and retain strong staff.
- Recruitment and hiring strategy, criteria, timeline, and procedures that are likely to result in a strong staff that meet ESEA requirements for being "Highly Qualified" and are well suited to the school
- Plan for supporting, developing, and annually evaluating school leadership and teachers that is likely to produce and retain a successful staff.
- Sensible allocation of school vs. network responsibilities for staffing.
- Leadership and teacher evaluation tools that are likely to be effective.
- Effective planning for unsatisfactory leadership/teacher performance and turnover.

1. Explain the relationship that will exist between the school(s) and its employees, including whether the employees will be at-will and whether the school(s) will use employment contracts. If the school(s) will use contracts, explain the nature and purpose of the contracts. Provide, as **Attachment 20**, a personnel policy or an employee manual, if developed.

We believe that a school is only as good as its teachers. We will implement an aggressive campaign to both recruit and retain the best teachers. While school employees will be at-will, our school will be an attractive place to serve. Teachers will be able to teach because the climate and culture of the school and classrooms will be one of joy, engagement, fun, and excitement. PLA also has a strong compensation and benefits program, some elements include: competitive base compensation; robust benefits; annual merit increases; annual bonus opportunities, and annual retention stipends for teachers who are rated as effective or highly-effective. PLA has also developed a strong teacher appreciation program; a proprietary Coaching Cycle that supports teacher development; and opportunities for professional growth.

2. Outline the proposed school's salary ranges and employment benefits for all employees, as well as any incentives or reward structures that may be part of the compensation system. Explain the school's strategy for retaining high-performing teachers.

PLA has developed a tiered compensation structure. It is structured to be at least at level with and where resources allow, to slightly exceed the home district salary schedule. Our compensation is based on experience. Generally, teachers can earn an annual base salary of $40,000-$80,000 per year plus benefits. We also commit to providing competitive benefits as well, matching the benefits package that the home district can provide wherever possible, including health, dental, retirement and more.

Several of the strategies to retain high-performing staff were outlined above. PLA will offer a 3% annual merit increase to all of its teachers. PLA also has an annual bonus program called Raising the Bar (RBI) initiative. Teachers can earn a bonus of up to 6% based on three metrics (student growth, school letter grade, and supervisor evaluation). Taken together, we believe school culture and climate; student behavior; effective school leadership; and opportunities for personal and professional growth will also impact retention.

3. Describe your strategy, plans, and timeline for recruiting and hiring the teaching staff, including the school's plan for hiring

"Highly Qualified" staff in accordance with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Explain other key selection criteria and any special considerations relevant to your school(s) design.

When recruiting and hiring, our aim is always to increase the quality of instruction in order to improve student outcomes, while keeping talent retention top of mind as well. For school launch and all other vacancies, we will implement a robust recruitment process. We have a refined process in place to recruit a strong cadre of educators. We recruit geographically and racially diverse educators by working with our partner Historically Black Colleges and Universities across the country. Locally, we recruit through word-of-mouth referrals from our strongest teachers, social media, radio, and news outlets that serve our target demographics, as well as local, social and professional organizations with connections to education professionals aligned with our target demographic.

Our hiring process is rigorous and has multiple screening stages that occur over a 5 month period (February - June before the academic year). Our Recruitment and Human Assets teams work with each school to ensure that the hiring timeline and process allows for the maximum amount of lead time possible before the academic year begins. During the first phase of the interview process, candidates complete an online application and participate in one phone interview with our Director of Recruitment and another with the School Principal. Applicants then complete a writing sample and leadership assessment test. If successful, candidates advance to the second phase of our selection process, which includes an interview day with a panel of educational experts.

The interview day is comprised of four components: 1) candidates present a 5-7 slide PowerPoint highlighting their background, reasons for becoming a teacher, and their teaching/leadership accomplishments; 2) candidates watch a video of an educator in the classroom, then highlight the teacher's strengths and areas for improvements; 3) candidates respond to a range of scenarios involving issues that might arise with scholars, parents, and colleagues; and 4) candidates are presented with anonymous DIBELS data for multiple scholars and must explain how they would help each child succeed. Our hiring process is open to all credentialed teachers. Recruitment works very closely with Human Assets to screen and review candidate credentials to ensure that staff hired are highly qualified in accordance with the ESEA.

In addition to instructional aptitude, teaching staff must possess a deep philosophical alignment that supports high performance, consistent achievement, and advocacy for our scholars. We regard these skills, knowledge sets, and abilities as non-negotiables and drivers for success. This professional profile is unique, and as a result, we have developed tailored selection criteria which serve as a blueprint to ensure we select leaders, teachers, and support staff with targeted skills. Once the candidate becomes a team member, PLA continues to evaluate staff using metrics aligned with our selection criteria bi-annually and annually.

4.   Outline the school's procedures for hiring and dismissing school personnel, including conducting criminal background checks.

Our process for hiring teachers was described above. Background checks are performed as part of the screening process. All new hires go through a 4-stage process that includes screening, phone interview, in-depth in-person interview with interviewing rubrics, credential/license checking, criminal background check, and a reference check. For senior level positions, candidates must also sign off on a thorough review of their social media accounts.

All PLA staff receive ongoing performance feedback through our Coaching Cycle platform and the evaluation process. That process, and student achievement data, drives our employee dismissal decisions. As it relates to dismissing school personnel, PLA has a well-developed process. While all employees are at-will, our goal is to retain 85% of high-performing teachers (effective and highly effective) year-to-year. It is also our goal to remove 100% of ineffective teachers if after coaching, peer mentoring, professional development and other supports, they are still unable to support student growth.

Below is our four-step process for staff dismissal:

1. **Give the teacher a warning.** If a teacher has demonstrated or has been reported for incompetence or misconduct, giving them a warning is generally the first step in our process. School leadership can do this verbally, but we recommend giving them a written warning, depending on the severity of the misconduct report.
2. **Provide resources to help the teacher improve.** Aligned with our goals of development and retention, in addition to giving a warning, supervisors will give the team member resources to help them improve. Some of these resources have been described above – coaching, peer mentoring, modeling and professional development.
3. **Observe the teacher in the classroom.** The teacher will be evaluated by the principal, particularly in instances of chronic underperformance. We recommend our school leaders schedule two 30-minute observations. During those observations, evidence will be gathered that either support the grounds for possible dismissal or demonstrate that sufficient improvement has been made.
4. **Document every incident that occurs.** We ask that our school leader create a file for the teacher in question. We strongly recommend that our leaders document everything – complaints, absences, what was found in the evaluations, and anything else that has to do with that teacher.

Again, our primary goals are development and retention, but this is our process towards removal should a team member continue to struggle with performance.

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5. Explain how the school leader(s) will be supported, developed, and evaluated each school year. Provide, in **Attachment 21**, any leadership evaluation tool(s) that you have developed already.

In addition to supporting the professional development of our educators, our partner PLA also has robust systems in place to support the development and retention of school leaders. Moreover, through processes such as our Principal-in-Residence program PLA will support the development of highly-effective educators who are seeking to transition into a leadership role. Please see below for an overview of these systems:

Leadership Institute: PLA's Leadership Institute is a 3-day summer training course made available to school leaders, instructional specialists and regional directors. Some sessions are held for all participants, such as Coaching Cycle training and calibration workshops. Many of PLA's school leaders have been serving scholars for years and have vast experience with the PLA educational model; therefore, Leadership Institute also provides differentiated break-out sessions, enabling leaders to choose topics of interest that meet their own needs. Example topics might include effectively engaging parents; providing leadership opportunities for educators; or helping teachers create achievement-focused classroom culture. Providing personalized support for development is a key practice at every level of the PLA organization, as this approach allows the organization to build from the strengths of our diverse team.

Coaching Cycle for Leaders: Similar to the PLA Coaching Cycle, which provides educators with job-embedded, data-driven professional development support to boost the quality of their instruction, PLA conducts ongoing progress monitoring of school leadership through the Coaching Cycle for Leaders process. The process begins with an observational evaluation, where instructional specialists from PLA's Central Office evaluate school leadership using a rubric that captures powerful leadership techniques. The Rubric breaks out the following Domains of Effective Leadership:

1) Leadership Urgency: school leadership plans all actions to achieve rapid, dramatic gains;

2) Leadership Influence: leadership effectively influences others to contribute to rapid, dramatic gains; and

3) Leadership Impact: leadership acts with the purpose of affecting the thinking and actions of others using data to solve problems. The rubric includes specific school indicators such as ">90-100% of the time Coaching Cycles were completed with fidelity in a timely manner" and, "Staff crafts and posts meaningful learning objectives aligned to state standards and connects learning objectives to scholars' lives."

Lastly, the rubric includes a self-evaluation component. School leaders are asked to provide examples of how they believe they have demonstrated and exhibited organizational core values, including: children first, respect, continuous improvement, gratitude and determination. Results and data from these ongoing evaluations are tracked through the Coaching Cycle, where PLA's Central Office Academics Team records notes about specific evidence, action steps or conversations they have had with school leaders. For example, after an observation, a PLA Instructional Specialist might record which grade levels are using Kickboard effectively for behavior management or might note that coaching conversations should be held more often. This way, PLA's team of Instructional Specialists can work together to support school leaders as they work to improve outcomes for scholars.

Principal-in-Residence: PLA's Principal-in-Residence (PiR) program represents one of several robust systems in place to support the development and retention of school leaders at our campuses. As a network, PLA recognizes that cultivating strong school leadership is a key element to developing and retaining effective educators who drive scholar achievement. Therefore, the 6-18 month PiR program is specifically designed to provide intensive hands-on training to candidates who are committed to execute our evidence-based model to produce strong results. By combining theory with practice, the PiR program develops principals across our campuses who are well-prepared to lead our schools to success, as defined by growth and performance. The PiR program offers a paid learning opportunity in which our resident principals serve as an integral part of their assigned school's core leadership team. Within the role, PiRs directly coach and manage teachers and work closely with leaders, students, and families every day. Therefore, applicants undergo a rigorous selection process in which they are evaluated based on a data analysis activity, an individual interview, and a group interview. The careful selection of our PiR candidates ensures that our program can focus on further developing leaders who already possess the fundamental qualities necessary to build strong school culture, coach teachers and leaders, and promote outstanding scholar success. Once accepted, our PiRs are placed within a PLA school where they undergo extensive professional development. Upon completion of the PiR program, residents will meet the requirements to transition into the role and responsibilities of a PLA school leader. The structured hands-on preparation that our PiRs undergo ultimately ensures that all schools within the PLA network receive strong, consistent leadership by individuals who are ready to fully embody the mission and vision of PLA. At its core, our PiR program is designed so that all of our principals are prepared to center school-wide decision-making around our network-wide objectives for school leadership.

