



# Charter School Application

Education One at Trine University  
1 University Ave.  
Angola, IN 46703

[www.education1.org](http://www.education1.org)

## Application Introduction and Specifications

A charter school is a public school that operates under a contract, known as a charter, between the school's governing board (or organizer) and an approved charter school authorizer. Charter schools are created to provide high-quality, innovative educational options that meet the diverse needs of students and families in the communities they serve.

Education One at Trine University has developed a rigorous, phased application process to ensure that only qualified and mission-aligned applicants are invited to move forward. Submission of a full charter school application is by invitation only, following an initial evaluation of the applicant's Letter of Intent and submission of an Initial Proposal and participation in a Proposal Pitch. While Education One operates on an open application cycle, recommended submission timelines are outlined to support planning and ensure a strong school launch. It is recommended that an application be submitted 12-15 months prior to the intended school start date.

The application is designed to elicit clear, concise information to support a comprehensive and equitable review process. The Education One Application Review Team evaluates each submission using clearly defined criteria aligned to national quality standards. Education One reserves the right to reject incomplete or non-compliant applications. All official communication will be directed to the authorized representatives identified by the applicant group.

Education One is governed by its own Board of Directors, independent from Trine University. Final authorization decisions are made by the Education One Board, based on a formal recommendation from the Executive Director. Education One's application and review process is informed by national best practices and quality authorizing standards outlined by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA). For more information, visit [www.qualitycharters.org](http://www.qualitycharters.org).

### Application Specification Instructions

- The application must be typed and single-spaced utilizing the template provided by Education One. Utilize the provided text boxes to answer questions. If a particular question does not apply, respond with a "Not Applicable." Questions without text boxes indicate that the response will be incorporated into an Application Attachment.
- The application narrative should not exceed 50 pages.
- For Application Attachments that require a specified template, ensure all pages of the document are completed.

## Notice of Disclosure

All information submitted as part of the charter school application process, including financial documentation, is subject to disclosure under the Indiana Access to Public Records Act (IC § 5-14-3). This includes potential disclosure to the public and media.

If an applicant believes that certain portions of the application qualify for exemption under the Act, the applicant must obtain an advisory opinion from the Indiana Public Access Counselor before submitting any materials. If the Public Access Counselor supports the applicant's position, any information deemed confidential must be:

1. Clearly marked as confidential within the application;
2. Accompanied by a written statement citing the specific exemption(s) under the Act; and
3. Accompanied by the Public Access Counselor's written opinion supporting the exemption claim.

If this process is not followed, all information submitted will be considered subject to public disclosure unless Education One independently determines that specific content must be withheld under the Public Records Act. By submitting an application, the applicant and its representatives, employees, and agents acknowledge that:

- All application materials may be reviewed or copied by the public;
- Education One, Trine University, the Indiana Department of Education, and any associated officials, employees, or agents shall not be held liable for any such disclosures; and
- The applicant waives any rights to legal recourse or claims arising from the release of application materials in accordance with the Public Records Act.

## Application Attachments

Education One utilizes a shared drive system to organize each applicant’s submission, including all required application materials and attachments as outlined in the table below. Each applicant group will be provided with access to a secure shared folder that contains all necessary templates and resources to complete the application.

Within the shared folder, a subfolder titled “Application Attachments” will be used to store all required attachments. Please follow these guidelines for uploading:

- Each required attachment should be saved as a single PDF document.
- Name each file using the format: *[School Name] – Attachment [Number]* (e.g., “Example Charter School – Attachment 1”).
- Upload all documents to the “Application Attachments” folder within the shared drive.

Once uploaded, applicants must link each attachment to the corresponding row in the table below by generating a shareable view-only link. Ensure that link access is set to allow anyone with the link to view the document. Add a space after each pasted link in the table to activate it for reviewers.

Failure to follow these formatting and upload instructions may result in delayed review of your application materials. If you experience technical issues with the shared drive system or have questions about the file naming or linking process, please contact Education One staff for assistance.

