

Renewal Proposal Overview

The applicant group’s **designated representative** will serve as the contact for all communications, interviews, and notices from the ICSB regarding the submitted application.

Charter School Name: _____

Charter School Address: _____

Designated Representative and Contact Information (Phone & Email): _____

Mission Statement: Our mission is to support 21st Century scholars on the path to becoming college and career-ready problem solvers who exude strong character, collaborate effectively, and think critically.

School Leader/Principal: _____

Current Board of Directors	

Current Grades Served	Future Enrollment	Grade Span for Next Charter Term	Maximum Enrollment for Next Charter Term
	Year 6		
	Year 7		
	Year 8		
	Year 9		
	Year 10		
	At Capacity		

Identify ESP or partner organization (if applicable): _____

HIAT Charter Renewal Application Narrative

Section I – Performance

Academic Success:

Over the course of the current charter term, the Higher Institute of Arts & Tech (HIAT) has experienced significant progress in the area of Academic Success. Since the beginning of our partnership with Phalen Leadership Academies (PLA) in 2018, we have been working hard to raise student achievement, elevating our school from D-rated to A-rated. The key driver for this improvement has been the implementation of PLA's evidenced-based educational model, which has supported our scholars' strong growth on state assessments. On the most recent ILEARN assessment from 2018-19, our scholars registered 111 growth points, reflecting strong annual growth towards proficiency, as measured by Indiana's Growth Model and reported through Student Growth Percentiles (SGP). Measures 1.3.b. and 1.3.d of our Accountability System Dashboard capture two highlights of our scholars' academic progress, as our school's top 75% and lowest quartile exceeded standards for expected annual growth in Math.

While our progress 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 students with the high-quality education they deserve. Specifically, we aim to bolster ILEARN and IREAD proficiency rates for all scholars who attend HIAT, including scholars of color, scholars from low-income communities, and scholars with disabilities (Measures 1.2.f and 1.2.g on the Accountability Dashboard). In 2018-19, only 17% of our scholars tested proficient in Math, and 14% tested proficient in English Language Arts on ILEARN (Measures 1.2.a and 1.2.b). As you know, the state assessment changed from ISTEP to ILEARN in the 2018-19 school year, causing scores to drop precipitously across the state. Additionally, 80% of our third-grade scholars achieved reading proficiency on the IREAD (Measure 1.2.c). 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 (Measures 1.2.d and 1.2.e).

A root-cause analysis of the key levers affecting Academic Success shows a need for greater fidelity in the implementation of the following elements of the PLA academic model:

- 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. In order to support Academic Success for all scholars at HIAT, we will ensure scholars of all subgroups participate in an evidence-based, rotational instruction model, which uses data from nationally normed NWEA results and weekly common

formative assessments to provide small-group instruction to ability-based clusters of 6-8 scholars.

- Personalized, adaptive learning - Within the root-cause domain “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 will leverage 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 academic 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 our 2019-20 classroom observations show that only 44% of HIAT scholars benefitted from one-on-one teacher-scholar conferencing. To improve implementation fidelity in this key instructional area, we will ensure our scholars receive continuous opportunities for progress feedback, including weekly performance data reports and bi-weekly student-teacher checkpoint meetings. Progress feedback cycles supports 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 implemented as part of our 2019-2020 root-cause analysis, 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 will ensure the successful implementation of the proprietary PLA Coaching Cycle system, an 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 – Within the root-cause domain “The teacher effectively uses instructional strategies to maximize learning at the appropriate time during the lesson,” 33% of HIAT educators were rated as “Ineffective” and 33% were rated as “Needing Improvement.” To ensure maximize classroom learning for each scholar, we will support teachers by facilitating 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.

- Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports - Within the root-cause domain “Lesson progresses at an appropriate pace so that scholars are rarely disengaged with inattentive/disruptive behavior,” 89% of HIAT educators were rated as “Needing Improvement.” To improve classroom behavior and scholar engagement, we will provide increased support for scholars through our evidence-based Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports system (PBIS), which leverages a data-driven framework for strong implementation fidelity. Specifically, we will ensure teachers and other school staff consistently model, practice, and encourage positive behaviors through the use of the online Kickboard system, which tracks student behavior, discipline incidents, referrals, and intervention in alignment with PBIS. Promoting positive behavior through our data-driven approach will decrease disruptions in the classroom and empower student success.

By implementing these interconnected instructional supports with fidelity, we will provide our scholars with the comprehensive support they need to raise their academic achievement. We look forward to building on this progress to address all areas of growth and help all of our scholars excel.

Financial Health:

Financial sustainability is one of our priority operational goals. Accordingly, since the start of our partnership with PLA, we have experienced strong improvements against key indicators of Financial Health. A holistic review of our Accountability System Dashboard shows that at the beginning of our charter term, prior to partnering with PLA, we met standards in just one measure of Finance Health. By contrast, the most recent data from FY20 shows that we are now meeting standards in nine of the key subcategories. In addition to maintaining a strong current ratio for three consecutive years (Standard 1), our school has met standards in effectively establishing and monitoring budgets (Measure 2.1.a). PLA has proven especially helpful in supporting the effective use of funds, as they coordinate and strategically allocate various funding streams in alignment with educational priorities.

While the progress our school has achieved since the start of the charter term has directly supported financial sustainability, we recognize that there is still room for growth. Specifically, we are seeing areas of improvement in Unrestricted Days Cash, Primary Reserve Ratio, Debt to Asset Ratio, and Debt Service Coverage (Standards 2, 4, 6, 8). While we are not yet meeting standards for Unrestricted Days Cash and Primary Reserve Ratio, we have seen a promising increase in the amount of unrestricted cash, from \$188,521 in FY19 to \$266,735 in FY20. Likewise, while we still have work to do improve our Debt to Asset Ratio and Debt Service Coverage, we are encouraged by reductions in Total Liabilities across each year of the charter term.

In order to strengthen our school’s Financial Health, we conducted a root-cause analysis and identified two key areas for improvement: (1) Student Enrollment and Retention and (2) Budget

Management. In alignment with the PLA financial model, we plan to build sustainability by improving implementation fidelity of evidence-based processes in each of these two areas.

Student Enrollment and Retention: One of the primary drivers of our school's Financial Health is student enrollment. Against this key lever for fiscal sustainability, we are seeing some indicators of progress and areas for improvement, as well. Within Measure 1.1.d of our 2019-20 Accountability Dashboard, for instance, our year-to-year student re-enrollment rate exceeds standards. We are also seeing progress with respect to our attendance goals in Measure 3.2.a: after showing deficiencies in 2016-2017 and 2017-2018, we began meeting standards in 2018-2019. Progress against these two measures reflects increases in our enrollment over the course of the charter term: expanding our student population from 153 scholars across grades K-5 in 2016-17 to 235 across grades K-8 in 2019-2020.

While we have seen positive progress with student enrollment, we recognize that there is much more work to do. Within Measure 1.1.c of our 2019-20 Accountability Dashboard, for instance, our student re-enrollment rate (from end of year to beginning of year) approaches but does not yet meet standards. Moreover, as the COVID-19 crisis continues to place a strain on scholars and their families, we see increased potential for enrollment challenges.