Leadership Zoom Series: PLA provides quarterly training and collaboration touchpoints for its leaders throughout the PLA network through a Leadership Zoom Learning Series. School leaders, instructional specialists and regional directors are invited to learn from one another's successes. Participants are encouraged to share their learning with their fellow educators, with downloadable slides to facilitate training sessions back at their school site. Topics cover best practices that drive success for scholars, such as implementing regular small-group interventions; effective practices for Professional Learning Communities; or the MTSS process. There is time at the end of each training for participants to ask questions, talk about issues at their school, or seek advice or experience that can help with decision-making. PLA school leaders report that they prefer a collaborative process for making important or complex decisions.

PLA Learning Institute Modules: Modules delivered through PLA Institute provide an introduction to the PLA organization, an overview of PLA's Academic Priorities for Success, a walkthrough of PLA's Coaching Cycle professional development program, and other key trainings. The Coaching Cycle module contains 23 mini-courses, helping Instructional Leaders who are new to PLA build a comprehensive understanding of how to conduct the Coaching Cycle process. Other key modules include professional development for tiered support; small group instruction; the PLC process; PLA finance resources; and a communication and marketing overview. Online delivery of learning ensures that PLA can ramp-up operations at new schools quickly. Through PLA Institute, the Academics Team can support the new schools' leadership team to implement key pillars of the evidence-based PLA educational model right away. Because PLA's practices are rooted in research, it is key that all school leaders receive the same training so they can enact the procedures effectively and reach the same positive results. PLA Institute makes this possible.

Leadership Reviews: PLA's Academic Team conducts Leadership Reviews with each school's leadership team on a regular basis in order to monitor progress and strengthen capacity when needed. This structured reflection provides the opportunity for school leaders to review progress and realign supports to accomplish school goals with the help of the PLA Central Office. For example, PLA's Academic Team might discuss with school leaders: how to use the most current teacher and scholar data to select professional development topics or provide differentiated training opportunities; strategies to increase trust between educators by

modeling transparency and professionalism; or resources for improving the effectiveness of Coaching Conversations. School leaders receive Leadership Reviews at the beginning of the year (BOY), the middle of the year (MOY) and the end of the year (EOY). Ongoing school monitoring informs these Leadership Reviews, with PLA's Academic Team continuously tracking school health indicators aligned to PLA's Academic Priorities for Success. Using the project management tool Monday.com, Instructional Specialists from PLA's Central Office record notes, evidence of progress, or suggestions for improvement during school visits throughout the year. This way, PLA's Academics Team is robustly engaged in supporting school leadership to accomplish the school's goals for scholar improvement.

6. Explain how teachers will be supported, developed, and evaluated each school year. Provide, in **Attachment 22**, any teacher evaluation tool(s) that already exist for the school(s).

As discussed extensively in the Professional Development section of the application, PLA has a robust process in place for supporting, developing, and evaluating educators at PLA schools. Please see below for a summary of how teachers will be supported, developed and evaluated during the school year:

- **High-quality professional development:** PLA's data-driven, intentional and frequent professional development is built upon strategic resources which include: Training Institutes, Coaching Cycles, and professional learning communities (PLCs). Collectively, they provide a professional development framework to PLA educators that encourages excellence and empowers them to deliver high-quality instruction.
- **Weekly progress monitoring:** With frequent classroom observations and walkthroughs through Coaching Cycles as well as weekly progress monitoring, educators are empowered to take ownership of their students' academic progress. This encourages retention as educators develop an achievement orientation and strive to improve student proficiency levels and content mastery over the year.
- **Data-driven culture:** Owing to PLA's evidence-based improvement and intervention strategies, the culture at PLA partner schools is very data-driven. The role of educator effectiveness on scholar achievement is evident through the data.
- **Opportunities for growth:** As mentioned previously, PLA believes in developing educators to become strong leaders through PLA's Principal-in-Residence program. PLA is committed to building talent from within by facilitating the career advancement of our most devoted educators. Therefore, the PiR program represents one of the key innovative systems we have in place to attract excellent educators to our network schools and to further develop them into the world-class leaders our scholars deserve.
- **Frequent feedback, support and recognition:** In addition to competitive pay, PLA school leaders, the Coaching Cycles process and PLCs collectively deliver frequent feedback and support to its educators. PLA prides itself on continually recognizing educators' efforts towards excellence in instruction. PLA deeply appreciates our educators and strives to make them feel part of a supportive, encouraging community.

All staff go through a formal performance evaluation process. The PLA educator evaluation plan is reviewed periodically to ensure it continues to be effective. Please find key steps below:

Step 1 – Beginning-of-Year Conference: The teachers meet with the primary evaluator near the beginning of the school year (August or September). The purpose of the meeting is to review the evaluation process and highlight priority competencies and indicators. Returning Teachers on an improvement plan will write a professional development plan with the primary evaluator near the beginning of the school year.

Step 2 – Classroom Observations: During the school year, evaluators (both primary and secondary) will collect evidence through a series of observations and conferences.

Step 3 – Mid-Year Conference (at evaluator's discretion): This conference is to be held in November, December, January, or February where the primary evaluator and teacher meet to discuss performance thus far. This conference will be mandatory if a teacher is in jeopardy of being rated as ineffective or improvement necessary based on prior observations or has been rated ineffective or needs improvement on an evaluation within the past 3 years. This conference is also mandatory for any teacher that is new with less than 3 total years of teaching experience.

Step 4 – Teacher Effectiveness Rubric Scoring: The primary evaluator compiles ratings and notes from observations, conferences, and other sources to reach a final Teacher Effectiveness rubric score.

Step 5 – Summative Teacher Evaluation Scoring: The final Teacher Effectiveness Rubric score is then combined with the scores from the teacher's scholar learning measures in order to calculate a final rating.

Step 6 – End-of-year summative evaluation conference: The primary evaluator meets with the teacher in a summative conference to discuss all the information collected in addition to the final rating. A copy of the completed evaluation, including any documentation related to the evaluation, must be provided to the teacher within seven days of the end-of-year summative evaluation conference.

At the end of the year, PLA's goal is to retain over 85% of our strong performers (rated effective or highly effective). This evaluation process also strategically informs and guides the decision-making process with regard to teacher and administrator placement and transfers. We believe that through the implementation of our strong recruitment, educator evaluation and retention policies, our partner schools will maintain highly effective educators and strong leadership.

7. Explain how the school(s) intends to handle unsatisfactory leadership or teacher performance, as well as leadership/teacher changes and turnover.

Most PLA educators succeed within the tiered systems of professional development and support. PLA works with school leaders to evaluate each educator at the end of the school year, based on their overall performance as measured by the PLA Coaching Cycle, and PLA's comprehensive performance evaluation system. Educators are given feedback in real time, which optimizes planning and minimizes turnover as staff members know where and how to improve. Educators who are not meeting expectations work with the PLA Academics team to develop personalized professional improvement plans with SMART goals, which support them to systematically address any areas of growth. If, in the rare event that none of the above systems are able to help personnel improve their performance, PLA will take steps to coach out the staff member in question. Please refer to our policy in question 4 of this section for an overview of the steps we will take to handle unsatisfactory performance.

Professional Development

Meets Standard Expectation
- Sensible allocation of school vs. network responsibilities for professional development, including demonstrated understanding of and preparation for professional development needs that are common to all schools in the network.
- Professional development standards, opportunities, leadership, and calendar/scheduling that effectively support the education program and are likely to maximize success in improving student achievement, including an induction program that will prepare teachers to deliver any unique or particularly challenging aspects of the educational program.

1. Identify the person or position responsible for professional development.

Our proposed schools will implement PLA's proprietary professional development system and will be supported by staff members from PLA's Central Office as well as school-level personnel. Professional Development, including the Teacher Training Institute, New Content Training, Leadership Training, and Coaching Cycles, will be a holistic, data-driven process designed and managed by PLA's Chief Academic Officer, Director of School Improvement, Director of Training, and Regional Director, working in concert with School Leadership to ensure strong implementation at the school level.

2. Discuss the core components of professional development and how these components will support effective implementation of the educational program. Discuss the extent to which professional development will be conducted internally or externally and will be individualized or uniform.

A critical element of PLA's school improvement process is developing existing staff. PLA has a comprehensive suite of professional development programs that begin with pre-service training in the form of Teacher and Leadership Institutes. PLA's ongoing

professional development programs include three elements: the PLA Coaching Cycle, weekly professional learning communities (PLCs), and PLA Learning Institute. The primary goals of PLA's professional development program are to: 1) prepare team members to effectively implement the pedagogical model; 2) communicate expectations for collaboration and professional behavior; 3) prepare educators to build positive partnerships with scholars and families; 4) prepare educators to effectively execute approved curriculum, instructional texts, and materials; and 5) prepare staff to uphold school-wide scholar behavior management and maintain school culture policies.

Training Institutes: PLA's summer training institutes represent a core component of the professional development program that support staff members as they prepare to carry out our network's model and vision. Depending on their role, PLA educators participate in one or more of the three training programs prior to the start of the school year:

- New Teacher Institute, a week-long training program for new teachers
- Teacher Institute, a two-week training program that prepares new teachers and returning teachers for success. (New teachers traditionally participate in two weeks of pre-service training.)
- Leadership Institute, a specialized week-long training of school leaders

Through these institutes, teachers and school leaders have the opportunity to receive extensive training on evidence-based practices and develop their skills to ensure that PLA scholars receive the best education possible.

The PLA Coaching Cycle: The PLA Coaching Cycle is a process that supports growing teachers in an intentional manner. The PLA Coaching Cycle platform includes six domains or focused areas of observations. Each domain includes eight indicators for success, creating a very quick and efficient walk-through form for each domain. The six domains are as follows:

- Culture and Behavior Management;
- Classroom Management and Environment;
- Scholar Engagement;
- Effective Lesson Components;
- Level 1 Instructional Execution;
- Level 2 Instructional Execution.
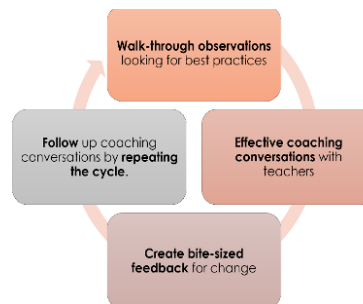
The first step of the Coaching Cycle is to conduct intentional walk-throughs, looking for evidence of best practices. Each walk-through takes no more than 10-12 minutes. The second step of the cycle is to lead effective coaching conversations with each teacher. Relationship-building is crucial during this step of the process. During this step it is imperative that the coach offers coaching side by side, gives positive feedback, and asks leading questions that guide the teacher to identify their own next steps. Timely feedback has a significant impact on implementation. Research says there is a 70% chance of implementation if feedback is delivered within 24 hours of observation; after the first 24 hours, the likelihood of implementation drops 10% each day feedback is not delivered. The next step of the Coaching Cycle is collaboratively creating a bite-sized goal for change; both the teacher and coach are accountable for the change. The final step before the cycle repeats is a follow-up observation from the same domain, looking for evidence of change according to the bite-sized goal.