Application Attachment Table		
Attachment	Description	Link
Attachment 1	<b>Organizational Charts for Governing, Managing, &amp; Staffing</b> <i>Submit an organization chart that shows school governance, management, and staffing structure for Year 1 and at full build-out.</i>	DMA Sout...
Attachment 2	<b>Planned Curriculum</b> <i>Provide a sample course scope and sequence for one subject for one grade level for each division (elementary, middle, high) the school will serve.</i>	DMA Sout...
Attachment 3	<b>Enrollment Policy</b> <i>Provide the school’s proposed enrollment policy. The policy should include a plan for compliance with any applicable desegregation order.</i>	DMA Sout...
Attachment 4	<b>Proposed School Calendar</b> <i>Provide the proposed school calendar for the first year of operation, including the number of days/hours of instruction. Instructional calendar guidance from the Indiana Department of Education can be found <a href="#">here</a>.</i>	DMA Sout...
Attachment 5	<b>A Description of Staff Responsibilities.</b> <i>Provide a description of the major staffing positions that make up the school’s structure (e.g., principal, instructional coach, teacher), including the core responsibilities of each role.</i>	DMA Sout...
Attachment 6	<b>Proof of Secured Facility</b> <i>Provide proof of commitment for the facility.</i>	DMA Sout...
Attachment 7	<b>Completed Budget and Staffing Workbook</b> <i>Use the workbook provided by Education One.</i>	DMA Sout...
Attachment 8	<b>Budget Narrative</b> <i>Provide a detailed description of the assumptions and revenue estimates, including but not limited to the basis for revenue projections, staffing levels, and costs.</i>	DMA Sout...
Attachment 9	<b>Discipline Policy</b> <i>Provide the school’s proposed discipline policy.</i>	DMA Sout...
Attachment 10	<b>Start-up Plan/Timeline</b> <i>Provide a detailed start-up plan for the school, specifying tasks, timelines, and responsible</i>	DMA Sout...

	<i>individuals. Include when the charter school is expected to begin school operations and have students attending.</i>	
Attachment 11	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Non-Profit Status Proof/Board Policies</b></p> <p><i>Submit Articles of Incorporation, proof of non-profit status and tax exempt status (or copies of filings). Attach all existing organizational founding documents, approved board policies or resolutions, and a status update on policies the organization plans to adopt relating to school governance before opening</i></p>	 DMA Sout...
Attachment 12	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Signed Statement of Assurances</b></p> <p><i>Submit one completed and signed Statement of Assurances on behalf of the board. Use the template provided by Education One.</i></p>	 DMA Sout...
Attachment 13	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>School's Founding Team, Leadership Team, and Governing Board</b></p> <p><i>List the members of the school's founding team, proposed leadership team, and governing board. Include full resumes that contain contact information for each individual listed.</i></p>	 DMA Sout...
Attachment 14	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Board Member Notice of Disclosure</b></p> <p><i>Submit completed and signed information sheets for each board member. Use the template provided by Education One.</i></p>	 DMA Sout...
Attachment 15	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Board Code of Ethics &amp; Conflict of Interest</b></p> <p><i>Provide the board's proposed Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest policy.</i></p>	 DMA Sout...
Attachment 16	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Term Sheet for Contract</b></p> <p><i>If engaging with an EMO/CMO, provide the term sheet, draft proposed management contract detailing limits and evidence that the service provider is authorized to do business in Indiana.</i></p>	N/A
Attachment 17	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Insurance/Levels of Coverage</b></p> <p><i>Provide a list of the types of insurance coverage the school will secure, including a description of the level of coverage.</i></p>	 DMA Sout...
Attachment 18	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Evidence of Community Support</b></p> <p><i>Provide evidence of support from community partners (i.e., letters of intent/commitment, memoranda of understanding, and/or contracts).</i></p>	 DMA Sout...
Attachment 19	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Historical Performance Workbook</b></p> <p><i>If applicable, use the workbook provided by Education One.</i></p>	<a href="#">DMA South - Attachment 19</a>
Attachment 20	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>3 Years of Audited Financials for IN Schools</b></p> <p><i>If applicable, provide the last three years of audited financial statements for the school(s) and the most recent internal financial statements.</i></p>	N/A
Attachment 21	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>3 Years of Audited Financials for Whole Organization</b></p> <p><i>If applicable, provide the last three years of audited financial statements for the organization as a whole and the most recent internal financial statements</i></p>	 DMA Sout...
Attachment 22	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Litigations</b></p> <p><i>If applicable, provide a summary of the demand, any response to the demand, and the results of the arbitration or litigation.</i></p>	N/A

