



Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

MEMORANDUM

TO: Indiana State Board of Education
FROM: Office of School Accountability, Indiana Department of Education
RE: Accreditation Petition for FaithPrep Indiana
DATE: June 2, 2021

This memorandum provides a summary of the information provided by the school in the petition and in any submitted revisions, as well as the Department's comments regarding the accreditation of FaithPrep.

Background & Demographic Information

FaithPrep Indiana is a kindergarten through twelfth grade school located in Columbus. FaithPrep intends to open as a fully virtual school, serving communities statewide. FaithPrep currently does not hold accreditation with an accrediting organization but is affiliated with Columbus Christian School (CCS). FaithPrep describes the relationship between FaithPrep and CCS as "...sister school[s] of Columbus Christian School (CCS) authorized by Columbus Christian School, Inc." FaithPrep also intends to utilize K12 for its virtual platform.

FaithPrep describes its mission as to "...help students pursue academic excellence, develop Christian character, and discover their gifts, talents and purpose to follow God's calling in life," and describes its vision as to "...impact the world for good through generations of Christ-centered servant learners."

FaithPrep intends to serve 500 students in grades kindergarten through twelfth grade upon opening, but ultimately intends to maintain its current grade levels and expand its student population to 2,500 students over the next five (5) years.

Operations

Facilities: FaithPrep currently operates out of the Columbus Christian School building located at 3170 Indiana Ave, Columbus, IN 47201. While FaithPrep did not provide additional documentation verifying that the facility meets Department standards for student occupancy, since FaithPrep operates virtually and is currently housed in a current Choice school, the Department concludes FaithPrep meets standards for student occupancy.

Tuition: FaithPrep indicates that their annual tuition is \$6,250 for Elementary School (Grades K-5), and \$7,250 for Middle and High School (Grades 6-12). FaithPrep has indicated that if accredited, it intends to participate in the Indiana Choice Scholarship program.

Staffing: FaithPrep's current Head of School is Kendall Wildey. FaithPrep currently does not employ any teachers, but intends to hire teachers holding valid teaching certification, as well teachers that "...possess online teaching competencies and qualities identified by research about effective online teaching." FaithPrep has provided assurances indicating it will utilize the services of an Indiana-licensed teacher to administer state assessments.

Academic Programming

Curriculum and Instruction: FaithPrep utilizes the Stride online curriculum for its subjects, which is "...grounded in a set of guiding principles that promote critical thinking and problem-



Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

solving skills to prepare students for the demands of the 21st Century. While maintaining alignment to Indiana Academic Standards, Stride uses ‘big ideas’ in every subject area to organize the explicit learning objectives for each course. This approach enables teachers to connect their instruction to both content and state standards easily.”

In addition to assessments provided by Stride, FaithPrep also utilizes several nationally recognized assessments such as NWEA, STAR360, Go Formative, and others to assess student growth and mastery.

FaithPrep has contracted with FACTS for its Student Information System (SIS). FACTS is Indiana Ed-Fi certified with Ed-Fi Data Standards, and FaithPrep has indicated to the Department that it has capacity to produce and submit all required data reports to the state in an accurate and timely manner.

FaithPrep’s main instructional approach is stated as “The Stride curriculum uses several types of multimedia to engage different learning intelligences of students. The multimedia strategies used in the curriculum include: Audio, Photographs/illustrations, Technology-Enhanced Item (TEI) types, and Animations/Videos.” FaithPrep also adds “...due to the unique online nature of the Stride curriculum, assistive technology tools are available to all students based on their individual needs. Accessibility tools include text to speech, speech to text, lowering readability of grade level text while maintaining grade level standards, translation tools, highlighting tools, zoom text, visual dictionary, word prediction software, and visual graphs and web support.”

As part of the seeking accreditation processes, FaithPrep submitted signed assurances agreeing to comply with all applicable legal standards and required processes for nonpublic schools as part of its provisional accreditation period and understands that its accreditation may be revoked if FaithPrep fails to meet any or all legal requirements while holding provisional accreditation.

Department Comments

- FaithPrep indicated that it operates as a “sister school” of Columbus Christian School and is “authorized” by Columbus Christian School’s Board of Directors. FaithPrep also indicated that the schools will operate out of the same building, both with the same head of school. The Department has concerns with separately accrediting FaithPrep as its own entity as, excluding its virtual method of instruction, FaithPrep appears to be almost identical to Columbus Christian School. The Department also has concerns with allowing a nonpublic school to “authorize” another nonpublic school, as this is not permitted under current statute.
- FaithPrep indicates that it has not hired any instructional staff at this time. The Department has concerns with accrediting a school that does not currently have any instructional staff.
- FaithPrep indicates that outside of a weekly session of synchronous instruction, students will spend their instructional day in asynchronous instruction unless synchronous instruction is specifically requested by the student or instructor. The Department has concerns with whether FaithPrep has adequate supports in place to ensure students remain academically engaged during periods of asynchronous instruction.



Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

- FaithPrep intends to operate as a fully virtual nonpublic school and has indicated that, if accredited, FaithPrep intends to participate in the Choice Scholarship Program. The Board has no previous record of accrediting virtual nonpublic schools, so this would need to be considered further.

Department Recommendation:

The Department recommends FaithPrep Indiana's petition for provisional accreditation be approved.