The PLA Coaching Cycle has an online platform that allows leaders at both the network level and the school level to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement, both holistically for the school and individually for the teachers. Teachers immediately receive their observation feedback through email following the walk-through. The sophisticated analytics provide leaders with feedback to ensure we are coaching up our teachers or coaching out ineffective teachers to ensure we provide our scholars with the education they all deserve. A toolbox of strategies and resources for each coaching area is also available within the Coaching Cycle online platform. This toolbox allows the coach to click directly on the link and share with the teacher. It is recommended that the coach go through the resource with the teacher to increase the likelihood of implementation, then follow through by sharing the resource with them to revisit on their own time. The toolbox provides short video clips, activities, articles, book recommendations, and PLA Learning Institute modules to assist with teacher growth.

Following an observation walk-through, teachers will immediately receive feedback through email and the online Coaching Cycle platform. Each teacher has an individualized page on the platform, providing tailored resources for their personal improvement, recording all coaching interactions, and summarizing the overall average evaluation score and domain-specific average scores covering multiple observations. Additionally, the platform keeps a historical record of all previous observations and evaluations, giving a rich view into the ongoing professional development process. This gives coaches and leadership access to continuous, equitable, transparent evaluation and data monitoring to ensure our scholars have the effective teachers they deserve. The Coaching Cycle platform tracks and records all coaching interactions, maintaining a record of the continuous improvement activities happening school-wide. PLA teachers model the growth mindsets we want our scholars to develop, and this historical record is a constant visual reminder that effort drives outcomes. For an individual teacher, this visual representation supports his or her own growth mindset in tackling challenges and setting goals, and acts as an acknowledgement of the consistent hard work on behalf of scholars. Teachers, coaches and school leaders have access to this record in perpetuity, in case past interactions are needed for reference.

Professional Learning Communities: Each week, teachers participate in Professional Learning Communities, or PLCs, in which they come prepared with student assessment data and performance artifacts to a) collaboratively analyze student data and identify areas in need of improvement; b) compare and share instructional strategies and resources; c) collaborate design appropriate interventions, including for example the incorporation of content literacy across subjects within a grade; d) develop and refine curriculum mapping; and e) organize model lessons on specific strategies and standards so that teachers can learn from their peers to improve their own practice. These weekly meetings also provide a venue for educators to collaborate and learn new skills from their peers. During PLC meetings, teachers can develop interventions and learn new approaches to implementing best practices.

PLA's Academic Leadership Team supports each school in facilitating their professional learning communities and the culture of learning that is essential to supporting these communities. PLCs include focused workshops, planning time, and data deep-dives. During these sessions, educators collaborate with their peers and evaluate student data to inform upcoming instruction, and they also work to map and align their pacing guides across grades and subject areas. Educators also have space to exchange best practices and ask each other for support. PLC topics can include Differentiated Instruction, Partnering with Parents, Effective Classroom and Behavior Management, Analyzing Student Data, Effectively Implementing Online and Classroom Curricula, and more.

PLA Learning Institute: PLA Learning Institute is an online learning hub hosted on the Instructure Canvas Learning Management System (LMS) that is aligned to teacher evaluation tools, with resources available for teachers and school leaders to download and customize. PLA Learning Institute's 72 modules fall into seven categories. Full course modules are available for each topic complete with quizzes, teacher reflection, and self-evaluation. The content of each training module includes narrated presentations, videos, classroom activities, implementation examples, an online discussion forum, shareable resources, and research/scholarly articles. Completion of modules is tracked in the Canvas LMS. Modules include topics such as Scholar Behavior and Classroom Management; Curriculum Mapping; Implementing Evidence-Based Curricula; Evaluation, Assessment, and Data-Driven Instruction; and Parents as Partners.

In general, PLA's pedagogy is focused on individualizing the learning experience for scholars. This focus on personalization is reflected in our teacher training on key strategies that support differentiated instruction, including data-driven instruction, small-group learning, collaborative teaching, and personalized learning. PLA Learning Institute is specifically designed to complement the two main professional development vehicles (Coaching Cycles and weekly PLCs) that PLA uses to support its educators. PLA Learning Institute adds value to these professional development practices by adding a self-paced component to the growth of educators. For example, when a coach conducts a walkthrough of a classroom and observes that the teacher needs to improve on classroom management, she can direct the teacher to the corresponding modules in PLA Learning Institute for further reinforcement. Accordingly, PLA's comprehensive professional development system is robust and is primed for immediate implementation at school partner sites. This system is critical to PLA's philosophy of working to retain the existing staff at its partner school sites and provide them with the professional development and training that they need to guide our scholars toward academic success.

3. Provide a schedule and explanation of professional development that will take place prior to school opening. Explain what will be covered during this induction period and how teachers will be prepared to deliver any unique or particularly challenging aspects of the curriculum and instructional methods.

Please find below a summary of professional development that will take place prior to school opening:

New Teacher Institute: Prior to the start of each school year, new teachers at each campus have the opportunity to acclimate themselves to the core elements of PLA's model through the New Teacher Institute. During this 4 day-institute, teachers receive 32 hours of intensive training on key topics that help them to build the skills necessary to become high-performing educators. While each PLA region develops its own new teacher training agenda, the topics covered are uniform across our network. Topics of training include the following:

- Introduction to PLA's mission, vision, and core values
- The PLA coaching cycle
- Relationship-building with scholars
- Social emotional learning
- Effective lesson planning
- Classroom management
- Student expectations
- Instructional strategies

In addition to welcoming new PLA teachers to their first year, this institute ensures that educators are well prepared to manage a classroom with joy and structure.

Teacher Training Institute: Following New Teacher Institute, all PLA campuses undergo two additional weeks - 80 hours - of all-staff development prior to the start of the school year. The first week of this training focuses exclusively on providing teachers a deep understanding of evidence-based best practices as it relates to their content areas and curriculum. Overall, the regional content training program ensures that PLA educators are well-prepared to execute their curriculum and utilize data to provide targeted instruction to their scholars A sample agenda of PLA's summer content training for Math and Reading is outlined in the table below:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00-9:00	Welcome, PLA ELA Block expectations, independent structures				
9:00-10:00					
10:00-11:00	K-2 Teachers: OG				
11:00-12:00					
12:00-1:00	Lunch	ELA Core Content Training	Fountas and Pinnell Guided Reading	Fountas and Pinnell BAS	Eureka or Math Core Content

1:00-2:00	Close reading, common formative assessments	(Instructional Specialists)			Training (vendor for Eureka, Instructional Specialists for others)
2:00-3:00	Edulastic				
3:00-4:00	PLA Math Block Expectations				

Teacher institute concludes with one full week of campus-specific staff development. School and regional leaders collaborate to determine a training agenda that best fits the needs of their staff and the scholars they serve. In addition to providing guidance on first-day logistics and school-wide systems, school leaders can sign up for their campuses to receive training on a variety of topics delivered by PLA's training team. An sample of training workshops that campuses can receive include the following:

- Building Classroom Community
- Take Kickboard to the Next Level!
- Utilizing NWEA Data
- KUD Instructional Strategies
- Differentiation Hacks
- Edulastic
- Social emotional learning
- Virtual Engagement Strategies
- Small Group Rotation Stations
- Higher Order Thinking
- Increasing Scholar Engagement

School and regional leaders also have the autonomy to create and execute their own training based on campus needs. This framework for pre-school year professional development allows us to seamlessly transition into our core professional development systems and processes to be implemented during the school year.

PLA Leadership Institute: PLA also provides targeted professional development (PD) to school leaders as part of our Leadership Institute. PD topics focus on the research-based effective leadership levers described in the highly respected book by Paul Bambrick-Santoyo, 'Leverage Leadership 2.0, A Practical Guide to Building Exceptional Schools'. Through interactive, discussion-based work sessions, school leaders will familiarize themselves with the seven key levers of effective school leadership including 1) Data-driven Instruction; 2) Instructional Planning; 3) Observation and Feedback; 4) Professional Development (what to teach, how to teach and how to help content retention); 5) Student Culture; 6) Staff Culture; and 7) Managing School Leadership Teams. Leaders will also receive training on time Management and Planning Tools they can leverage to support effective leadership.

Following the initial work sessions, PLA provides a four-day summer Leadership Institute that provides approximately 32 hours of professional development. Day 1 of the institute is reserved for new-to-PLA school leaders, while all school leaders attend training on Days 2-4. The agenda, as well as major professional development topics covered at the institute is outlined below:

Day 1:
- Data-Driven Instruction Workshop
- Leading other Leaders

Day 2:
- The Together Leader - Organizing for Success (Session 1)

- PLA Mission, Vision, and Goals

Day 3:

- High-Impact Methods for Developing Teacher Practices and Achieving Results

Day 4:

- The Together Leader - Organizing for Success (Session 2).
- Leveraging Student Work and Data to Drive Results

Each day of the institute begins and ends with interactive work sessions focused on understanding, applying and receiving feedback on the seven key effective leadership levers outlined above. Through this thoughtful design, the PLA Leadership Institute supports school leaders in gaining mastery of the seven research-based key leadership levers prior to the start of the school year.

This framework for pre-school year professional development will allow PLA schools to seamlessly transition into PLA's core professional development systems and processes previously described. In addition to PLA Teacher Institute, self-paced onboarding modules delivered through the PLA Learning Institute will provide an introduction to the PLA organization, an overview of PLA's Academic Priorities for Success, a walkthrough of PLA's Coaching Cycle professional development program, and other key training. The Coaching Cycle module contains 23 mini-courses, helping Instructional Leaders who are new to PLA build a comprehensive understanding of how to conduct the Coaching Cycle process. Other key modules include professional development for tiered support; small group instruction; the PLC process; and a communication and marketing overview.

4. Describe the expected number of days/hours for professional development throughout the school year, and explain how the school's calendar, daily schedule, and staffing structure accommodate this plan. Include time scheduled for common planning or collaboration and how such time will typically be used.

The school calendar is designed to provide teachers with 120 hours, or 15 days, of scheduled professional development throughout the school year. In a regularly scheduled school week, students are given an early release on Fridays, which allows for an hour of dedicated professional development each week. In addition to this time, which is typically used for weekly PLC meetings, content area teachers will have common planning time daily to collaborate on lesson planning. PLA will employ key staff positions, such as Instructional Coaches and a Data Coach, to assist in delivering high-quality professional development. These school-level positions will be supported by the PLA Central Office Academics team – namely, the Regional Instructional Specialist, Director of Training, Director of School Improvement, and Chief Academic Officer. Also, every teacher is observed once a month, at minimum for an hour. If a teacher does not receive a score of Effective or High Effective, multiple layers of observations are then required.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Meets Standard Expectation
- Quality interim assessments that are aligned with (each) school's curriculum, performance goals, and state standards.
- Effective plan and system for measuring and evaluating academic progress – of individual students, student cohorts, and the school as a whole – throughout the school year, at the end of each academic year, and for the term of the charter contract.
- Comprehensive, effective plan and system for collecting and analyzing student academic achievement data, using the data to refine and improve instruction, providing training and support for school personnel, and reporting the data to the school community. This should include identification of the student data system to be used, as well as qualified personnel who will be responsible for managing and interpreting the data for teachers and leading or coordinating data-driven professional development.
- Thoughtful, appropriate corrective actions the school and network will take if either falls short of goals at any level, including explanation of what would trigger such actions and who would implement them.
- Sound plan for monitoring performance of the portfolio as a whole and thoughtfully considering portfolio performance in decisions regarding continued growth and replication.