## Executive Summary

Proposed School Information	
<b>Name</b>	Dynamic Minds Academy- South (DMA-S)
<b>Address</b>	4065 Asbury St, Indianapolis, IN 46227
<b>School District</b>	Dynamic Minds Academy
<b>Planned Year of Opening</b>	2027-2028
<b>Model or Focus</b>	Therapeutic Education
<b>Legal Group Name</b>	Dynamic Minds Academy
<b>Primary Contact Person</b>	Samantha Bandy
<b>Primary Contact Email</b>	sbandy@dynamicmindsacademy.org
<b>Primary Contact Cell Phone</b>	317-677-3397
<b>Applying as a/an</b> <input type="checkbox"/> [New School] <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> [Existing School] <input type="checkbox"/> [Replication] If applying as an existing school, please indicate the school's first year of operation, the current authorizer, and the year renewal of the current charter will take place. <i>2019, Education One at Trine University, 2039</i>	
<b>Does the applicant group seek approval for multiple campuses under a single charter?</b> [Yes] <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> [No] If yes, please indicate how many.	
<b>Does the applicant group already operate schools elsewhere in the United States?</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> [Yes] [No] If yes, please indicate where. <i>Indianapolis, IN</i>	
<b>Will the applicant group partner with an Education Service Provider (ESP)?</b> [Yes] <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> [No] If yes, please provide the name of the ESP.	
<b>Has the applicant group had any charter school applications under consideration by any other authorizer(s) in the United States, within the last five years?</b> [Yes] <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> [No] If yes, please indicate the state, authorizer name, proposed school name, application submission date, and decision date for each applicable application	

**Mission and Vision:** Provide an explanation of why this proposed school is the right fit for the intended community and how it aligns to the mission and vision of the school. The response should include the proposed school's mission and vision, an overview of the educational model that will be implemented, and a description of the community the school intended to serve.

*According to the Indiana Department of Education, the number of students in Indiana receiving special education services under the primary eligibility of autism is on the rise. In 2019, when Dynamic Minds Academy (DMA) opened its initial location, there were 15,930 students in grades K-12 with that eligibility. That grew to 19,895 in 2024 (2025 numbers are not yet available). These numbers do not include students in preschool or children who are enrolled in ABA therapy full-time and do not attend school. **Dynamic Minds Academy aims to bridge the gap between treatment and education for students with autism spectrum disorder by providing evidence-based practices for personal growth within an optimal learning environment.** We are seeking to grow our network to include a second location at 4065 Asbury Street at the southern tip of the Indianapolis Public School district. We currently serve 135 students at our location in the Castleton area of Lawrence Township, but only 10% of our students come from Lawrence Township. Some of our families travel 1-2 hours one-way to attend our program and have even relocated to be closer. We are the only model in the country to co-locate a public charter school with an ABA (applied behavior analysis) clinic to provide seamless services for families. In addition to our family's dual enrollment in ABA and education, we also provide access to related services like mental health sessions, speech/language therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy. Our education is provided in a low-complex environment with a 1 to 3 ratio of staff to students, where a student's individual needs come first. We focus on low-tech, hands-on teaching in the early grades with curricula like Math U See by Demme Learning, Orton-Gillingham, and Reading A-Z. As students progress in grades through middle school, we introduce higher-order thinking through the Indiana State Standards in*

*addition to Orton-Gillingham, Math U See, and Reading A-Z. At the high school level, we use computer-based Edmentum Plato Courseware for students to access all courses required for a traditional high school diploma. For core subjects like Algebra, Geometry, US History, Biology, English, etc., they are taught in small groups where our licensed teachers can individualize and differentiate their approach for each student. This has led to 84% of our graduates being able to earn a traditional diploma in an average of 6.15 years. The biggest difference in our educational model compared to other ABA centers and specialized schools is our therapeutic approach to behavior. Our approach is trauma-informed and focuses on co-regulation and strong supportive relationships. We want our students to be willing participants in the educational process and feel safe coming to school each day.*

**Founding Team:** Provide the full name, current job title, and employer, and connection with the proposed school for all persons on the founding teams, adding lines as needed.

Full Name	Current Job and Employer	Connection with Proposed School
Samantha Bandy	Education Director, Dynamic Minds Academy	Will be Chief Education Officer for the network and the initial Education Director for the DMA South location
Aaron Wallace	Associate Education Director, Dynamic Minds Academy	Will be Education Director for the Craig Street location (Dynamic Minds Academy- North)
Joshua Wolf	College & Career Coordinator, Dynamic Minds Academy	Will continue as College & Career Coordinator for both locations
Andrew Crum	Special Education Coordinator, Dynamic Minds Academy	Will continue as Special Education Coordinator for both locations

**Enrollment Summary:** Complete the table below, indicating grade level and enrollment projections for the school's first five years.

	Year 1 2027-2028	Year 2 2028-2029	Year 3 2029-2030	Year 4 2030-2031	Year 5 2032-2033
Grade Levels Served	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12
Total Enrollment	36	60	82	110	121

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

*Since we are opening up the option to our current families to transfer to the new location, we want to start off by offering services to all grade levels. This has benefited our growth since opening in 2019 because we are not limiting availability to a specific grade level. Our growth plan is based on an incremental increase in age groups from Year 1, as well as retention from year to year. According to the re-enrollment information we already have for 2026-2027, we have 42 students interested in transferring to Dynamic Minds Academy- South, and with 98% of our families responding.*

## Section I: People

The strength of any high-quality school lies in the people who bring its mission to life, from the founding team and leadership to the community stakeholders and future educators. This section evaluates the depth of the founding team's understanding of the community they intend to serve, their capacity to engage diverse stakeholders, and their ability to assemble the talent and infrastructure necessary to successfully design, launch, and sustain a high-performing charter school.