To strengthen student enrollment, we will implement the following key strategies:

- Professionalizing the Student Recruitment Process – Maximizing student enrollment requires a strong, data-driven framework that cycles through the entire student recruitment process. Collecting and tracking key performance indicators (KPIs) through the process of generating leads, managing inquiries, and guiding application completion is essential to achieving strong conversion. We will also hire an experienced Director of Enrollment to lead this data-driven process to strengthen student enrollment at HIAT.
- Utilizing a Data-Driven Student Recruitment System – Employing the student recruitment system SchoolMint will provide us with an online hub to empower data-driven decision-making in our recruitment and retention process. Leveraging automated, multilingual mobile capabilities, SchoolMint will help us streamline 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 build financial sustainability by setting and reaching KPIs through accurate, data-driven forecasting.
- Leveraging PLA Marketing Support – Through our partnership with PLA, we have access to the support of PLA's Marketing Department, which provides the capacity to make strategic outreach in support of student recruitment. Specifically, the Marketing team will leverage: 1) News and print media: PLA pitches news stories to the press on a monthly basis and collaborates with media on coverage within PLA schools. 2) TV and Radio campaigns: PLA boosts visibility for enrollment expansion with appearances and advertisements in radio and TV. 3) 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, supporting family awareness, engagement, and satisfaction. 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. PLA has also created a dedicated website for our school, which provides easy access to enrollment documents. 4) Formal and informal community outreach: We will notify local churches, community organizations, and after-school programs about HIAT, send letters home, conduct phone blasts, and hold events. Together, these diverse communication strategies will work to reach a wide range of interested families as part of our data-driven recruitment process.

- Implementing Evidence-Based Family Engagement – Leveraging PLA's scientifically proven family engagement model, we 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.

Budget Management: Another key driver of our school's Financial Health is strong budget management. Through the implementation of effective budget management processes, we will work to ensure that the school will become financially sustainable on recurring government funding for the core operating budget. Key strategies that we will implement to strengthen budget management at school include:

- Accurate cash planning forecast - Maintaining a strong cash reserves is essential for the Financial Health of all charter schools, allowing adequate preparation for any unforeseen changes that can yield budgetary impacts. In order to ensure our school maintains a healthy cash reserve, we will work to ensure accounting actuals are tied closely to cash flow forecasts.
- Improving position control - We will ensure all personnel expenditures are tightly linked to our core operating budget by strengthening position control, the capability that links our Human Resources Information System, which tracks employment and job openings, with our Finance and Accounting systems. By improving this interdepartmental capacity, we will ensure all new hires are budgeted for and aligned with our cash planning forecast.
- Tighter coordination between finance, enrollment, and school leadership - Strong budget management is a cross-functional process that requires collaboration between finance, enrollment, and school leadership. The hiring of our Director of Enrollment will strengthen essential linkages across the three departments coordinating to support our school's financial health.

Furthermore, our partnership with PLA has allowed us to place quality assurance and capacity-building at the forefront: two key pillars that help bolster a school's financial sustainability. PLA raised more than \$360,000 in growth funding for the school to enhance personalized learning, professional development, and data-driven systems that help to improve student outcomes. For example, these funds have supported the implementation of SchoolMint, a data-driven student recruitment system that will strengthen year-to-year and within-year enrollment - both of which drive financial health. We have also invested these funds into the Student Data Warehouse, a quality assurance system which provides real-time scholar-focused insights to our teachers and leaders. Equipped with these insights, our teachers and leaders are empowered to engage in data-driven decision making. This has a transformational impact on the quality of education our school provides, as each scholar receives instruction and evidence-based interventions personalized to their needs. Similarly, capacity-building systems such as the PLA Coaching Cycle have allowed us to provide personalized, frequent feedback to teachers that supports their growth into effective and highly effective teachers. Collectively, by embedding quality assurance and capacity-building into our school, these systems will help us support continued academic growth and satisfaction. Ultimately, we expect this to have a positive impact on scholar enrollment and retention, thus bolstering our financial health.

Financial Health has been especially important to us this year, with the unprecedented pandemic bringing both instructional and financial challenges to the fold. PLA has helped us navigate this turbulence while maintaining our financial health in several ways. When schools across Indiana were forced to close, PLA helped us secure the necessary resources to address urgent educational needs at our school. With PLA's support, we were able to secure the learning devices and software our scholars needed to engage in high-quality distance learning. These investments will continue to have a long-term impact, strengthening our capacity to provide personalized learning in the ongoing health crisis and beyond. Additionally, PLA has supported us in driving pandemic-related government funding sources, such as CARES, towards planned operating expenses. Doing so has provided much-needed financial relief to our general fund, supporting our overall operations and sustainability.

In combination with our efforts to boost quality, capacity, and enrollment overall, our holistic approach to budget management will allow us to improve key indicators of Financial Health, including Unrestricted Days Cash, Primary Reserve Ratio, Debt-to-Asset Ratio, and Debt Service Coverage Ratio (Standards 2, 4, 6, and 8). Our Accountability Dashboard reflects strong growth with respect to financial sustainability: in FY17, we met standards against just one measure of Finance Health, while in FY20, we are meeting standards against nine key metrics. By strengthening fidelity in the implementation of our strong financial control system, our budget management process, and student enrollment strategies, we look forward to continuing to build financial sustainability for our school.

Organizational Compliance

Viewing Organizational Compliance as a bedrock of our school's Academic Success and Financial Health, we have always placed great emphasis on meeting key benchmarks in this area. The Accountability System Dashboard reflects this strong commitment: in each of the past two years, we met standards for all measures of Organization Compliance. HIAT is currently engaged in the following strategies that have led to success in this crucial area:

- Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports - The introduction of PLA's Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports system has supported excellence in our discipline practices, as reflected in Measure 3.2.b of the Accountability Dashboard. By consistently modeling, practicing, and encouraging positive behaviors, we have been able to keep in-school suspension and expulsions under statewide averages.
- Proactive Family Engagement - In line with Measure 3.2.a, we have leveraged PLA's evidence-based family engagement model in order to meet our attendance goals. As part of our proactive outreach strategy, we call parents, not only to address alarming patterns of absences, but also to congratulate them on improvement and high attendance records. We also send letters home underscoring the value of attendance to families whose students have chronic absences. Implementing PLA's family engagement model has yielded strong results: prior to our partnership with PLA, the Accountability Dashboard showed a failure to meet attendance goals for two consecutive years; as of the 2018-2019 school year, we have begun meeting standards.
- Strong Enrollment and Retention Processes - Since the start of the charter term, we have maintained strong organizational compliance in the area of admissions, enrollment, and retention, meeting standards for Measure 3.1.a for each available year. This success is evidence of our strong, data-driven processes for student recruitment and retention, which we will continue to improve with the hiring of our Director of Enrollment and the development of our online recruitment system.

With these effective strategies in place, we look forward to continuing to build excellence in the area of Organizational Compliance. The strong systems and practices we have in place to support school culture, scholar attendance, and enrollment have set a strong foundation for improvement in the areas of Academic Success and Financial Health.