1. In addition to all mandatory state assessments, identify the primary interim assessments the school(s) will use to assess student learning needs and progress throughout the year. Explain how these interim assessments align with the school's curriculum, performance goals, and state standards.

PLA views regular quizzes and assessments as both a core learning activity and a tool for tracking growth. We use assessments that align with the curriculum to support retention, stamina, and rigor. Encouraging students to set goals—and determine steps to achieve those goals—gives students a sense of control and ownership over their own success, a factor conducive to learning and intrinsic student motivation. During biweekly check-ins, PLA teachers implement research-based practices proven to raise students' achievement, helping students: 1) know what high-quality work looks like; 2) develop skills to objectively evaluate their own work compared to the standard; and 3) use strategies to guide improvement of their work. Since PLA reframes tests as a core classroom learning activity, scholars look forward to this opportunity to improve on past performance, and weekly results provide ongoing motivation. The intentional focus of PLA on shared, data-driven ownership of academic progress supports continuous improvement in student performances. PLA utilizes four primary types of assessments to measure our progress in achieving our academic goals: diagnostic assessments, interim assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments,

Diagnostic Assessments

Diagnostic assessments are another way to identify the knowledge, skill levels, interests, and any signs of special needs for scholars.. They tend to happen at the beginning of a unit, lesson, quarter, or period of time, with the goal of understanding a scholar's current position to inform effective instruction. This allows teachers to identify strengths and areas of improvement for scholars. PLA utilizes the following diagnostic assessments:

- Nationally-Normed Assessment in Reading and Math: PLA administers nationally-normed assessments at the beginning of each year (NWEA) to measure progress against standards in both literacy and mathematics. PLA uses assessments that are aligned with Common Core State Standards and highly rated for reliability and validity by organizations such as the National Center on Intensive Intervention or the National Center on Response to Intervention.
- Curriculum-tied diagnostic surveys/quizzes: Placement tests within our reading and math curricula will round out diagnostic assessments and help teachers appropriately differentiate instruction. This can occur through intervention programs such as Fountas and Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention or through module assessments built into the curriculum.
- Adaptive software placement quizzes: Where resources allow, we will also use diagnostic assessments that align with state standards via adaptive learning software. These assessments are rigorous, adaptable, and suitable for students with disabilities.

Interim Assessments

Interim assessments occur every 6-8 weeks and are school and district level assessments given to identify gaps in student learning. These assessments help predict student performance on state tests and help drive decisions in the classroom and at the district level. The interim assessments that help guide PLA's decision making are:

- Reading Inventory: Quarterly reading inventories measure progress in reading levels. Students identified through the MTSS process for Tier 2 and 3 interventions may be assessed more frequently.
- Nationally-normed Reading and Math Assessments: Literacy and math tests administered at mid-year evaluate progress toward academic goals.
- Curricula-based benchmark tests: Based on our curriculum maps, scope, and sequences, benchmark assessments evaluate student mastery of content in any subject.

Formative Assessments

Formative assessments are daily or weekly assessments that are a critical component of PLA's data-driven academic model. These assessments are linked to the scholars' learning experience and assess their understanding and mastery of skills. This information is then used to modify instruction in the classroom. This form of assessment can present itself in various ways, a few of which are listed below:

- Questioning: Teachers will be trained to use appropriately rigorous levels of questioning based on Bloom's Taxonomy and Webb's Depth of Knowledge to ascertain students' content knowledge and conceptual understanding.

- **Checklists**: Teachers will develop grade-wide checklists to identify student mastery of specific skills. These tests extend student assessment beyond screening tests and are used to inform instruction.
- **Adaptive software assessments**: Computer-based content offers built-in assessments that provide immediate feedback. This allows both students and teachers to determine mastery and to pace instruction appropriately. Moreover, parents can monitor students' learning and administrators can evaluate teachers.
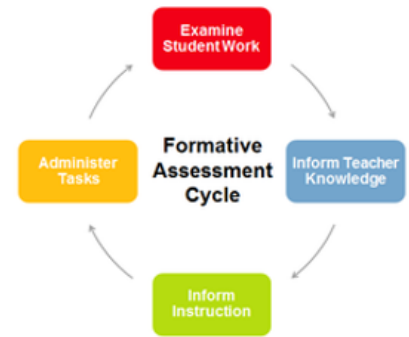
Summative Assessments:

Summative assessments are state assessments or any end-of-year assessments. These are always aligned to content area state standards and are used to measure students AYP (adequate yearly progress). Summative assessments are also a component of teacher accountability and evaluation. Two examples of summative assessments are:

- **ILEARN**: All eligible students will take the state's standardized assessment annually.
- **Nationally-normed Reading and Math Assessment**: Scholars will also take a nationally-normed exam end-of-year assessment to assess growth in these subjects.

All of these layers of assessment will help us build on scholar growth and ensure ongoing monitoring, tracking and adjustments throughout the year.

2. Explain how the school(s) will measure and evaluate academic progress – of individual students, student cohorts, student subgroups, and the school(s) as a whole – throughout the school year, at the end of each academic year, and for the term of the charter contract. Explain how the school(s) will collect and analyze student academic achievement data, use the data to refine and improve instruction, and report the data to the school community(ies).

A focus on data-driven decision-making is a core feature of our schools, and we have a comprehensive system in place for using the aforementioned assessment data to continuously improve scholar outcomes. On a regular basis, we will aggregate student achievement data and assess student learning trends. Our grade-level teams will use the results of assessment data to conduct formal "data-dives" and create concrete action plans for raising student achievement. Explicit training will be provided to teachers and grade-level teams on how to properly administer assessments, collect data, analyze results and develop action plans. In these meetings, our teachers and grade level teams will carefully structure all lesson plans in core subjects to align to Indiana state standards, as well as to provide a clear progression of skill based on scholars' beginning of year testing scores. Scholars' performance on diagnostic and summative assessments will then be used during quarterly meetings to evaluate scholar growth.

Teachers will also utilize the results of assessment data during weekly grade-level planning meetings, where they will disaggregate the data based on student groups, need, and proficiency. During weekly planning sessions, our educators will analyze assessment data to identify struggling students who need remediation or advanced students who need additional challenges; to design weekly lessons based on clear skills and objectives outlined by pacing guides in math and ELA; and to identify the best resources to use to meet student needs during the upcoming week.

On a daily basis, teachers will use assessment data to ensure that scholars receive multiple, personalized, and data-driven touch points. Within small group sessions, teachers will be able to differentiate assignments by assigning specific standards to work on according to each scholar's performance on assessments. Based on the results of interim assessments, for example, educators will be able to categorize each scholar's mastery of key skills and standards in core subjects as "green," "yellow," or "red," which indicate a child's level of academic need. Using data generated by these assessments, teachers are able to group scholars according to their color-coded "performance band" and provide curriculum-based, skill-building exercises that target specific standards and skill deficits. Scholars who have mastered standards will be able to expand their breadth of knowledge through guided assignments in teacher-led small groups; rigorous assignments that tap into student interests during independent study; and higher grade-level materials that teachers provide for students to work on at home.

We also know that parents play a critical role in ensuring their child's achievement. That is why we provide parents with regular communications summarizing their child's performance on assessments. Additionally, teachers will create portfolios highlighting the progress of children to be shared with parents during parent-teacher conferences. Based on these data summaries, parents are able to provide teachers with feedback and information on specific scholar needs during each of these processes, and this feedback will be among the key data points that teachers will use during professional development to design lessons.

3. Identify who will be responsible for managing the data, interpreting it for classroom teachers, and leading or coordinating professional development to improve student achievement.

The school academic team will be responsible for managing data, interpreting for teachers, and leading or coordinating professional development to improve student achievement. The academic team is composed of the school principal/building leader, instructional coaches, data coach, SPED teacher, and a grade level/content area team leader from each grade level.

4. Explain the training and support that school leadership and teachers will receive in analyzing, interpreting, and using performance data to improve student learning.

To support educators in using data, PLA offers high quality professional development in the form of coaching from instructional coaches, school leaders, and/or veteran teachers. These coaches will build the capacity of other educators, through mentoring and support, to use data to drive differentiated instruction and develop/deliver appropriate Tier 2 and Tier 3 reading and math interventions. PLA also offers weekly Professional Learning Communities (PLC) to support data-driven instruction. A recent example of an effective use of a PLC in this context was a PLC centered around Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). This professional development experience focused on how to best use the increased frequency of assessments and concurrent increased volume of data to customize instruction and personalize learning for every scholar. PLCs are not just run by school leaders, but also offer leadership opportunities to veteran teachers who can facilitate learning communities. Teachers also bring real-time data to grade-level meetings and use that data to improve instructional strategies. All elements of PLA's proprietary Professional Development system previously explained -- namely the PLA Coaching Cycle, Weekly PLCs, and PLA Learning Institute – center the role of data in driving pedagogical decisions. Moreover, as previously discussed, PLA's Coaching Cycle for Leaders and Calibrating the Coaching Cycle Process support school leaders in the effective use of data. Owing to PLA's evidence-based improvement and intervention strategies, the culture at PLA partner schools is very data-driven. The results of educator effectiveness on scholar achievement are evident through the data. Additionally, school staff will receive ongoing support from the PLA Central Office throughout the year on implementing data-driven instruction.

5. Describe the corrective actions the school(s) will take if student academic achievement falls short of expectations and goals at the school-wide, classroom, or individual student level. Explain what would trigger such corrective actions and who would be responsible for implementing them.

PLA will implement an across-the-board continuous process for improvement and adjustment. At the beginning of the school year, PLA's Academic Team will work collaboratively with leadership and teachers to set both school-wide and classroom performance goals. SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound) goals are developed based on PLA's Comprehensive Educational Analysis, which includes historical data, instructional reviews, and stakeholder surveys. These goals are incorporated into the PLA Coaching Cycle platform, which triggers notifications and follow-up actions if key performance indicators fall below standard. Similarly, we will support teachers in setting projected student growth on NWEA that is aligned with our overall academic goals. When integrated with NWEA data, Edgenuity identifies a suggested Individualized Learning Path specific to each scholar's starting score in each domain that drives growth toward desired outcomes. The Learning Management System utilized at PLA consists of bite-sized, packaged, spiraled curriculum pathways, providing scholars with self-guided modules for skill acquisition within each domain as they progress through the spectrum of mastery laid out by NWEA's MAP scores. Because NWEA MAP scores & Edgenuity modules transcend grade levels, both low-performing and high-performing scholars have access to practice that directly

matches their level of understanding and guides them in mastering increasing complexity, and because the domains remain the same from elementary through high school, scholars can see a clear progression of how skills build upon each other over time.