Applicants are asked to demonstrate how their community engagement, coalition-building efforts, leadership experience, and staffing strategies are aligned to the school's mission, vision, and educational model. The responses provided in this section will offer critical insight into the team's readiness to build a school that is responsive to community needs, built on access for all students, and staffed by professionals prepared to drive strong academic and operational outcomes.

### 1.1 Community and Coalitions

#### Meets Standard Expectation

- The founding team has a deep understanding of the community the proposed school seeks to serve.
- The founding team builds and maintains relationships across diverse interest groups and engages others in understanding, supporting, and acting on behalf of the mission.
- The founding team can navigate power and influence within local systems, structures, and people

1. Describe the community the school seeks to engage and the target student population.

*Dynamic Minds Academy- South's target student population is K-12 students with Autism Spectrum Disorder who are not successful in their current placement or whose parents are not satisfied with their current placement. Lack of success could be due to academic achievement or behavioral challenges. Families may not be satisfied with academic offerings, behavioral supports, and/or related services offered. We recruit families that are transitioning from full-time ABA (applied behavior analysis) and/or a traditional public school setting, as our program offers a mix of ABA therapy and individualized education under one roof. The CDC reported in 2025 that 1 in 31 children nationwide has been identified as having autism. Since opening in 2019, the number of IEPs in Indiana for students in grades K-12 with autism has grown from 15,930 to 19,895 in 2024. These students need the services and support that Dynamic Minds Academy- South aims to provide.*

2. Identify key stakeholders the founding team has engaged with (e.g., families, students, community leaders, business people, elected officials, organizations, and others) and describe:
  - Their support for the proposed school, including any commitments they have made. (Include letters of support or similar, as appropriate.)
  - Any reasons for strong opposition, and strategies to mitigate this.

*We have attached our current service contract with The Hope Source, our therapy partner. They plan on continuing their partnership at the DMA-S campus. I also attached several letters of support from our parents and staff that were read at the public hearing for Raymond Brandes 65. We have partnered with The Mind Trust through the Indiana Charter School Fellowship, awarded to our Associate Education Director, Aaron Wallace for the 2025-2026 school year. This fellowship has committed funding to Dynamic Minds Academy to aid in the growth of our network. Aaron Wallace is also participating in the National Accelerator of Autism Charter Schools Fellowship, led by Arizona Autism Charter Schools, to learn best practices to apply to the Dynamic Minds Academy network. Together Ed has partnered with us to help with pre-development for our new building. We have forged a connection with Derek Cahill, Councilor for District 23, where DMA-S will be located. We have begun making connections with the University Heights neighborhood by attending their neighborhood association meeting. We were very well received at this meeting and plan to become a cornerstone of this community. At this time we have not faced any opposition to our growth into southern Marion County.*

3. Summarize the founding team's approach to gathering community input and explain how this input shaped the school design.

*Dynamic Minds Academy has been loosely gathering community input over the last 6.5 years of operating our location on the north side by getting feedback from current families, families that have withdrawn, and interested families who ultimately did not enroll. That feedback has told us that we need additional locations in the city to allow ease of access for our families. We have had families withdraw due to the burden of traveling from the southern portion of the city. Our current families are very happy with the services we provide at our north side location, and we plan to continue that programming at DMA-S. We have begun gathering input directly from the University Heights neighborhood now that we have secured a location. We will use their feedback to shape our improvement projects for the building and communicate about our population's unique needs.*

4. Describe coalition-building successes and challenges, including the team's strategies for overcoming these challenges. Include any coalition-building strategies planned between now and the potential school opening.

*We are continually building connections with key stakeholders in the autism community, charter school sector, and the community in which we will be moving. Thus far, the only challenges we have faced have been with the current legislation being considered in the Indiana General Assembly, imposing changes on schools within the Indianapolis Public School boundaries. We are working to overcome this challenge by lobbying at the statehouse and staying in contact with our connections in the House and Senate. This is likely to continue happening each legislative session, and we are building the foundation for continued advocacy for our program.*

## 1.2 Founding Team

### Meets Standard Expectation

- The founding team has the relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities to execute in areas of education, finance, governance, and the proposed school's identified key design elements.
- The founding team demonstrates a track record of success in a variety of endeavors, large and small, as well as experience with failure and a demonstrated ability to learn, grow, and adapt.
- The founding team demonstrates an awareness of their areas for growth and how they plan to address them.
- The founding team understands how the organization will have to mature.