Section II – Improvement

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. Our strategic planning process is enabled by strong collaboration between key stakeholders on our governing board, leadership team, and teaching staff, who are dedicated to supporting our school's success and sustainability over the course of the next charter term. Throughout this process, we have analyzed and reflected authentically on our past performance, identifying both strengths and areas of improvements as shown our Accountability System Dashboard and other data sources. We will drive ongoing improvement towards sustained success by addressing our challenges with evidence-based strategies proven to bolster educational outcomes, financial sustainability, and organizational compliance.

Governing board:

In order to support long-term sustainability and success, HIAT leverages a powerful and impactful board, with extensive experience in the areas of education, workforce development, health and human services, business administration, and technology. Please find their bios below:

Sharla C. Johnson, M.Ed. (President) – Sharla brings 25 years of management experience to her role as HIAT Board President. A leader in the education and workforce development sectors, she has proven success in the development of comprehensive educational training tools. In her roles as a Center Manager and Regional Team Representative at WorkOne, she hired, trained, supervised and evaluated a range of highly skilled employees. As a Talent Coach at Ivy Tech Community College, she assessed progress of coaching students and worked with leadership to bolster program success. In her 11 years of service at HIAT, she has contributed support in the areas of public relations, community development, and project management. Holding a Master's in Education from American Intercontinental University, she has served in the role of Board President since 2017.

Stephanie Davis (Vice President) – Drawing on a Master's in Public Affairs and a Graduate Certification in Nonprofit Management, Stephanie has dedicated her career to providing equitable support to underserved communities. As a Case Manager at Jobworks, she helped diverse individuals to identify and overcome barriers to employment. Then, as a Case Manager at Indiana Professional Management Group, Stephanie led person-centered planning processes for persons with disabilities. Now, as a Program Director at Dungarvin, she supervises staff members working to provide persons with disabilities with the services that they need to succeed in today's society. With her strong background in workforce development and human services, Stephanie is a strong board advocate for HIAT scholars of diverse backgrounds.

Charles Reese (Treasurer) – A dependable team leader with a strong work ethic, Charles brings twenty years’ experience as a banking professional, with twenty years serving in a management capacity. Serving as an Assistant Vice President and Branch Manager for First Midwest Bank, Bank Financial FSB, and JP Morgan Chase, he has established himself as a top performer with track record of meeting or exceeding sales goals and customer service standards. As the Treasurer for HIAT’s board, Charles draws on a strong background in business administration and financial management to support the implementation of strong policies at our school.

George Tucker (Secretary) – Holding a Bachelor’s in Computer Science from Southern University and multiple professional certifications in Microsoft systems, George possesses a strong understanding of the value of educational technology. After beginning his career as a Computer Technician and Teacher for the Gary Community School Corporation, he has spent the last 17 years of his career building his technological acumen, serving as Network Administrator, Project Management, and System Administrator for several businesses in the Greater Chicago Area. Now, as the IT Manager at the Boys and Girls Clubs of Northwest Indiana, he is responsible for the management of policies and procedures for all IT operations. His expertise leveraging technological services in support of scholars makes him a valued leader on HIAT’s board.

We are pleased to have this strong board already in place at the school with members who possess expertise and skillsets in core functional areas that are instrumental to the educational and operational success of the school. Implementing best practices in board member identification, recruitment, and selection, we would look to implement the following framework for selecting new board members or filling vacancies:

1. Hold an introductory meeting to determine candidate interest and alignment with mission.
2. Candidate submits curriculum vitae/resume and letter of interest.
3. Hold interview to determine the potential member’s capacity to fulfill essential responsibilities, including: a) attending regularly scheduled board meetings; b) reviewing and approving operating budgets; c) supporting educational programming for our scholars (i.e., serving as guest speakers, hosting career day visits, or supporting a college campus visit for our scholars); and d) engaging in efforts to raising the visibility of HIAT in the community.
4. Based on initial meetings and interest, invite prospective board members to visit our school.
5. Hold an additional meeting to share feedback on the candidate and reach a mutual decision regarding the candidate’s interest level and commitment to serve.
6. Conduct formal selection process – in regular board meetings, the selection and hiring of a new board member is raised as a discussion item and voted upon.

The HIAT board utilizes real-time performance management systems and processes to continuously evaluate success. Key systems include the PLA Coaching Cycle, student data dashboard, NWEA assessment reports, and staff evaluations. During quarterly meetings, the board conducts a comprehensive review of the organization's activities through the review of financial reports and a balanced scorecard which illustrates our performance on measures such as educational performance, employee satisfaction, systems, and finance. Both announced and unannounced site visits are available to the board, in addition to performance reviews at the school level. We also support the board in effectively evaluating performance through the following strategies:

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.

Leadership team:

HIAT's long-term sustainability and success is supported by a strong leadership team who bring extensive instructional and operational experience to their work, empowering educational excellence. Please find below bios for some of our key school leaders:

Jillian Kemp (Principal): Jillian brings 13 years of experience in education, including 8 years with the Chicago Public School District. In her previous role, she served as the Assistant Principal and Academic Coach at National Heritage Academies in Gary, IN. As a middle school ELA teacher, her 6th through 8th graders scored in the top percentile growth on the NWEA assessment. As a School Leader, she coached her K-2 teachers to achieve an overall growth of 80% as well as 65% proficiency on the NWEA last year. Ms. Kemp earned both her B.S. in Elementary Education and an M.A. in Administration and Supervision from Saint Xavier University in Chicago.

Jessica Orlando (Academic Interventionist): Jessica is an instructional leader with more than 17 years' teaching experience at the elementary and middle school levels. She got her start as a middle school English Language Arts teacher, where she personalized learning in multicultural classes serving scholars with multiple levels of ability. After 11 years of teaching at the middle school level, she transitioned into an elementary teaching role, where she excelled in cultivating and maintaining positive and productive relationships with all educational constituencies including parents, students, administrators, and the community. Now, as an Academic Interventionist, Jessica leads Instructional Assistants in the implementation of a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) in order to provide all scholars with the individualized support they need to succeed in the classroom.

Tamika Reese (Pathways to Leadership Fellow): Tamika is a skilled educator with 12 years' experience supporting scholars from diverse communities, including scholars with disabilities. As an Academic Interventionist at Aspire Charter Academy in Gary, IN, she facilitated small-group instruction to help scholars key learning concepts across disciplines. As a Special Education Interventionist for the School City of East Chicago, Tamika specialized in identifying, developing, and implementing intervention strategies and IEPs for scholars with disabilities. Now, as a Pathways to Leadership Fellow, she participates in intensive trainings on topics such as, school culture and climate; curriculum and instruction; and effective management practices in order to provide key leadership support at HIAT.

In addition to our strong school-level leadership, we are further supported by PLA leaders with strengths in the areas of nonprofit leadership, education, finance, law, assessment and evaluation, fundraising, recruitment and human resources, and more. These leaders include:

Earl Martin Phalen (Founder and 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 20 schools serving 8,000 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 a 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.

Sharida Combs (Lead Instructional Specialist): Sharida brings a decade of instructional experience to her role as Lead Instructional Specialist. She began her career as a certified elementary school Teacher at Thea Bowman Leadership Academy in Gary, IN, where she implemented designated curriculum for English/language arts, mathematics, science, social studies. Then, she moved into the role of Mentoring Teacher, where she led team members in aligning curriculum expectations across grade levels and using assessments effectively for data collection, analysis, and data-driven decision making. As Lead Instructional Specialist, Sharida now supports efforts to improve classroom instruction through professional development by coaching, supporting, and guiding teachers and leaders.