PLA promotes a culture of ongoing learning and continuously improving teaching practice through professional development, collaboration, modeling, and collaborative planning amongst faculty and staff. Some of the systems in place to facilitate this process include the Coaching Cycle and weekly PLCs, both of which are informed by consistent use of data to inform and drive decision-making and instruction at the school. Because of the job-embedded support provided to our school leaders and teachers, we are able to monitor school progress on a weekly basis and use data to adjust our approach when necessary. The PLA Coaching Cycle platform provides several key performance indicators, monitors progress constantly, and will be able to course-correct well before the end of the year if it appears that the school may fall short of its goals at any level.

As described at length in other sections, Tier 2 instruction and Tier 3 interventions will be corrective strategies employed to support the success of our scholars. Data will be the driver of when each intervention will be employed. Tier 2 Scholars are identified for individual or small group intervention in addition to core instruction. This level includes scientific research-based programs, strategies, and procedures designed to supplement, enhance, and support Tier 1 activities. Tier 3 scholars who have not responded adequately to Tiers 1 and 2 will receive specific, custom-designed individual instruction beyond the instruction in Tier 1. Scholars who do not achieve the desired level of progress in response to these targeted interventions, after thorough consideration including both academic and non-academic factors, are referred for a comprehensive evaluation for special education services. The data collected during Tiers 1, 2, and 3 are included and used to make the eligibility decision.

FACILITIES

If the applicant is seeking an existing public school facility made available by the authorizer, complete Part A <u>and</u> Part B. If you intend to identify and operate in an independent facility, complete only Part B.

Part A: Existing Public Facilities (If available)

> **Meets Standard Expectation**
> - Complete and compelling response to the facilities needs assessment aligned with the educational program and anticipated student population.

1. Describe the basic facility(ies) requirements for accommodating the school(s) plan, including number of classrooms, square footage per classroom, common areas, overall square footage, and amenities.

Not Applicable.

2. List your anticipated specialty classroom needs, including the number of each type and the number of students to be accommodated at one time. Specialty needs may include but are not limited to the following:
   - Science labs, art room (with or without kiln), computer labs, library/media center, performance/dance room, auditorium, etc.

Not Applicable.

3. List your anticipated administrative/support space needs, including anticipated number of each. Administrative/support space needs may include but are not limited to the following:
   - Main office, satellite office, workroom/copy room, supplies/storage, teacher work rooms, etc.

Not Applicable.

4. List which, if any, of the following are essential to fulfillment of the core athletic program:

- Gymnasium, locker rooms, weight rooms, field(s) (football, soccer, multipurpose), baseball/softball field

Not Applicable.

5. Identify any other significant facilities needs not already specified, including:
    - Playground, large common space for assemblies and other large group meetings, etc.

Not Applicable.

6. Does the applicant have a specific desired location(s) from those being made available by the authorizer?

    ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ▪ N/A

    If yes and the applicant has a specific facility(ies) under consideration, identify by current school(s) name and/or neighborhood(s).

    Desired Location(s): Not Applicable.

7. Is the applicant willing to share the facility(ies) with another school(s)?

    ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ▪ N/A

8. Discuss contingency plans in the event you do not receive a facility(ies) from the authorizer.

Not Applicable.

Part B: Independent Facilities

> **Meets Standard Expectation**
> - Sound plan and timeline for identifying, financing, renovating, and ensuring code compliance for a facility that will meet the requirements of the educational program and anticipated student population.

1. If you intend to operate in an independent facility, describe the process for identifying and securing the facility(ies), including any brokers or consultants you are employing to navigate the real estate market, plans for renovations, timelines, financing, etc.

We will work with our longtime partner, the Charter School Development Corporation (CSDC), to identify and secure the facilities for our proposed schools. Since 2013, CSDC has successfully helped PLA identify, purchase, and renovate (if necessary) suitable school facilities. For example, CSDC supported PLA in the acquisition and renovation of the building for PLA's founding school, the George and Veronica Phalen Leadership Academy, and for PLA's middle/high school, the James and Rosemary Phalen Leadership Academy. The facility identification process is a structured workflow that includes comprehensive market due diligence, building compatibility analysis, and price negotiations. Some of the key services we will retain from facility partners include: acquisition & renovation of an existing building; acquisition of land and construction of a new building; expansion in current facility; financing; and real estate consulting services.

Once a facility is selected, we will obtain cost estimates for facilities construction or leasing from the CSDC, as well as the terms of any loans that may be needed to cover these costs. In addition, PLA will collaborate with the CSDC, building owners, real estate agents, and community agencies to ensure that high quality vendors are selected to provide construction or renovation services. Based on an ongoing and careful analysis of local data and typical facilities costs in our selected community, as well as meetings with local partners, we will be able to budget sufficiently and reasonably for an annual lease or purchasing agreement, construction and repairs, insurance, furniture, and utilities.

Upon formal approval of the charter, we will move forward with finalizing our facility arrangements. Should our charter be approved, we will ensure that information on our selected facility, financing approach, and agreement terms are shared in a timely manner with Trine.

2. If you currently hold a facility or have an MOU or other proof of intent to secure a specific facility, please provide proof of the commitment as **Attachment 23**.

3. Briefly describe the facility(ies) including location, size, and amenities. You may provide, as **Attachment 24**, up to 10 pages of supporting documents providing details about the facility(ies). Charter school facilities must comply with applicable state, local, and authorizer health and safety requirements. In addition, charter school applicants must be prepared to follow applicable city planning review procedures.

We are going to use the planning year to finalize our decision around school facilities. We will use our design principles and prior experiences to create a safe, secure and sustainable learning space. At the proposed facilities, classrooms will be designed to provide for personalized learning experiences throughout the school day and year. In our effort to provide scholars with an interactive, dynamic learning experience in the classroom, we will configure classrooms specifically to help facilitate teacher-student and peer-to-peer interactions in our rotational stations. We will also ensure adequate space for hands-on, interactive learning experiences where scholars can engage in project-based learning and creative tasks that use various learning tools and approaches. All spaces within the facility will promote safety, collaboration, and engagement for students and staff alike. Holistically, facilities will be modern, safe, clean, and welcoming environments. Please see Attachment 24 for more specifics surrounding PLA's design principles and priorities.

START UP & ONGOING OPERATIONS

Meets Standard Expectation
- Detailed start-up plan specifying tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals, which is aligned with sound Start-Up Budget.
- *(If the school will provide transportation)* Sound plan for student transportation, including both daily and special-event transportation.
- Sound plans for school and student safety and security, including security personnel, technology, equipment, and policies.
- Plan to secure comprehensive and adequate insurance coverage, including workers' compensation, liability, property, indemnity, directors and officers, automobile, and other.

1. Provide, as **Attachment 25**, a detailed start-up plan for the school/network, specifying tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals. This plan should align with the Start-Up (Year 0) Budget and Staffing Workbook, that will be included as Attachment 28.

2. If the school(s) will provide transportation, describe the transportation arrangements for prospective students. In addition to daily transportation needs, describe how the school(s) plans to meet transportation needs for field trips and athletic events.

Given resource constraints, PLA does not currently plan to provide bus transportation directly. We will aim to strategically place the facility or facilities so as to ensure they are within walking distance for our scholars. Another factor we will consider in selecting the school facilities is its accessibility to existing bus transportation routes. Additionally, we will continue to explore potential partnerships that may help scholars address transportation needs. Some options may include school-facilitated parent transportation in which the school helps parents set up carpool options, and before and after school programming that will allow families a window of time (versus a fixed schedule) in which to pick up scholars. The elementary school will not have a need for transportation for athletic events, but transportation for field trips is only utilized if the budget allows. For the middle schools and the high school, we typically will contract with local providers to provide transportation services for field trips and athletic events.

3. Provide the school's plan for safety and security for students, the facility(ies), and property. Explain the types of security

personnel, technology, equipment, and policies that the school(s) will employ.

PLA's student safety systems and processes reflect best practices on risk-reduction measures and have proven effective for PLA schools. Safety measures include a single point of entry, required visitor check-in and identification, camera surveillance systems, and extensive safety training and drills (threat assessment/awareness, violence prevention, security procedures, and emergency planning). PLA will ensure compliance with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of its charter agreement relating to safety, security, and health related service.

A school's command system can be used to manage emergency incidents or non-emergency events such as graduations, athletic events, or celebrations. The system is flexible to meet the school's needs. Staff are assigned to serve within the School Incident Command system based on their expertise and training and the needs of the incident. Roles are pre-assigned based on training and qualification. Using Thea Bowman Leadership Academy as an example, a school currently authorized by Trine, below please find two charts that summarize the School Incident Command system and who typically serves in each role.
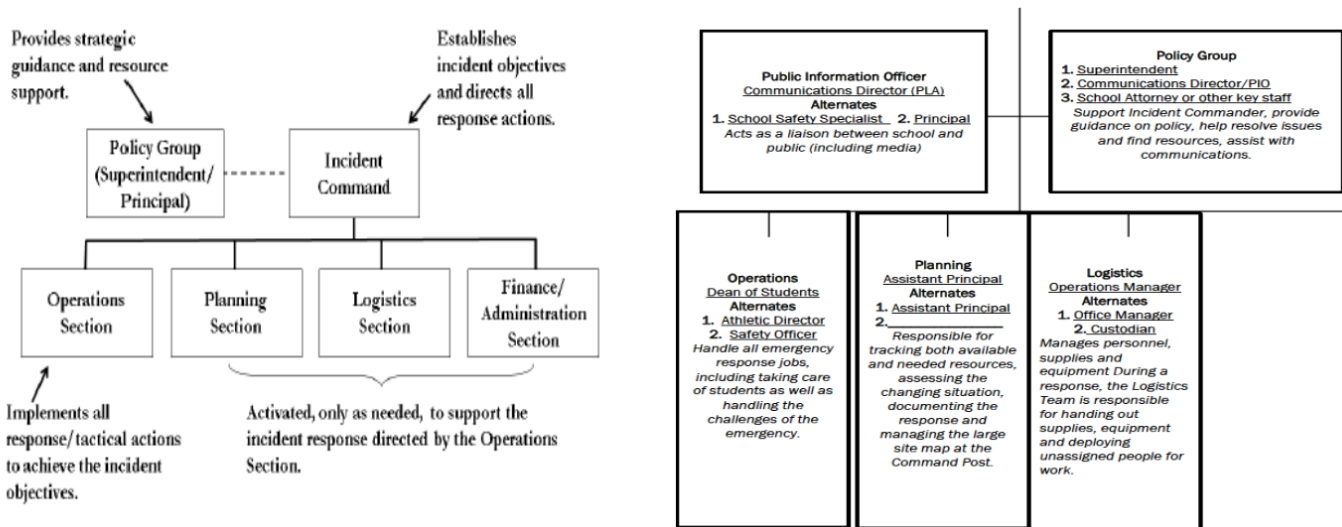
PLA also ensures our schools have a robust school safety plan in place that is regularly implemented and contains specific guidance on Standard Operating Procedures and protocols in various safety-related situations. PLA will have a comprehensive school safety plan that covers such topics as: shelter in place protocol, remote evacuation and family reunification protocol, emergency lockdown protocol, media protocol, active shooter protocol, and more. By taking the time to think through all possible safety scenarios and clearly delineated protocols should any of these events arise, PLA has had proven success in providing safe and secure learning environments for all of its scholars.