1. Explain how the founding team has the relevant skills, knowledge, and abilities to develop, start up, and operate the proposed school.

*The Chief Education Officer for the network and Education Director for DMA-S, Samantha Bandy, is in her 20th year as an educator and 7th year at the helm of Dynamic Minds Academy. Samantha brought experience as a special education teacher of record, an instructional coach, and an administrator to her role as Education Director for Dynamic Minds Academy in 2019. Since opening, her skills in education, finance, governance, and therapeutic education have grown exponentially, as evidenced by the continued success of the program. Samantha navigated the program through the financial uncertainty of COVID and has secured two CSP Quality Counts grants totaling over \$1 million and \$250,000 in Lilly Endowment grants.*

*Aaron Wallace is also in his 20th year of education and brings a wealth of experience in special education and working with underserved populations to his work at Dynamic Minds Academy. He has been with DMA since it opened in 2019 in the Associate Education Director role, and has completely transformed behavior data collection for the program. This data collection allows us to provide targeted support for our students in the classroom setting and have informed conversations with teachers, families, and our therapy partner. He is currently an Indiana Charter School Fellow with The Mind Trust and is also completing the National Accelerator of Autism Charter School Fellowship. Although he will take over as the Education Director for the DMA North location, he will still be an integral part of the leadership team for the network.*

Andrew Crum has been in education for 20+ years as a music educator and in special education. He has been with Dynamic Minds Academy since its first year. He started initially in a teaching role but has since progressed into leadership as the Special Education Coordinator. In this role, he has consistently seen high satisfaction ratings for IEP meetings from families, and we meet compliance metrics for Education One at every quarterly check with a 100% special education population. He will continue in the Special Education Coordinator role, splitting time between the two locations as we grow.

Joshua Wolf joined the Dynamic Minds Academy team when we opened in 2019 after spending 7 years as a behavior technician for The Hope Source. Through that experience, he truly learned how to bridge the gap between education and therapy by earning his Master's in Teaching from Purdue University and helping our struggling high school students conquer difficult math and physics concepts. He has since transitioned into the role of College and Career Coordinator, overseeing the delivery of our high school curriculum. Under his direction, our students earned an average of 7.1 credits per student in 2024-2025, and we were able to graduate a record of 14 students last year with traditional diplomas. He will continue in his role as the College and Career Coordinator, splitting time between the two locations as we grow.

2. Conduct a gap analysis of the founding team's capacities and plans to fill gaps with training, new team members, future hiring, and/or coalition building.

The founding team for Dynamic Minds Academy South has a strong background in charter school management for a single site, special education services, and best practices for educating individuals on the autism spectrum. Potential gaps we face are the shift from managing a single site to multiple sites in the city. This will require building a system-wide budget and norming on Standard Operating Procedures. We aim to address these gaps with our partnership with Afton Partners through the CSP Technical Assistance Coaching in the area of School Finance. Our engagement with the PEO ADP Totalsource will help us to standardize handbooks and operating procedures across the network. By utilizing the Chief Education Officer for Dynamic Minds Academy as the initial school leader for DMA-S, we will be able to set the standard for the location and train the eventual Education Director on the model and routines.

### 1.3 Staffing

#### Meets Standard Expectation

- The founding team develops compensation packages (salary and employment benefits), systems, and strategy that are likely to attract and retain strong staff.
- The founding team develops recruitment and hiring strategy, criteria, timeline, and procedures that are likely to result in a strong staff that meet ESEA requirements for being "Highly Qualified" and are well suited to the school
- The founding team has the relevant knowledge to develop a plan for supporting, developing, and annually evaluating school leadership and teachers that is likely to produce and retain a successful staff.

1. Provide and discuss specific evidence that the proposed school leader demonstrates the capacity to design, launch, and manage a high-performing charter school with the anticipated student population.

Dynamic Minds Academy's north side location opened in 2019 with an initial enrollment of 112 students, led by Samantha Bandy, the proposed initial school leader. The school has since grown, through COVID, to serve 135 students with a 97% student retention rate, a staff retention rate of 83%, and a waitlist of over 160 students for 10 open seats. During her tenure, DMA was renewed for a 15-year charter under Education One at Trine University and continues to perform highly on annual reviews. We believe this demonstrates the capacity to continue to serve the autism population at a second location, Dynamic Minds Academy- South.