Amber Deckard (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.

Helen Dixon (Director of Human Resources): Helen has over 10 years of human resources experience. Prior to joining PLA, Helen served as National Director of Recruitment for New Leaders for New Schools, a non-profit which specializes in recruiting and developing exceptional teachers into urban school principals. Formerly the Director of Recruitment for the City of Chicago, Helen was the architect of an enterprise-wide recruitment program for 38,000 employees and 43 operating departments. Prior to the City of Chicago, Helen served as a Senior Recruitment Officer and Marketing Manager for the Chicago Public Schools. During her tenure, she provided district-wide recruitment and employment guidance for 600 schools and implemented new strategies to meet annual workforce requirements.

Melissa Ross (Director of Compliance & Reporting): Melissa Ross has 12 years of experience completing state reporting and providing compliance oversight for schools in Michigan. She has worked in both traditional public and charter schools with student populations that range from 500 – 5000 students. Along with compliance and state reporting, Melissa has managed Title I programs and budgets that range from \$500,000 to \$3,000,000. In her 12 years of compliance work, Melissa has also been instrumental in helping her schools to receive literacy grants, early childhood and reading grants. Before working in school compliance, Melissa was a Reading specialist for two years and taught in the classroom for 10 years. As a teacher, Melissa has experience that ranges from teaching 3rd - 11th grade students. All of her teaching experiences occurred in an urban setting. In all of her experiences, Melissa Ross has paid attention to data and used it to better the situation. She is dedicated to giving all students the chance to learn in the best possible environment. Melissa completed her administrator's certification program at Oakland University in 2012 with a 4.0 average. Melissa received her Master's in Reading with a Reading Specialist Certificate and her Bachelor's Degree in English Language Arts with a Minor in Elementary Education from Grand Valley State University. Melissa has been a member of the MEAP Content Committee for 5 years. She also has been a member of the Michigan Pupil Accounting & Attendance Association (MPAAA) for 12 years and a member of Volunteering for the Disabled (VAD) for 15 years.

Nicole Scott (General Counsel): Nicole Scott joined PLA with over 10 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.

Michelle McConnico (Director of Marketing and Communications): Michelle is an award-winning communications and marketing professional and proud United States Air Force Veteran. She has spent over a decade connecting communities and helping organizations achieve their goals through communications. Michelle received numerous awards for her work including Verizon Wireless Communications Improvement Recognition, President Obama's Call to Service Award, and The Village's Helping Hand Award. She was also named one of Chicago's Top Professionals Under the age of 40. In addition to representing school districts and cities, Michelle has counseled and represented companies and CEO's of some of the world's most successful organizations including The Coca-Cola Company, The Department of Veterans Affairs, Verizon Wireless and PetSmart.

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 8,000 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.

Teaching Staff:

Our school’s cadre of teachers is a diverse group of 14 educators, who possess a wealth of experience and expertise in providing strong support to scholars from underserved communities. Leveraging a comprehensive professional development system, we work hard to support the retention of our highest performing educators; to that end, we were able to surpass our teacher retention goal and retain 89% of our most effective teachers in 2019-20. In that year, our school also achieved a 0% 90-day quit rate for all teachers. Currently, 71% of our educators rate as “effective,” per our rigorous evaluation framework. We are striving to improve the effectiveness of our teachers through the delivery of data-driven professional development support.

To hire highly qualified teachers, we implement a rigorous, multi-stage screening process. During the first phase of the interview process, candidates will complete an online application and participate in one phone interview with our Director of Recruitment and another with a Principal. Applicants then complete a writing sample and leadership assessment test. If successful, candidates will be advanced to the second phase of the selection process, which includes an interview day with a panel of educational experts. There are four components to this interview day: candidates present a 5-7 slide PowerPoint highlighting their background, reasons for becoming a teacher, and their teaching and leadership accomplishments; candidates watch a video of a teacher teaching and highlight the teacher’s strengths and areas for improvements; candidates respond to a range of scenarios involving issues that might arise with scholars, parents and their peers; and candidates will be presented with student data for several scholars and are asked to explain how they would work to help each child succeed. The hiring process will be open to all credentialed teachers.

Selection criteria

In addition to technical ability, staffers must possess a deep philosophical alignment that supports high performance, consistent achievement and advocacy for our scholars. We regard these skills, knowledge and abilities as non-negotiables and drivers for success. This professional profile is unique, and as a result, we have developed tailor-made 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, we continue to evaluate and assess staff using metrics aligned with our selection criteria. Below are the qualities we look for:

Belief	All educators believe that all scholars/children can learn, and should be given the opportunity to reach their highest potential.
Personal Responsibility	Educators possess relentless self-efficacy; holding themselves and other team members accountable for the achievement of our scholars/children.

Results-Driven	Has a track record of achieving goals and results.
Communication & Interpersonal	Has the ability to establish impactful relationships across diverse and various groups.
Teacher Proficiency	High instructional aptitude.
Classroom Management	Ability to set a positive tone, culture and expectations.
Collaboration	Understands the value of teamwork.

We understand the value of high-quality educators and know that providing opportunities for their growth means passion, innovation, and results for scholars.

Academic Improvement:

Through the implementation of PLA’s strong education model and high-quality proprietary systems, we have experienced a considerable positive change in academic achievement, as reflected on Indiana school accountability report cards. While our 2017-2018 school report card grade was a D, our 2018-2019 school report card grade was an A. This significant improvement is largely due to strong scholar growth.

On the most recent state assessments administered in 2018-2019, there was a significant increase for HIAT scholars in the growth domain in both the English Language Arts (ELA) and Math content areas of our state accountability system. In the 2017-2018 school year, before we began our partnership with PLA, our scholars were awarded 72 points for growth in ELA and 62 points in Math. In 2018-2019, the first year after our partnership with PLA, those growth numbers rose to 89 and 134, respectively. Tracking academic growth on nationally normed NWEA assessments in 2019-20, we saw schoolwide growth rates of 67% in ELA and 60% in Math. Notably, our 4th graders achieved a growth rate of 125% in ELA, our 5th graders achieved a growth rate of 119% in Reading, and our 6th graders achieved a growth rate of 122% in Math.

Despite these indicators of scholar growth, proficiency on Indiana state assessments remains a priority area of improvement for our school. On the most recent ILEARN exams from 2018-19, 17% of our scholars tested proficient in Math, and 14% tested proficient in English Language Arts. These rates are both considerably lower than the statewide averages (48% and 49%, respectively). On the IREAD, 80% of our third graders tested proficient in Reading, which is also lower than the statewide average (87%).