4. Provide, as **Attachment 26**, a list of the types of insurance coverage the school(s) will secure, including a description of the levels of coverage. Types of insurance should include workers' compensation, liability to indemnify the school, its board, staff and teachers against tort claims, property, directors and officers, automobile, and other.

OPERATIONS CAPACITY

Meets Standard Expectation
- Individual and collective qualifications for implementing the Operations Plan successfully, including capacity in areas such as staffing, professional development, performance management, school start-up, general operations, and facilities management.
- *(If proposing an independent facility)* Demonstrated experience in facilities acquisition and management, including managing build-out and/or renovations.

1. Describe the applicant team's individual and collective qualifications for implementing the Operations Plan successfully, including capacity in areas such as the following:
   - Staffing, professional development, performance management, general operations, and facilities management

PLA has a strong record of successfully operating 26 campuses across 6 states. These schools will receive support from the PLA Central Office to ensure operational excellence, so that our school leaders and educators can focus on robustly supporting scholars and families. There are four departments that provide primary support for the areas listed above:

Human Assets (Supporting Staffing, Professional Development, and Performance Management) PLA's Chief Human Assets Officer, JoAnn Gama, manages a team of 10 who have varied and valuable experience in education consulting and programming, and recruitment, employee relations, and retention. This team has over two decades in human resource management, including policy development and implementation, as well as the design and application of onboarding, training, and performance evaluations. They also have vast experience in the area of administration, such as compensation and benefits for all staff, managing compliance, and payroll.

Recruitment (Supporting Staffing) PLA's National Director of Recruitment, Amber Deckard, manages a team of 18 nationally who have years of experience with talent sourcing, recruitment strategy, relationship management, and system implementation. This experience helps ensure that PLA's Recruitment Playbook is utilized effectively to meet all staffing needs for all national, regional, and school-based teams.

Academics (Supporting Professional Development and Performance Management) PLA's Chief Academic Officer, Andrea Robinson, manages a highly capable team of over 30 with experience that supports capacity building in a number of areas. The academics team has a combined decades of experience in instructional improvement, including professional development design and coaching. This team has a breadth of experience in staff and teacher evaluation and assessment, which is necessary for the annual administration of the PLA Comprehensive Analysis. Other key areas of experience include data analysis and deep knowledge and training experience in educational technology.

Operations (Supporting Performance Management, General Operations, and Facilities Management) PLA's Chief Operating Officer Arely Benavides, manages a team of 17 who have a wide array of collective experience that is essential to the implementation of the operations plan, specifically within performance management, general operations, and facilities management. Thei team brings a deep understanding of strategic planning, operational systems management, and logistics. This experience is in day-to-day operations (transportation, food service, and other auxiliary services) as well as the implementation of long term strategic planning and system evaluations. They also use their deep experience with data management and professional development training to assist teachers and leaders with effectively using formative data for differentiating and adjusting instruction, and conducting regular classroom observations and providing feedback to support the growth of our teachers.

In addition to the robust support provided by the national team, there will be a regional team in place to aid in the implementation of the operations plan. Please see Attachment 14 to view the regional organization chart and the role each position has in increasing capacity.

2. Describe the organization's capacity and experience in facilities acquisition and management, including managing build-out and/or renovations, as applicable.

Our highly experienced Facility Team is planning to work with our lead facility partner, CSDC, to both evaluate potential facility options that best meet the needs of our children and families and to develop appropriate facility financing arrangements. We anticipate that through this collaboration, there will be a leasing agreement compatible with the facility and financial needs of the Academy and that any construction costs will be compatible with the scope of renovations needed to ensure we can deliver a high-quality educational program to our students.

PLA recognizes that the quality of our facilities can determine our scholars' perception of their school and directly impact their educational experience. Therefore, to maintain top quality schools, the PLA central office has established clear policies, procedures, and guidelines to ensure that our facilities remain safe and optimal for student learning. At the campus level, our school Operations Managers conduct weekly building walkthrough inspections to carefully document items in each room that require immediate repair or updating. During these walkthroughs, the Operations Manager also reviews school safety measures to make sure that facilities are well-equipped in the case of an emergency. To further ensure the top maintenance and operational performance of our campus facilities, school leaders at PLA conduct regular monitoring calls with PLA's central office to discuss, identify, and resolve any potential challenges. PLA's Regional Director will then visit our campus on a monthly basis to verify that all maintenance concerns have been properly addressed and repaired. Our dual approach to facility monitoring ensures that no concern remains unresolved.

Aside from addressing problems as they arise, all PLA campuses undergo regular preventative maintenance. For example, maintenance on our HVAC system occurs every four months to ensure the system operates at peak efficiency. During these checks, our vendor changes filters and looks for and immediately addresses wiring or mechanical issues that impede the system. Our school also undergoes yearly formal inspections from a licensed surveyor. After receiving the report from the inspection, PLA Elkhartt schools quickly will address any item that is not up-to-code. Through strong preventative maintenance, we remain proactive instead of reactive in terms of addressing any facility concerns.

When building repairs are necessary, our campus-based team internally addresses most matters promptly upon receiving direction from the Operations Manager or PLA Regional Director. When items cannot quickly be addressed internally, they will be outsourced. For these more complex maintenance concerns, PLA identifies a minimum of three potential vendors and requests quotes to ensure competitive pricing. Once the most suitable vendor has been identified, our Operations Manager is responsible for scheduling and monitoring the repair work to be performed. Through our strong procedures and oversight of campus facilities, PLA is able to provide our scholars a safe and optimal environment for learning at all campuses.

3. **Replication Schools:** Provide an implementation schedule, as **Attachment 27**, that explains the strategy for executing each charter that is approved.

FINANCIAL PLAN

> **Meets Standard Expectation**
> - Draft financial procedures, policy, or other reasonable assurance that the operator will have sound systems, policies and processes for financial planning, accounting, purchasing, and payroll, including a description of how it will establish and maintain strong internal controls, ensure compliance with all financial reporting requirements, and conduct independent annual financial and administrative audits.
> - Evidence that the school's leadership has a strong understanding of the appropriate delineation of roles and responsibilities among the administration and governing board regarding school finance.
> - Evidence that the school will ensure financial transparency, including plans for public adoption of the school's budget and public dissemination of its annual audit and an annual report.
> - Sound criteria and procedures for selecting contractors for any administrative services and the acquisition of liability insurance.
> - Complete, realistic, and viable start-up and five-year operating budgets.
> - Detailed budget narrative that clearly explains reasonable, well-supported revenue and cost assumptions, including grant/fundraising assumptions, including identifying the amount and sources of all anticipated funds, property, or other resources (noting which are secured vs. anticipated, and including evidence of firm commitments where applicable).
> - Sound contingency plan to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than estimated.

1. Describe the systems, policies and processes the network/school will use for financial planning, accounting, purchasing, and payroll, including a description of how it will establish and maintain strong internal controls and ensure compliance with all financial reporting requirements.

PLA schools benefit from the implementation of PLA's strong systems for financial planning and management. A core strength of PLA is its implementation of financial processes and procedures that not only improve the efficiency of school financial operations but also provide strong separation of responsibilities, a clean audit trail, and clear processes for all financial transactions, accounting, purchasing and payroll. At PLA schools, financial responsibilities have been consistently managed with success, including overseeing financial operations, grant reporting, forecasting, budgeting, and long-term strategic financial planning. As a result, financials have steadily improved from pre-operational planning through startup and growth to capacity. PLA schools have successfully managed federal, state, and local funding and have been able to meet all audit requirements. The schools have managed five years of clean audits and met or exceeded financial goals each year. PLA sets specific, measurable financial goals each year to ensure the success of its financial management system. In the most recent audited fiscal year, PLA met or exceeded all financial goals.

To ensure a safe and sound financial system, PLA has in place a comprehensive internal financial control framework, as well as strong financial controls over expenditures and records retention procedures. This process has been developed in a culture in which controls are clear, consistently followed, and aligned with the financial reporting requirements of the State Board of Accounts, and the U.S. Department of Education. PLA's financial control system is designed to track and safeguard all assets; ensure that that all financial practices align with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP); assign all grant expenses according to the requirements of the approved grant budgets; and maintain appropriate records, financial management systems and individual time distribution records to disburse funds and track program expenditures according to federal, state and grant requirements. The internal control system for expenditures includes the following key elements and principles:

- *Authorization and approval controls for expenditures:* PLA is authorized by its board to approve and make expenditures on behalf of its schools for the following purposes: insurance coverage as required to comply with agreements, payroll expenses and payroll taxes or other required taxes, and any payment required to comply with any agreement approved by the board, including charter sponsor-oversight fees and management/technology fees. All service contracts should be supported by a current written contract. Compensation and any other payments for goods and services should not be paid in advance of receipt of goods or services, and all invoices must be paid in a timely manner and within 30 days when possible. Invoices require full itemization and match to a purchase requisition.

- *Segregation of duties controls for expenditures:* The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) prepares all checks to fulfill obligations on expenses approved by PLA. If payment is requested on an invoice that has not been approved, the request will be denied until approval has been secured. Once approved, the CFO creates the check and records the payment, but does not have signatory authority.
- *Payroll and benefit controls for expenditures:* Payroll and benefits are managed by the CFO and processed by a third-party payroll provider who manages direct deposits and check preparation based upon a pre-approved contract. Payroll entry is managed by the CFO based on the payroll spreadsheet provided by the Director of Human Resources. Payroll is run twice per month and includes only employees at authorized salary or hourly rates. Payroll is reconciled to the bank account as part of the bank reconciliation and month end close.
- *Expense reports controls for expenditures:* All expense reports are completed in accordance with organizational guidelines and submitted to the operations department for initial review of supporting documentation and compliance with guidelines. Upon approval, the CFO reviews expenses reports and backup documentation to ensure compliance with PLA policies and federal/state requirements; the CFP then prepares checks for signature by the CEO.
- *General operating expenses controls for expenditure:* Normal monthly operating expenses, such as utilities, rent, and phone invoices are approved by the operations department. Once approved, the invoices are submitted to the CFO for processing and checks are signed by the CEO.
- *Review and reconciliation controls for expenditures:* In the event of overpayment to a vendor, a refund is collected. All payable accounts are reconciled to vendor statements on a monthly basis, and all check payments are also reconciled to bank statements on a monthly basis.