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

*Dynamic Minds Academy- South will provide a robust compensation package for our staff. Teacher salaries start at \$50,983 with a 2% bonus payable twice a year as a retention incentive. Our instructional assistants start in the \$18-21 an hour range, depending on experience, and earn a 25-cent raise quarterly based on performance. Administrative salaries vary but are competitive with other charters in the city. All staff receive a 6% contribution to their chosen retirement plan (403b or TRF) on a 6-year vesting schedule. We also offer competitive health benefits through our PEO partnership with ADP TotalSource. We attract and retain high-performing teachers by taking our time in the hiring process to ensure the teacher is a good fit for our program. When we find staff who have expectations that align with our mission, we see the most success with retention.*

3. Describe the strategy, plans, and timeline for recruiting and hiring the teaching staff, including the school's plan for hiring "Highly Qualified" staff in accordance with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Explain other key selection criteria and any special considerations relevant to the school's design. Outline the school's procedures for hiring and dismissing school personnel, including conducting criminal background checks

*We currently use Indeed for most of our hiring, but to expand our staff for the new location, we will also engage in other recruiting sites such as Glassdoor, LinkedIn, and the state's Nimble recruiting system. We will start recruiting new staff in January 2027 so that they can complete the hiring and training process prior to the start of the 2027-2028 school year. Some of our current staff may transfer to the new building, leaving spots available at our north side location.*

*Our model requires staff to have an open mind and be outside-the-box thinkers, therefore we frequently hire people for teacher roles who seek alternate routes to licensure. They may apply for an emergency permit for their first year while we coach them to determine the best route to full licensure—transition to teaching or a charter school license. By the start of their 2nd year in the classroom, they should have initiated their chosen route to licensure. For instructional assistants, we look for those who have at least two years of college or a paraprofessional license. While experience working with students with autism is a plus, it comes down to the heart and willingness to do the work.*

*Our typical hiring process involves an initial phone interview with the Education Director to both ask questions of the candidate and educate them about our program. If there is alignment, the next step is an in-person interview with at least two administrators. During this interview, we ask more in-depth questions as well as tour the building. In some cases, we will have a 3rd step where the candidate shadows a current staff member for a portion of the day. Our current staff can give us a read as to whether or not they feel the candidate would fit our team, and we can also see their interactions with our students. If we decide to move forward, an offer letter will be sent for their acceptance. Once accepted, we set a start date, and they submit their information for a full background check through Safe Hiring Solutions.*

*Dynamic Minds Academy is an at-will employer, and we utilize a progressive discipline system. We approach many issues as a coaching opportunity until they become repeated actions. However, some conduct can result in immediate termination such as workplace violence, harassment, theft of any kind, insubordinate behavior, vandalism or destruction of company property, severely jeopardizing student safety including both their mental and physical well-being, use of company equipment and/or company vehicles without prior authorization, indiscretion regarding personal work history, skills, or training, divulging Dynamic Minds Academy business practices or any other confidential information, and/or any misrepresentation of Dynamic Minds Academy to a customer, a prospective customer, the general public, or an employee. The Education Director and Chief Education Officer reserve the right to administer disciplinary action at their discretion and based upon the circumstances.*

*During the first three years of operation at DMA South, we plan on sharing some staff between the two locations to keep costs down. Our current College and Career Coordinator and Special Education Coordinator will share time between the two locations initially. The only administrator who will be positioned full-time at the DMA South building will be the Chief Education Officer serving in the Education Director Role. The Chief Education Officer will develop a*

*distribution of responsibilities flow chart to ensure that no tasks required for each individual location are overlooked. Capacity to complete distributed tasks, total enrollment numbers, and financial sustainability will be evaluated when determining expansion of the administrative team at DMA South. Further expansion of the team would be to add instructional coaches at both locations and a full-time Education Director at DMA South.*

## Section II: Model

This section evaluates the overall design and instructional approach of the proposed school, including its alignment to the mission and responsiveness to the needs of the intended student population. A high-quality school model clearly defines what success looks like for students and provides the structures, strategies, and systems needed to reach those outcomes. Applicants must present a compelling mission and vision, outline the school's educational philosophy and key design elements, and demonstrate how the curriculum, instruction, and assessment systems will be implemented effectively.

In doing so, the founding team should clearly show how the proposed model supports academic achievement, student growth, and long-term readiness. Additional attention is given to how the school will serve all students, maintain a safe and productive learning environment, and build the foundation for long-term sustainability through sound planning, clear goals, and a strong understanding of the community landscape.

### 2.1 Mission, Vision, Purpose

#### Meets Standard Expectation

- The proposed school's mission is clear, cohesive, and measurable, and centers students and the community. The mission outlines the proposed school's purpose, what it does, and for whom.
- The vision outlines a clear aspirational long-term goal or ideal state the school aims to achieve.

1. Outline the proposed school's mission. Include a description of the indicators of success in achieving the mission and how you will evaluate the extent to which the school is achieving it.