To improve performance in this area of priority need, we will support scholars with the following evidence-based academic supports:

Differentiated, data-driven, small-group instruction: To effectively embed personalized learning into daily core academic classes, we will leverage PLA’s rotational, small-group instruction model, in which small groups of 6-8 scholars who perform similarly in a subject area rotate through multiple learning modules with support from trained Instructional Specialists. Daily instructional blocks typically begin with 30 minutes of whole-group instruction; during this time, the Lead Teacher will introduce a concept, such as two-digit multiplication. Then our scholars will break into deliberate, predetermined groups for time at one of three strategically chosen learning centers. One group of eight may travel to one pod where the Teacher walks them through a real-life application of the concept to scaffold their understanding. Another group of eight scholars, who may not have mastered the basic concepts, may work with the Instructional Specialist through single-digit multiplication, by accessing a fun, game-like app on an iPad to advance student learning. Across the room, another group of scholars will work one-on-one through self-paced adaptive educational programs like Edgenuity or Edulastic that are customized based on their skill level, but also bring in related concepts like addition and subtraction to raise the level of cognitive demand and comprehensible input. By the end of the two-hour block, our scholars will have traveled through all stations, targeting key skill areas through four distinct learning modalities.

Rotation	Structure	Duration	Example/Description
Rotation I	Small group learning with lead teacher	30 minutes	The Lead Teacher may walk scholars in a higher performance band through a hands-on application of two-digit multiplication to scaffold their understanding. They may review problems using real life examples on a large whiteboard, as students use small whiteboards to record their answers. The teacher focuses on their small group while supporting scholars in other rotations.
Rotation II	Small group intervention with Instructional Specialist	30 minutes	Here, the Instructional Specialist would intervene with scholars in a lower performance band to help them master the core concepts of the lesson, such as single-digit multiplication. The Specialist may lead a group of scholars through a fun, game-like app on an iPad; other scholars may work with or lead a partner in a math game involving dice, worksheets, etc.

Rotation III	Online, adaptive learning	30 minutes	Scholars work with self-paced, best-in-class adaptive educational software programs that are customized based on their skill level, but which also bring in related concepts like addition and subtraction to raise the level of cognitive demand and comprehensible input.
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The rotational, small-group instruction model raises academic achievement by helping scholars master concepts in a way that is individualized based on their skill level, ensuring that differentiated academic supports are in place to meet the diverse needs of all students. This approach to small-group instruction also empowers social-emotional growth by promoting student ownership of learning; as they maximize time spent working independently or one-on-one with classmates, teachers, and instructional specialists, scholars develop key 21st Century skills, such as leadership, collaboration, insight, and social awareness.

Personalized, adaptive learning: Tightly linked to the implementation of the PLA small-group instructional model, adaptive learning technology will serve as another core component of our effort to raise academic achievement. Adaptive learning platforms empower academic success by using scholars’ performance data to provide coursework that is directly aligned with their distinct educational needs. This technology also maximizes the effectiveness of small-group instruction by providing the data necessary to assign ability-based clusters, in which scholars who perform similarly in a subject area can build progress together. Finally, adaptive learning platforms support student- owned learning by expanding data access to the extent that scholars can track their academic growth in real time.

With PLA’s support, we will effectively implement the following adaptive learning platforms to support our personalized learning and improve academic outcomes:

Program	Description
Edgenuity	Edgenuity provides scholars with self-guided modules for skill acquisition as they progress through the spectrum of mastery laid out by their nationally normed NWEA scores. Automatically integrating NWEA assessment data, Edgenuity identifies a suggested Individualized Learning Path specific to each scholar’s test results, thereby driving personalized growth toward desired outcomes in key domains. 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 they need to meet score goals over time. Because NWEA 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. Also, because the domains remain the same from year to year, 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.
Edulastic	Edulastic provides weekly Common Formative Assessments and daily, personalized practice aligned to end-of-year state assessments. This practice helps scholars become familiar with diverse types of questions and forms of problems solving at the level of thinking that they will be asked to do. After being taught how to solve each new type of problem in a whole-group setting, Edulastic provides scholars with extensive practice opportunities to master the problem-solving method. Additionally, its auto-scoring capabilities give scholars the opportunity to learn from their own mistakes. Finally, Edulastic lets students see their growth as the result of their own efforts to address errors and misconceptions.

Adaptive learning programs like Edgenuity and Edulastic bolster academic performance by providing each scholar with appropriate level of rigor to help them remain on track to meet educational goals. These platforms also support social-emotional development by helping scholars build confidence in their ability to tackle increasingly rigorous challenges.

Progress feedback cycles: Leveraging the data generated through adaptive learning and the individualized support enabled by small-group instruction, our approach to progress feedback begins with the administration of weekly common formative assessments, using Edulastic. These learning-centered assessments provide a framework for progress monitoring, as educators use them to access timely, accurate performance data reports, which they share with scholars on a weekly basis. The final stage of the progress feedback cycle process consists of the one-on-one scholar-educator meetings, which occur on a bi-weekly basis during small-group rotations. In these biweekly check-ins, teachers and students work collaboratively to 1) continually review and process the meaning of recent performance data; 2) set goals with specific steps to achieve those goals; and 3) provide structured recognition of student progress.

Structure recognition of progress, as codified in the PLA model, regularly recognizes and rewards student growth and persistence instead of absolute grades. Our scholar recognition program will include weekly trophies (based on class-level academic growth); bi-weekly prizes (based on student-level academic growth); a monthly social event (based on behavior); quarterly honor program (based on cumulative academic growth); and an annual celebration ceremony (based on academic and social growth). Structured recognition supports the development of a growth mindset in our scholars and a strong belief in their own abilities.

Throughout the progress feedback cycle process, scholars look forward to the opportunity for explicit reflection to improve on past performance and review weekly results for ongoing motivation. Progress feedback cycles support academic achievement by empowering student-owned learning and promoting instruction that is individualized to each scholars' distinct learning needs.

Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) - To empower scholar-emotional learning and academic success, we will work to implement PLA's Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) system with fidelity. When implementing PBIS, teachers and other school staff consistently model, practice, and encourage positive behaviors and social skills. The use of PBIS reduces disciplinary incidents, including aggressive/antisocial behavior and bullying behavior. As PBIS helps our scholars build core SEL competencies, it will in turn boost their academic engagement and achievement.

In keeping with the PLA model, we will implement a set of logical consequences when scholars don't meet expectations aimed at supporting scholars to achieve both academic and behavioral excellence. Specifically, scholars will receive daily grades for behavior, effort, and academics that are recorded on a weekly progress report each Friday that requires a parent's signature. As scholars work to build on areas identified in their weekly progress reports, deans, counselors, and mentors support our scholars to help them realize their best selves and develop their community-oriented character.

As part of PBIS implementation, we will use the online Kickboard system to track student behavior, discipline incidents, referrals, and interventions. The system offers apps for teachers, who can award points and make notes, as well as for students and parents to see feedback in real time. 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. In addition, the online system provides support and resources for teachers and other school staff, including live support, video libraries, and best practices resources. Collectively, this tool will help us to decrease the number of discipline incidents, promote better communication with parents, and create student success.

In addition to providing our scholars with a comprehensive framework for academic improvement, we will also support educators with a data-driven professional development system specifically designed to improve educational outcomes. The principal components of this system include:

The PLA Coaching Cycle for Educators: The PLA Coaching Cycle for Educators is an iterative, data-driven professional development coaching process designed to help teachers improve in core areas of instruction. Once in place, the process will strengthen the instructional capacity of our teachers over a year-long cycle, driving continuous improvement in student outcomes. Its steps include biweekly walk-through observations, effective coaching conversations, creating bite-sized feedback, and follow up coaching conversations by repeating the cycle. Our coaching platform includes six domains, or focused areas of observations based on Charlotte Danielson's

framework. Each domain includes eight indicators for success, creating a very quick and efficient walk-through form for each indicator.