PLA's record retention procedures are designed to abide by all federal and state legal requirements regarding document retention. Pertinent documents that we will retain indefinitely include (but are not limited to) the following: records of incorporation, bylaws, amendments and corporate charter, 501(c)(3) approval letter, minutes of board meetings, annual reports, tax returns, financial audit reports and student records. Additionally, any document with confidential student, employee, or financial information is destroyed either by shredding the document or by using a certified document destruction vendor. Financial records, including but not limited to balance sheets, detailed ledgers, banking records, vendor payments and payroll records, are retained for either seven years or per federal/state requirements, whichever is longer. To ensure the accuracy and integrity of financial records and reports, all financial records are reconciled on a monthly basis by the CFO and any required adjustments and/or corrections are made promptly and clearly documented. All general ledger accounts are reviewed on a monthly basis to determine that transactions were properly processed and approved. All general ledger entries are designated to the appropriate general ledger account and class with a clear audit trail to supporting details.

2. Describe the roles and responsibilities of the network/school's administration and governing board for school finances and distinguish between each.

The network administration is responsible for managing daily accounting and finance responsibilities including accounts payable, accounts receivable, payroll journal entries, grant allocation, grant reimbursement submissions, account reconciliations, vendor statement reconciliations and all treasury functions. The network is also responsible for the monthly close and preparing monthly internal financial statements to include the Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Cash Flow Statement and Trial Balance as well as all financial Board presentations. The network also ensures the financial health of the school as well as managing and supporting the external audit that validates the accuracy of the internal trial balance, income statement, balance sheet and cash flow statement. Additionally, the network prepares the annual budget, quarterly budget to actual reports and all DSCR and lender support and is responsible for the preparation and filing of the annual 990 and all Federal, State and local tax filing submissions.

The board is responsible for reviewing and approving the internal school financials, the annual budget, the 990 and the annual external audit. The board is also responsible for financial oversight as well as ensuring the fiscal health of the school by their review of all financials and school expenditures.

3. Describe the process and procedure for conducting an annual audit of the financial and administrative operations of the network/school.

When the annual audit occurs, the network finance team works together with an external audit firm to ensure efficiency and accuracy. The network secures the annual engagement of an external auditor and presents the engagement letter to the board for review and approval. The audit firm puts together the audit team for the school and PLA finance begins to meet with the audit team weekly in April. The auditors prepare the PBC lists of initial requested items to review each school and the organization as a whole. The auditors request support lists as they test all receivables, all grant reimbursements, ADM and student information and all expenditures in the organization. PLA is responsible for providing check copies, scholar data, grant awards and reimbursement submissions, payment receipts, employment agreements, payroll registers and all reporting as requested by the auditors. The auditors also test against State Board of Accounts requirements for the school.

The testing support is reviewed by the initial audit team, the audit management team and finally the audit approval teams. All schools that receive federal funding of $750,000 or higher are also subject to an A-133 audit or a single audit that has additional review and testing requirements.

Once the audit is approved by all levels of the audit firm, the report goes to the State Board of Accounts for review. The SBOA reviews the audit, requests additional support as needed and issues an approval that is then returned to the audit firm and the final audited financial statements are issued. The 990 is prepared once the final financial statements have been issued and the 990 is filed. The audited financials are also filed with the federal audit clearinghouse.

4. Describe how the network/school will ensure financial transparency to the authorizer and the public, including the anticipated costs and criteria for selecting such services.

The network and school will ensure financial transparency by maintaining a strong segregation of responsibilities on both expenditures and financial reporting. All expenditures require dual approvals and all financials are approved internally and by the board and issued monthly for review. Additional transparency is provided by the annual audit and issuance of audited financials and the 990. The annual cost of the audit is dependent on the size of the school and complexity of transactions and is generally between $12,000 - $18,000 per school. The audit firm is selected based on State Board of Accounts approved vendors, cost and historical experience.

5. Describe any services to be contracted, such as business services, payroll, and auditing services, and include the anticipated costs and criteria for selecting such services.

PLA will contract with a third party for auditing, payroll processing, insurance, IT support, and supplemental legal advising.

6. Submit, as **Attachment 28,** the Budget and Staffing Workbook. In developing the budget, please use the per-pupil revenue projections provided by the authorizer and ensure all tabs are completed.

7. Submit, as **Attachment 29**, a detailed narrative of the assumptions and revenue estimates, including but not limited to the basis for revenue projections, staffing levels, and costs. Specifically address the degree to which the school budget will rely on variable income (e.g., grants, donations, fundraising). Include the following in the narrative:
   ● Per-Pupil Revenue
   ● Anticipated Funding Sources: Indicate the amount and sources of funds, property or other resources expected to be available through banks, lending institutions, corporations, foundations, grants, etc. Note which are secured and which are anticipated, and include evidence of commitment for any funds on which the school's core operation depends.
   ● Discuss the school's contingency plan to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than estimated.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

> **Meets Standard Expectation**
> ● Individual and collective qualifications for implementing the Financial Plan successfully, including capacity in areas such as financial management, fundraising and development, accounting, and internal controls.

1. Describe the applicant team's individual and collective qualifications for implementing the Financial Plan successfully, including capacity in the following areas:
   ● Financial management;
   ● Fundraising and development;
   ● Accounting and internal controls.

The strong processes for financial management described above will be implemented by an experienced team with a track record of success.

The finance team is composed of a Chief Financial Officer, who oversees an Assistant Director of Finance, Finance & Budget Manager, Accounting Manager, Financial Grant Manager, Finance Specialist, two Staff Accountants, and a Finance Associate. PLA's Chief Financial Officer, Eva Spilker, has over two decades of experience in finance and accounting, including payroll and benefit management, internal and external reporting, annual budgeting, and audit management. Eva has served as Controller and Finance Director at Diamondback Direct, an international division of Quadriga Direct Mail Holdings—a leading global provider of direct marketing services. Her responsibilities included all finance and accounting functions as well as short- and long-term forecasting, payroll and benefit management, internal and external reporting, executive team and board presentations, margin and audit management, and annual budgeting.The combination of skills and experiences of the Finance team include tax preparation and filing, auditing, cost benefit analysis, and budget management. In addition to the skillsets they bring to the table, they have a balance of experience in the public and private sector; working for non-profits, charter schools, state agencies, and private corporations. These experiences ensure that the finance team has the professional qualifications that well equip them to implement the financial plan successfully.

PLA also has a Philanthropic Giving (PG) team in place to support fundraising for special projects. The PG team is led by the National Director of Philanthropy who oversees the Director of Individual Giving, the Associate Director of Philanthropy, a Development Officer, and a Special Projects Grant Writer. Justin Blackstone is PLA's National Director of Philanthropy and he has over a decade of experience working with fundraising, donor outreach, annual giving, and planned giving. The team has extensive experience with strategic planning for fundraising campaigns and building donor relations.

In addition, PLA's Business Development & Strategy team oversees federal funding, proposal development and sustainable business growth. PLA's Chief Strategy & Development Officer, Johnny Jin, has over 12 years of experience leading institutional advancement efforts to achieve large-scale social impact. He developed the charter application and business model that launched the Phalen Leadership Academies, today serving 10,000 children across the nation. Johnny oversees a Development team consisting of Proposal Managers and Government Development Managers. The development team has deep experience with public policy, research, business development, and K-12 education at various levels including classroom instruction, finance and program management.

(Only Applicable for Network Schools)

Education One, L.L.C. will base qualification decisions, in substantial part, on the organization's past performance. Provide the following information about all schools operated by the organization and/or any ESP or CMO partner. Education One may request additional information from applicants at any time during the review process.

1. Submit the Historical Performance Workbook (provide the completed workbook as **Attachment 30**, and be sure to complete all sheets in the Workbook).

2. Select one of the consistently high-performing schools that the organization and/or ESP/CMO operates and discuss the school's academic performance. If possible, select a school with similar demographics to the targeted student population in the application.
   - Describe the primary causes to which you attribute the school's distinctive performance.

George and Veronica Phalen Leadership Academy (GVP) is PLA's flagship school, its first year was the 2013-2014 school year.. Similar to the planned PLA Elkhart schools, it is a new start school, and currently serves over 300 K-8th graders in Indianapolis. Demographically, the population is made up of a majority of scholars of color (99%) and a majority of economically disadvantaged scholars (81%). GVP continually outperforms Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS) and has stayed close to or outperformed overall state achievement for both math and ELA.

Through the PLA educational model, GVP has:
- Maintained an A-rating, continually outperforming its local district and stayed close to or outperformed overall state achievement for both math and ELA.
- Demonstrated strong performance in the Growth domain on the 2019-20 Indiana Accountability report, with 121.9 overall points for Math and 108.1 overall points for ELA.
- Achieved 120% of individualized growth goals for fourth graders on the 2019-20 Winter NWEA Reading assessment.
- Built a strong foundation in math skills for scholars in Grade K, who achieved 101% of individualized growth goals on the 2019-20 Winter NWEA Math assessment.
- Achieved a scholar proficiency rate of 63% on the 2019-20 Math ILEARN, with all subgroups surpassing the state average. Proficiency for Black scholars was 61%, 13 percentage points above the state average; while proficiency for scholars experiencing poverty was 64%, 16 percentage points above the statewide average.
- Consistently surpassed the host district and statewide proficiency rates on the IREAD exam, outperforming peers for more than 4 years in a row. On the most recent IREAD, Black scholars and scholars experiencing poverty achieved proficiency in reading at a rate of 91%.

We can attribute this performance to several key strategies. PLA has developed a hiring process specific to the model, provides targeted professional development in support of implementation fidelity; and developed processes which support strong execution. We also created a quality assurance process to evaluate how well each of these core elements are being delivered. We developed a dashboard which enables us to evaluate the quality of implementation of each of the core pillars, and we have also strengthened our oversight process, which now includes:
- Bi-weekly instructional reviews, providing data analysis and reporting to measure growth
- Bi-weekly review meetings with the PLA central office staff focused on performance data
- Professional development on curriculum implementation for both ELA and math and instructional resources
- Training and coaching on curriculum mapping to ensure all standards are being met with the appropriate level of cognitive complexity and scholar autonomy
- Full training and full immersion of the Coaching Cycle for every leader and teacher in the building

We emphasize our results, scholar progress, and their connection to the school whenever possible. This leads to greater capacity to sustain and grow excellence over time. We are proud of all of our scholars, and the performance of our children at GVP. These lessons learned and the processes that we have developed will support the success of all PLA schools.

- Identify any notable challenges that the school has overcome in achieving results.

Overall, PLA is an organization that embodies a growth mindset; we have learned several lessons that have and continue to enable us to become stronger for scholars. This mindset has helped us become a strong school and ultimately a strong network. When GVP first opened, there was significant success with scholar growth, however the model that PLA implements at all of its schools now did not yet exist, therefore scholars were not reaching their full potential. Through recognizing these challenges as opportunities to learn and grow, GVP was able to innovate and develop the key components of the PLA model.

Below are a some obstacles GVP faced and the deliberate, scientific, and data-driven actions taken to overcome them:

Initially, curriculum, assessments, and interventions were each isolated, creating silos for scholar learning and growth. We recognized that and aligned all three in order to efficiently use data across all three to monitor and drive student progress on mastery of standards in order to form a synergistic and comprehensive learning experience for our scholars, empower our teachers to ensure scholars are not being left behind, better equip our teachers to catch up scholars who may have come to us or fallen behind, and help them provide differentiated instruction to challenge those who exceed expectations.