*Mission: Dynamic Minds Academy aims to bridge the gap between treatment and education for students with autism spectrum disorder by providing evidence-based practices for personal growth within an optimal learning environment.*

*Dynamic Minds Academy (DMA), a public charter school, opened in 2019 in Castleton to serve approximately 110 students in grades K-12 with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). DMA co-locates with The Hope Source (THS) which provides modern and innovative direct therapeutic services for children with ASD. These therapies include applied behavior analysis, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, and mental health services. They also provide recreational, music, and art therapy in small group settings. DMA provides an innovative choice for parents who desire built-in extended school year services, and access to a public school education that is efficiently and effectively integrated with modern therapeutic services for their children. With the focus on maximizing the enormous potential for these students, lost time from transportation students between a school and therapy site, as is often the case when attempting to provide therapy, will be eliminated. Additionally, therapists will frequently work alongside educators, integrating the educational and therapy services seamlessly. In this model, communication is optimized, time is optimized, and a professional team is truly synchronized throughout an entire calendar year.*

*Dynamic Minds Academy- South will be the organization's second location in Indiana. DMA South plans to replicate the successful educational and therapeutic services currently provided at the flagship location in Castleton for both DMA and THS. Initially, DMA South will serve 36 students and grow to 121 students in grades K-12 over 5 years. Dynamic Minds Academy intends to continue to close the gap between education and therapy services so that they are working hand in hand for the benefit of the students. From the perspective of the students and families, all the education and therapy are provided seamlessly throughout their day.*

*We currently measure our success, and will continue to do so, by examining student progress on Individualized Education Plan goals, graduation rates, and student retention.*

2. Outline the proposed school's vision (i.e., describe what will be different if the school successfully meets its

mission).

*Vision: Dynamic Minds Academy will fill gaps in treatment and education, bridging evidence-based treatments and practices for an optimal learning environment.*

*The number of children diagnosed with ASD has been on the increase for some time. Data released from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) in March of 2014 estimated the prevalence of children with ASD across the United States at 1 in 68. That rate has increased to 1 in 31 as of 2025 per the CDC. Since opening in 2019, the number of IEPs in Indiana for students in grades K-12 with autism has grown from 15,930 to 19,895 in 2024. These numbers include students with an Individualized Education Plan or Special Education Service Plan, but it excludes the many families who choose to home-school or exclusively attend an ABA center. The sharp increase in identification of students with ASD has created gaps in treatment and education that DMA intends to fill.*

*Though programs focused on full inclusion of students with ASD are important on the continuum of services, it is not the optimal choice for all. Among the most prevalent problems with full inclusion is bullying. A 2012 study of bullying among adolescents with ASD in school settings reported 46.3% victimization with an additional 8.9% determined to be both victims and perpetrators of bullying. Because such victimization can be so crippling to social, emotional, and academic growth, some families prefer a more controlled method of integrating social skills and coping mechanisms into the routines of their children. An innovative educational choice is clearly needed.*

*Traditional public-school programs also differ from the DMA model in length of service. Though these programs may extend the school year through the IEP designated extended-year mandates, staffing is often reduced, and routines are changed during the extension. Even extended school years will frequently offer no more than 200 instructional days, and most students will remain on a traditional 180-day schedule. DMA provides a 48-week program, only fully closing to students for specific holidays and a week in the summer. This provides 240 instructional days or an instructional year 33% longer than the traditional calendar. Traditional public schools cannot offer this choice.*

*Students at DMA benefit from a small school environment where everyone in the building is a specialist, educationally or therapeutically, on ASD. Traditional public-school programs, no matter how extensive the services, will separate these services. Classroom time, followed by busing or moving students, followed by therapy time, is the norm. Additionally the expense of these programs can be immense and the student experience lacks consistency and efficiency.*

## 2.2 Key Design Elements

### Meets Standard Expectation

- Key design elements of the educational model are aligned with the mission and designed to achieve positive outcomes for the proposed student population.
- The approach to serving special populations is likely to lead to high-quality educational outcomes for students with diverse needs.
- The school environment will be safe, supportive, and conducive to student learning for all students.

1. Describe and justify the proposed school's key design elements, including how they align with the mission; the research basis and/or examples of other schools or programs the founding team researched or visited; what they learned from them; and how that may be applied to this school.