PLA Professional Learning Communities: Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are weekly strategy meetings that offer educators a chance to: (a) collaboratively analyze student data and identify areas in need of improvement; (b) compare and share instructional strategies and resources; (c) collaborate and design appropriate interventions, including 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 University 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 University's 72 modules fall into seven categories, including such topics as Scholar Behavior and Classroom Management; Curriculum Mapping; Implementing Evidence-Based Curricula; Evaluation, Assessment, and Data-Driven Instruction; and Parents as Partners. 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.

PLA Teacher Institute: Prior to the school year, educators attend the PLA Teacher Institute, a week-long summer training program that prepares new teachers and returning teachers to effectively implement our data-driven personalized learning program. Key domains include PLA Model Introduction and Overview; Brain-Based Teaching and Learning; PLA University; PBIS Platform and Tools; Pedagogy and Instructional Execution; PLA Coaching Cycle; PLA Teacher Evaluations; Scholar Engagement; and Developing Curriculum Maps.

Alongside the holistic professional development system for educators, we also provide school leaders with resources to drive academic improvements:

PLA Coaching Cycle for Leaders: A job-embedded, data-driven professional development process, the PLA Coaching Cycle for Leaders provides ongoing progress monitoring of school leadership. The 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:

- Leadership urgency: school leadership plans all actions to achieve rapid, dramatic gains
- Leadership influence: leadership effectively influences others to contribute to rapid, dramatic gains

- Leadership impact: leadership acts with purpose of affecting 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 the organizational core values, including: children first, respect, continuous improvement, gratitude and determination. Results and data from these ongoing evaluations are tracked through the project management tool Monday.com, where PLA’s 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.

PLA Leadership Reviews: PLA’s Academic Team conducts Leadership Reviews with HIAT’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, PLA Instructional Specialists 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.

PLA 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 trainings and calibration workshops. Many of PLA’s school leaders have been serving our 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 us to build from the strengths of our diverse team.

PLA Pathways to Leadership: School staff members who are interested in developing leadership skills or moving into a leadership role can participate in PLA’s Pathways to Leadership program. Pathways to Leadership is a 7-month, intensive fellowship led by in-house and area experts focused on PLA’s Academic Priorities for Success and centered around key elements such as data-driven decision making and coaching cycles. Once a month, participants engage in a day-long Professional Development seminar, during which PLA experts deliver training on a wide range of topics associated with the educational ecosystem. Some topics include school culture and climate; curriculum and instruction; student information policy; or effective management practices. Participants have access to powerful articles, books and other instructional resources that allow them to build their own knowledge on topics which are especially interesting to them. Leaders complete a Capstone Project, providing them with the opportunity to evaluate the offerings at their own school and identify key focus areas that can improve the scholar or educator experience. Leaders decide among themselves what to focus on—perhaps the socio-emotional resources currently available could be distributed more broadly to help more students, for example—and report their focus areas to the central office. This allows PLA to identify and provide key resources or best practices from other schools for support and collaboration.

Additional Data:

The strong, data-driven systems we have implemented with support from PLA have captured a wealth of information that we use each day to improve educational outcomes. In the area of educator effectiveness, data collected as part of The PLA Coaching Cycle shows strong evidence of strong instructional improvements taking place. In the domain, “The teacher’s practice reflects solid knowledge and understanding of the content, language, and academic vocabulary,” 89% of HIAT educators were rated as “Effective” and none were rated as “Ineffective” or “Improvement Necessary.” In the domain, “Attitudes and interactions between teachers and scholars are positive and respectful,” 89% of HIAT educators were rated as “Effective,” showing the impact of positive school climate and culture in the classroom.

In addition to strong educator data, we are seeing evidence of improvements in the areas of scholar behavior and social-emotional development. In the last behavior data collected by IDOE in 2018-2019, we were pleased to see that rates of 0% for in-school suspension and expulsion were below statewide averages of 4.8% and 0.2%, respectively. PBIS data collected through our online Kickboard system revealed a similarly positive trend: 63% of Kickboard entries from the 2019-2020 school year were positive. In the nascent 2020-2021 school year, results are looking even better, as 93% of Kickboard have been positive. By improving PBIS implementation, we are building a strong school culture to support long-term scholar success.

Section III – Proposed Changes to the Charter Agreement

At this time, the Higher Institute of Arts & Tech does not anticipate a change to any material provisions of the relevant charter agreement. However, if unforeseen circumstances arise, HIAT reserves the right to modify and/or seek material revisions (pursuant to ICSB's process and procedures) in order to ensure compliance with all other provisions of the charter agreement.

Instructions for Renewal Budget Workbook

= Information should be entered into light gray shaded cells.

Name of Proposed Charter School: Higher Institute of Arts & Technology

Location: Merrillville Community School

First Year of New Charter (Renewal Year): 2021 - 22 SY

<p>1. Instructions</p>	<p>• All organizers submitting a renewal application to the Indiana Charter School Board must complete Sheets 1 through 4 of the 5-Year Budget Template. All data should be entered into GREY cells.</p>
<p>2. Enrollment Projection</p>	<p>• Please complete the enrollment table for the school's current year, and provide enrollment projections for the next five (5) years beginning with the Renewal Year.</p>
<p>3. Staffing Plan</p>	<p>• Please provide a list of administrative, instructional, and other staff along with estimates of proposed salaries and benefits for both the current year and the next five (5) years. Please include both full and part-time employees and contractors. Projected salary and benefits should align with the 5-Year Budget.</p>
<p>4. 5-Year Budget</p>	<p>• Please provide the most recent version of the current years budget (as approved by the school's governing board) as well as budget projections for the next 5 years. Tab 5 will show "ERROR" if the information provided in Tab 3 does not align with the personnel expenses provided in Tab 5.</p>

Version 10.20.20

REQUIRED
REQUIRED (Use Pull Down List)

5-Year School Enrollment Projections

(must align with Renewal Application Enrollment Plan)

School Name: Higher Institute of Arts & Technology
 Location: Merrillville Community School
 Renewal Year: 2021 - 22 SY

Notice Related to the Effect of the COVID-19 Pandemic

The "Total Distribution" calculation is an estimate based on the current 2019-21 State budget. Actual tuition support for Year 6 and beyond will not be known until the 2022-24 budget bill is enacted during the 2021 legislative session. The State of Indiana had a significant shortfall in revenue in FY 2020 and expects an even more significant shortfall in FY 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, there is a possibility that tuition support for 2021-22 (Year 6) and beyond may be lower than it was in 2020-21, and could remain static or low for some years. The "Adjusted Distribution" calculation is a new calculation that attempts to account for this possibility by reducing the total distribution for Year 6 by 5%, Years 7 & 8 by 3%, and Years 9 & 10 by 1%. No reduction is applied to the Current Year calculation. **We strongly suggest that schools remain conservative in all budget projections for the next few years.**