In addition to making great strides and overcoming barriers with the academic model, GVP ran into challenges with a lack of professional development opportunities, and developed innovative solutions. Originally, weekly meetings were focused on administrative updates and were offered as a more general education opportunity for staff members. This was not serving the needs of teachers and staff, so we reformed our approach to these meetings. It shifted so that the focus is now connected to student data, outcomes, and the targeted improvements to teacher practice. While that was a great first step in providing additional support to teachers, GVP saw that it did not solve the problem entirely. That is the origin of the PLA Coaching Cycle, a resource to provide targeted support to teachers. Designed and implemented by our national headquarters professional development expert, the PLA Coaching Cycle is an iterative non-evaluative coaching process designed to help teachers improve in the following six core areas of instruction: classroom culture and behavior management, classroom environment, scholar engagement, instructional execution, and effective lesson components. By strengthening the capacity of our teachers in these six areas over a year-long cycle, coupled with our data driven and research based pedagogy, this best positioned GVP to further solidify the school's instructional core and continue to improve student outcomes

These strategies were designed and implemented over time, through a multi-year iterative process, but were fully in place at GVP by the 2016-2017 school year. GVP received and has maintained an A rating in the 2017-2018 school year, just one year after the creation and embedding of the PLA model that guides all of our schools.

- Explain the ways in which the school's success has informed or affected how other schools in the network or organization operate, including how the effective practice, structure, or strategy was identified and how it was implemented elsewhere.

The fact that GVP is the first school in the network has helped PLA gather data around effectiveness of the model and best implementation practices. GVP has been in operation since 2013, and over the past decade, PLA has had the opportunity to innovate, generate understanding, and identify the most effective practices across the board. Throughout this, at times, iterative process, PLA has determined the components where we have found the most success and used those practices as the core components of the educational mode that is implemented at every PLA school. As mentioned before, some of these effective strategies include the use of data to inform scholar success, teacher training and retention, and personalized instruction as an

instructional design. The success at GVP has been necessary when codifying the PLA model and all core processes across the board.

GVP is often used as the model school that leaders from across the network are invited to visit and learn from, through the coaching cycle, onsite visits, and peer to peer conversations. Our core systems are designed to replicate best practices and distribute knowledge in a way that is effective in real-time. As mentioned, one of our core systems, the PLA Coaching Cycle, embeds real-time feedback through biweekly classroom observations to support continuous knowledge-sharing and improvement. Similarly, one of our key processes, our weekly Professional Learning Communities (PLC's), provides opportunities for educators to share their knowledge and best practices with us in real-time. These systems, developed first at GVP, are an essential building block of professional development at every school in the network. When we add a new school, we also add talented educators to our network. As our enterprise-level systems are replicated at each new school, these talented educators help propagate knowledge-sharing and add to our current best practices. This strategic process of refinement through continued knowledge-sharing allows us to build the strength of classroom instruction at our schools across the network.

Most importantly, launching the proposed schools is mission-aligned. Since 2013, as a network we have remained committed to our mission of identifying and serving scholars in traditionally underserved communities where there is a strong, urgent educational need. We have witnessed firsthand the difference it makes when children are surrounded by teachers who believe in their tremendous innate potential and empower them to unlock it. We see PLA Elkhart schools as yet another opportunity to serve our mission and provide additional children access to the educational home that they deserve.

3. Select one of the network's or organization's schools whose performance is relatively low or not satisfactory and discuss the school's academic performance. If possible, select a school with similar demographics to the targeted student population in the application.
   ● Describe the primary causes to which you attribute the school's performance.

Higher Institute of Arts and Technology (HIAT) is a charter school located in Merrillville, Indiana that currently serves over 200 scholars in grades K-8. The majority of students served by HIAT live in poverty and are students of color. PLA partnered with HIAT in the 2018 - 2019 school year and since then has raised the school from a D rating to an A rating. While HIAT is A rated, that rating is based on the growth the school has shown, but proficiency is still low. The state assessment changed from ISTEP to ILEARN in the 2018-19 school year, causing scores to drop precipitously across the state, and since the 2019-2020 academic year, we have been facing pandemic related learning loss that has not been accounted for in state testing yet.

While the progress at HIAT over the past two years has provided a strong foundation for academic success, we recognize that there is still room for improvement as we strive to provide all of our scholars with the high-quality education they deserve. In 2018-19, only 17% of our scholars tested proficient in Math, and 14% tested proficient in English Language Arts on ILEARN. Overall, we are seeing that these proficiency rates are lower than statewide averages, reflecting a need to raise academic achievement in comparison to peer schools.

With children in our community facing a lack of high-quality educational options, HIAT acts as a public institution that provides a nurturing, safe environment for learning to scholars who face a multitude of socio-emotional stressors. Pandemic related strains on the system and on the community have created additional opportunities for growth around proficiency. This growth can occur in the purposeful implementation of the PLA academic model at HIAT through data-driven small group instruction, rigorous curriculum, personalized adaptive learning, high quality professional development, and a coaching cycle that develops teachers, to name a few of the elements that help us ensure the continued success of PLA students. Please see further details below.

   ● Explain the specific strategies that are being employed to improve performance.

Building on the academic, organizational, and operational progress we have experienced in the current charter term, our school has developed strong plans and strategies for continuing improvement and sustaining long-term success. There are a number of strategies being implemented to improve performance at HIAT, particularly the following elements of the PLA academic model. While these elements are currently built into the instructional design, enacting them with a higher degree of intentionality will prove useful in improving performance. By implementing these interconnected instructional supports with fidelity, we will provide our scholars with the comprehensive support they need to raise their academic achievement.

Differentiated, data-driven, small-group instruction – Classroom observations conducted as part of our 2019-2020 root-cause analysis revealed that HIAT scholars currently spend 67% of their learning time in whole-group instruction that is not adequately personalized to their educational needs. This data means that we need to expand the opportunities for differentiated small-group instruction that is proven to raise scholar achievement.

Personalized, adaptive learning – Looking at a survey questions stating "The teacher provides differentiated ways of engaging with content by incorporating a variety of learning levels/styles, backgrounds, interests, and skills to meet individual scholar needs", 44% of HIAT educators were rated as "Needing Improvement" and 11% were rated as "Ineffective." This data means that we need to further support our scholars' academic success by improving the delivery of personalized, adaptive learning. To this end, we are leveraging the adaptive learning platforms Edgenuity and Edulastic to facilitate personalized, skills-based instruction aligned with NWEA and end-of-year state assessments. This personalized adaptive learning will bolster achievement by providing scholars with coursework that is appropriately rigorous and helps them build self-confidence as self-directed learners.

Progress feedback cycles – Classroom observations conducted as part of the 2019-20 school year, show that only 44% of HIAT scholars benefitted from one-on-one teacher-scholar conferencing. We are ensuring that our scholars receive continuous opportunities for progress feedback, including weekly performance data reports and bi-weekly student-teacher checkpoint meetings. Progress feedback cycles support academic achievement by providing scholars with opportunities for explicit reflection and collaborative goal-setting, which allow them to take ownership of past and future performance.

The PLA Coaching Cycle – On surveys from the 2019-2020 school year, 50% of HIAT teachers disagreed with the statement "I feel like we have had the proper training for curriculum and programming." To support our educators in delivering effective, data-driven instruction that improves educational outcomes, we are deliberate in ensuring the successful implementation of the proprietary PLA Coaching Cycle system, PLA's iterative professional development process, which provides regular walkthroughs, progressive goal setting, and personalized feedback to educators, using a data-driven, web-based platform.

Professional Learning Communities – To ensure maximum classroom learning for each scholar, we are supporting teachers by continuing to facilitate productive Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), weekly data-driven meetings, in which teachers collaborate, discuss instructional strategies, share best practices, and learn new skills from their peers through coaching and mentoring. PLC topics like Effectively Implementing Classroom Curricula, Positive Behavior Management, and Differentiated Instruction will help boost scholar engagement and academic success.

While all strategies presented above are currently embedded in the PLA model, HIAT can benefit from a more conscious implementation with these goals in mind. We look forward to building on this progress to address all areas of growth and help all of our scholars excel.

- Identify how you know when performance is satisfactory. Include the expectations for satisfactory performance in terms of levels and timing.

PLA uses a number of indicators to determine satisfactory performance, which may vary slightly situationally. Below are four goals HIAT is currently working toward in improving performance:

Goal #1: HIAT will increase scholar proficiency by a minimum of 5% per year in both ELA and math on the state accountability test. To encourage continuous improvement, we aim for year-to-year growth in proficiency on the ILEARN Math and Reading Assessment.

Goal #2: Scholars in grades K-8 will meet at least 70% of their projected math and reading growth goals from the beginning of the year to the end of the year, as measured by the annual NWEA MAP Reading and Math assessments.

Goal #3: Scholars in grades K-8 will exceed district average passage rates on the ILEARN Math and ELA Assessment by the end of the 2024-25 school year, and the state passage rate by the end of the 2026-27 school year.

Goal #4: Each year, at least 85% of middle school scholars will successfully graduate into high school. As a school serving middle-school aged children, it is important to us that our scholars successfully transition into high school and continue their path towards postsecondary success. With this in mind, we will aim to work towards maximizing middle to high school transitions for our scholars as a schoolwide goal.

4. For all schools operating in the state of Indiana, provide as **Attachment 31** (a) the last three years of audited financial statements for the school(s) and (b) the most recent internal financial statements, including balance sheets and income statements for the organization and any related business entities. Be sure that the school level, ESP/CMO level, and the overall operations are distinctly represented.

5. For the organization as a whole and any related business entities, provide the following as **Attachment 32**: (a) the last three years of audited financial statements and management letters; and (b) the most recent internal financial statements including balance sheets and income statements. Be sure that the ESP/CMO level and the overall operations are distinctly represented.

6. List any contracts with charter schools that have been terminated by either the organization or the school, including the reason(s) for such termination and whether the termination was for "material breach."

Due to differences in management philosophy, PLA and our partners mutually agreed to wind down school management partnerships for Middlebury Academy in Ohio, and Chapel Hill Academy in Texas. Both Middlebury Academy and Chapel Hill were turnaround schools that experienced chronic underperformance. While partners made good faith efforts to collaborate, there were key differences in the vision for the school, so we mutually decided to part ways. The terminations were not for material breach.

7. List any and all charter revocations, non-renewals, shortened or conditional renewals, or withdrawals/non-openings of schools operated by the organization and explain.

Not Applicable.

8. Explain any performance deficiency or compliance violations that have led to formal authorizer intervention with any school operated by the organization in the last three years, and how such deficiencies or violations were resolved.

Not Applicable.

9. Identify any current or past litigation, including arbitration proceedings, by the school, that has involved the organization or any charter schools it operates. Provide, as **Attachment 33**, a summary of the following information: (a) the demand, (b) any response to the demand, and (c) the results of the arbitration or litigation.

Not Applicable.