Enrollment	Current Year 2020 - 21 SY	Year 6 2021 - 22 SY	Year 7 2022 - 23 SY	Year 8 2023 - 24 SY	Year 9 2024 - 25 SY	Year 10 2025 - 26 SY
Kindergarten	17	18	19	20	21	22
Grade 1	25	27	28	29	30	32
Grade 2	24	25	26	27	28	29
Grade 3	23	24	25	26	27	28
Grade 4	24	25	26	27	28	29
Grade 5	20	21	23	24	27	28
Grade 6	21	22	23	26	27	28
Grade 7	22	23	24	25	26	29
Grade 8	22	23	24	25	26	27
Grade 9						
Grade 10						
Grade 11						
Grade 12						
Adult						
Total Adult Enrollment:	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total K-12 Enrollment:	198	208	218	229	240	252
Special Education #	25	21	22	23	24	25
English Learners #	10	10	11	11	12	13
FRL #	178	187	196	206	216	227
K-12 Distribution	\$ 1,307,759.31	\$ 1,373,807.76	\$ 1,439,856.21	\$ 1,512,509.51	\$ 1,585,162.80	\$ 1,664,420.94
Adult Distribution	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Distribution	\$ 1,307,759.31	\$ 1,373,807.76	\$ 1,439,856.21	\$ 1,512,509.51	\$ 1,585,162.80	\$ 1,664,420.94
Adjusted Distribution		\$ 1,305,117.37	\$ 1,396,660.52	\$ 1,467,134.22	\$ 1,569,311.17	\$ 1,647,776.73

How "Total Distribution" is Calculated:

Basic Tuition Support (for schools with non-virtual students) is generally equal to:

$$(\text{Foundation Amount} \times \text{ADM}) + ((\text{Complexity Multiplier} \times \text{Complexity Index}) \times \text{ADM})$$

The Complexity calculation provides additional funding to school corporations serving proportionally more students from low-income families. It is based on the percentage of a school corporation's students receiving SNAP, TANF, or foster care services. For the sake of simplicity, the above calculation uses the Complexity Index for the school corporation in which the proposed charter school is located; however, as the Complexity Index is calculated based on the percentage of the specific charter school's students, the charter school's actual Complexity amount may differ. The total distribution (as adjusted) is carried over to Tab 4, Line 1 - Basic Tuition Support.

Total "State" tuition support includes "basic tuition support" plus any other "categorical" grants for which a school may be eligible (e.g., honors designation awards; special education grants; CTE grants). Average Daily Membership (ADM) is determined on two count dates (in September and February). For ADM purposes, full day Kindergarten students are counted as 1.0, half-day kindergarten students are counted as 0.5.

The FY 2021 foundation amount is \$5,703. The FY 2021 complexity multiplier is \$3,675. The FY 2021 Adult Grant amount for adult high schools is \$6,750.

5-Year Projected School Staffing Plan

School Name: Higher Institute of Arts & Technology
Renewal Year: 2021 - 22 SY

- Complete all relevant Gray Shaded areas - Name of Position, Number of Positions, Average Salary, Health Insurance, Retirement Contribution, and Other Benefits.
Projected salary and benefits must align with 5-year budget.
Please see footnotes below for additional information.

Main staffing and expense table with columns for Current Year, Year 6, Year 7, Year 8, Year 9, and Year 10. Rows include Instructional Staff (Instructor, Teaching asst, IPE/Instructor), Admin & Support (Accounts, Operations Manager, Director, Assistant), and Benefits (Health Insurance, Retirement Contributions, Social Security, Medicare, Unemployment, Other Compensation).

SUMMARY table with columns for Current Year, Year 6, Year 7, Year 8, Year 9, and Year 10. Rows include Total Staff, Total Salaries, Total Taxes & Benefits, Total Salaries + Benefits, and Student/Teacher ratio.

The information provided below does not, and is not intended to, constitute legal advice. Schools should consult with an attorney for any questions about employment matters.

(1) Amounts paid to "employees" regardless of whether they are full-time, part-time, or limited-time should be included in the Average Salary column (lines 13-45) for each year. You should include all pay given to an employee for services performed, including salaries, vacation allowances, bonuses, stipends, commissions, and grants. Fringe benefits. For more information, see https://www.in.gov/indianapolis/155. Generally, a worker who performs services for you is your "employee" if you have the right to control what will be done and how it will be done. Do not include payments made to "independent contractors" (see #2 below). Do not include self-employed contractors.

(2) Health Insurance and Retirement Contributions should be calculated as a per employee expense and entered manually on lines 51 & 52 for each year.

(3) Social Security, Medicare, and Unemployment are "employment taxes" which must be collected by the employer for all wages paid to individuals who are considered employees. The Worksheet calculates these amounts automatically based on the information entered in the Average Salary column for each year.

(4) Includes all other compensation, including non-taxable benefits (e.g., educational assistance, dependent care assistance, transportation benefits, non-lease fringe benefits, etc.). In addition, all amounts paid to "independent contractors" should be listed in the Other Compensation line (line 50) and explained in the budget narrative. The general rule is that an individual is an independent contractor if you have the right to control or direct only the result of the work and not what will be done and how it will be done. There are many factors used by the IRS to determine whether an individual is an independent contractor. See: https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employment/independent-contractor-self-employed-or-employee.

5-Year Projected Annual Operating Budget - Fiscal Year July 1 - June 30

School Name: Higher Institute of Arts & Technology
Renewal Year: 2022 - 2023

Special Instructions for Schools: Contributions with a Management Component
Please include a note in the assumptions column and budget narrative if any fee item includes additional service, consulting, facility, or licensing fees paid to a management company or affiliate of a management company that are not included in Line 97 (Education Service Provider Management Fee). For example, you should note any additional fees for instructional support supplies and resources, license fees for materials, software, or educational programming, or fees related to the management, sale, or lease of real estate. Please also state whether your facility is leased or purchased from a management company or affiliate of a management company.

Table with columns: REVENUES, Current Year, Year 6, Year 7, Year 8, Year 9, Year 10, Assumptions. Rows include State Revenue, Federal Revenue, Other Revenue, and EXPENSES categories like Administrative Staff, Instructional Staff, Support Supplies and Resources, and Facilities Expenses.

Footnotes:
(1) Charter school meeting certain criteria are entitled to 5750 per student to be used for capital, technology, and transportation costs.
(2) Including, but not limited to, alternative education program grants (IC 20-20-31); virtual safety plan grants (IC 21-1-14); second school fund grants (IC 20-2-1-2); dual language pilot program grants (IC 20-20-4-3); student and parent support services grants (IC 20-34-3); etc.
(3) This is a competitive grant. Funding is not guaranteed. The funding for the PCSG grant is distributed through a reimbursement process. Contact DOE's Office of Title Grants and Support for more information.
(4) Office of Superintendent includes the head of school, School Leader, Executive Director, Chief Executive Officer, as well as an associate or assistant executive positions, Office of the Principal includes the Vice Assistant Principals, Other School Administration includes Chief Academic Officers, Directors, Deans, and Coordinators of Curriculum, Instruction, Faculty, Students, Assessment, Student Affairs, Student Achievement, and similar positions.
(5) includes staffing for instruction and Curriculum Development, Instructional Staff Training, etc.
(6) Secretary, Receptionist, Attendance Clerk, Office Manager, Cafeteria Worker, and other off or part-time employees not specifically described.
(7) One half percent (1/2%) of basic tuition support or adult learner grant amount received by the school.
(8) include only those fees (per seat, contingent, or fixed) paid to a management company for educational or management services and describe how the fee is calculated in the budget narrative. All other additional amounts paid to a management company or affiliate of the management company (e.g., license payments, software, instructional materials) must be accounted for elsewhere in this worksheet.
(9) Schools are required to maintain an account in reserve to cover expenses for school closing. \$10,000 should be placed in reserve starting in year 2 with a balance of \$30,000 by year 4.

HIAT Charter Renewal Budget Narrative

Please find below a high-level summary of the budget, including key assumptions and revenue estimates:

- Our budget is based on a conservative view of enrollment, revenue, and expenses to ensure that the school is sustainable on State and Federal funds for each of the five years projected.
- Enrollment growth reflects a very conservative view of 5% increase per year from the FY21 count day enrollment of 198.
- State basic funding is also conservatively projected at the values generated by the budget model and equals a decline of 5% in year 6, a 3% decline in years 7 & 8 and a 1% decline in years 9 & 10 due to the likely impact of COVID on state education funding,
- Staffing is based on current average salaries and benefits plus an allowance for 3% annual increases.
- Staff ratios are based on 25 scholars per class.
- Facility lease costs are based on current expenses with a projected annual increase of 5%.
- We were able to secure 2:1 technology, so technology expenses budgeted are replacement costs only.
- All expenses are aligned to funding available based on annual enrollment.
- In keeping with our strategy to ensure that the core operating budget is financially sustainable, potential competitive grants and philanthropy are not included. When secured, growth funding will support supplemental resources for the school.

HIAT 5 Year Budget - Key Assumptions:	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26
Enrollment	198	208	218	229	240	252
Annual Enrollment Growth		5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Average Basic State Funding Per Scholar	\$6,605	\$6,275	\$6,407	\$6,407	\$6,539	\$6,539
Charter School	\$750	\$750	\$750	\$750	\$750	\$750

Facility Grant Per Scholar						
Average Other State Funding Per Scholar	\$372	\$394	\$391	\$387	\$384	\$380
Federal Funding Per Scholar (excl Nutrition)	\$1,876	\$1,192	\$1,260	\$1,277	\$1,260	\$1,260
Avg Nutrition per Scholar	\$813	\$813	\$813	\$832	\$813	\$813
Comp. Gr & Philanthropy per Scholar		-	-	-	-	-
Total Funding Per Scholar	\$10,416	\$9,424	\$9,620	\$9,653	\$9,745	\$9,741
Total Full Time Staff (FTE)	19	16	16	16	17	17
Annual Salary Increase	0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%
Facility Lease	\$123,087	\$129,241	\$135,703	\$142,488	\$146,763	\$154,101
Total Expenses per Scholar	\$10,403	\$9,410	\$9,594	\$9,615	\$9,701	\$9,690
Net Surplus	\$2,568	\$2,985	\$5,777	\$8,602	\$10,639	\$13,011

Building on the core assumptions we have shared above, our business plan incorporates several key strategies to promote our school’s financial health:

- We maintain a full-year monthly cash flow projection to identify any variances against budget and allow time to adjust.
- We evaluate all budgeted expenses as they arise during the school year to ensure that they are still necessary and represent the best use of funds.
- The enrollment set in the Pro-Forma employs conservative ADA figures.
- Staffing levels are based on actual enrollment only.
- We align all state and federal grants to educational priorities, working cross-functionally with Academics, Finance, and School Leadership to ensure funds are allocated to maximize educational outcomes.
- As our school-level budget demonstrates, we use non-competitive public funding and conservative state and federal funding estimates as the only source of revenue. This

approach yields a financial model that is low-risk and well-positioned to help the school reach sustainable financial health.

In addition to the information we have shared above, please refer to our Application Narrative for additional strategies that will further contribute to our school's long-term financial health, including our data-driven processes for Budget Management and Student Enrollment and Retention. Thank you for your partnership in helping our school provide sustainable impact to the scholars and families we serve.

Statement of Assurances

The charter school agrees to comply with all of the following provisions: (*Read and check*)

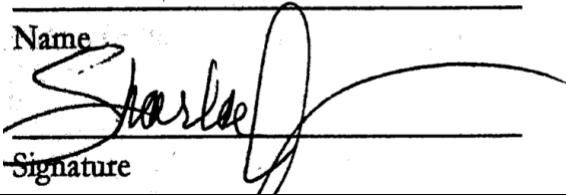
- 1. A resolution or motion has been adopted by the charter school applicant's governing body that authorizes the submission of this application, including all understanding and assurances contained herein, directing and authorizing the applicant's designated representative to act in connection with the application and to provide such additional information as required.
- 2. Recipients operate (or will operate if not yet open) a charter school in compliance with all federal and state laws, including Indiana Charter Schools Law as described in all relevant sections of IC § 20-24.
- 3. Recipients will, for the life of the charter, participate in all data reporting and evaluation activities as required by ICSB and IDOE. See in particular IC § 20-20-8-3 and relevant sections of IC § 20-24.
- 4. Recipients will comply with all relevant federal laws including, but not limited to, the *Age Discrimination in Employment Act* of 1975, Title VI of the *Civil Rights Act* of 1964, Title IX of the *Education Amendments of 1972*, section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act* of 1973, Part B of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, and section 427 of the *General Education Provision Act*.
- 5. Recipients will comply with all provisions of the Non regulatory Guidance—Public Charter Schools Program of the U.S. Department of Education, which includes the use of a lottery for enrollment if the charter school is oversubscribed, as well as with applicable Indiana law. See also relevant sections of IC § 20-24.
- 6. Recipients shall ensure that a student's records, and, if applicable, a student's individualized education program as defined at 20 U.S.C. § 1401(14) of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, will follow the student, in accordance with applicable federal and state law.
- 7. Recipients will comply with all provisions of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 ("ESSA")*, including but not limited to, provisions on school prayer, the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act, the Armed Forces Recruiter Access to Students and Student Recruiting Information, the Unsafe School Choice Option, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") and assessments.
- 8. Recipients will operate with the organizer serving in the capacity of fiscal agent for the charter school and in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles.
- 9. Recipients will at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.

- 10. Recipients will indemnify and hold harmless ICSB, the State of Indiana, all school corporations providing funds to the charter school (if applicable), and their officers, directors, agents and employees, and any successors and assigns from any and all liability, cause of action, or other injury or damage in any way relating to the charter school or its operation.
- 11. Recipients understand that ICSB may revoke the charter if ICSB deems that the recipient is not fulfilling the academic goals, fiscal management, or legal and operational responsibilities outlined in the charter.

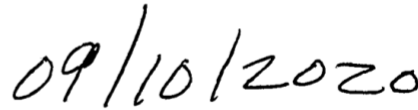
I, the undersigned, am an authorized representative of the charter school applicant and do hereby certify that the information submitted in this application is accurate and true to the best of my knowledge and belief. In addition, I do hereby certify to the assurances contained above.

Sharla Johnson, M.Ed.

Name



Signature



Date