*Dynamic Minds Academy-South will continue to co-locate with an ABA therapy provider, The Hope Source, to provide both an education and medically necessary ABA therapy at one convenient location for families. Families will enroll their child in with both organizations. Enrollment in ABA therapy with The Hope Source is contingent upon a medical diagnosis of autism and insurance approval. Beyond just co-locating, the two entities collaborate to provide*

*a seamless integration of services throughout each student's day. The number of hours spent in education and ABA therapy may vary depending on student need, but most students will spend 3.5 hours of their day in the DMA-S therapeutic classroom or THS therapeutic lab, and 3.5 hours will be spent in small group or 1:1 ABA therapy provided by The Hope Source. Enrollment in both programs is essential to student success, as the skills taught through naturalistic ABA are as critical as the academic skills taught in the classroom.*

*Our education is provided in a low-complex environment with a 1 to 3 ratio of staff to students, where a student's individual needs come first. DMA defines a low-complex environment as having very little clutter, limited items on the wall, and only materials necessary for lessons available. Environmental management is one of the most basic antecedent interventions for a successful learning environment. We focus on low-tech, hands-on teaching in the early grades with curricula like Math U See by Demme Learning, Orton-Gillingham, and Reading A-Z. As students progress in grades through middle school, we introduce higher-order thinking through the Indiana State Standards in addition to Orton-Gillingham, Math U See, and Reading A-Z. At the high school level, we use computer-based Edmentum Plato Courseware for students to access all courses required for a traditional high school diploma. For core subjects like Algebra, Geometry, US History, Biology, English, etc., they are taught in small groups where our licensed teachers can individualize and differentiate their approach for each student. These curriculum choices allow us to individualize our instruction to provide evidence-based practices in an optimal learning environment.*

*This model has been successful for our students at our current location, as evidenced by our annual reviews by Education One, our 36 alumni, and our 15-year charter renewal by Education One for a term of July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2039. In our first annual review of our new charter term, we received an overall rating of "Approaching Standard" in Academic Performance. However, we achieved a rating of "Exceeds Standard" on 4 out of 14 indicators, including Proficiency on State Summative Assessment: ELA, Historical Proficiency: ELA, Historical Proficiency: Math, and Bigs Classroom: Progress Toward Proficiency Reading. Historical Proficiency compares proficiency of Legacy students (students enrolled 3 or more school years) to non-legacy students, demonstrating that increased time in our program increases academic proficiency. We also scored "Meets Standard" in 3 additional indicators including Special Education, Instruction, and Bigs Classroom: Progress Towards Proficiency Math.*

2. Summarize and provide a rationale for the proposed school's chosen instructional approaches.

*In grades Kindergarten through 7th grade, we focus heavily on building foundational skills through Science of Reading and hands-on manipulative-based learning. Our reading curriculum includes Orton-Gillingham (OG), in which all K-7 teachers and instructional assistants are trained. This is supplemented by leveled texts from Reading A-Z to integrate Science and Social Studies concepts and novel studies rooted in Indiana State Standards. We have also recently adopted Four Square Writing to increase writing exposure in our lower grades. All three of these curriculums—OG, Reading A-Z, and Four Square Writing—are grounded in the Science of Reading. Research shows that when students have a strong foundation in literacy, they are more likely to be able to engage with rigorous, grade level work as they progress through their educational experience. These curriculums also lend themselves to individualization and personalization for each student to reach their independent academic goals at their own pace.*

*For Math in grades K-7, we utilize Math U See by Demme Learning. Initially utilized for homeschool students, Math U See is a manipulative-based program that helps students learn math concepts at their own pace. The curriculum has 13 levels starting with an introduction to number sense and progressing all the way to calculus. Math U See focuses on mastering concepts before moving to a new topic which translates easily to our individualized learning approach. Again, students are able to progress at their own individualized pace through the curriculum.*

*For grades 8-12, we utilize Edmentum's Plato Courseware and direct small group instruction from highly qualified teachers in Math, ELA, Science, and Social Studies based on the core Indiana standards. Efficacy studies in Plato Courseware show that it increases the probability of on-time graduation for students utilizing the curriculum. The courses are aligned to state standards and take a mastery-based approach. This option allows flexibility in meeting the needs of our individual learners while affording them access to all required courses for the Indiana diploma types. Our ELA teachers in the upper grades have also received training in Orton-Gillingham so they have a better*

foundation in the Science of Reading for students who maintain those gaps. We have also provided additional training for our math instructors in the upper levels of the Math U See curriculum as it can support high school math courses such as Algebra, Geometry, and Calculus. This approach to our high school curriculum allows for students to progress to mastery at their individual pace and earn a diploma on their timeline.

Finally, all staff throughout the building have received training in the Universal Design for Learning (UDL). UDL designs lessons so that all individuals can access them, not just those with or without disabilities. UDL is grounded in research from the fields of neuroscience, the learning sciences, and cognitive psychology. By teaching our staff how to provide multiple means of representation, multiple means of action and expression, and multiple means of engagement, they can adapt all curriculum offered to meet the needs of our unique student population. The strict barriers that many traditional public school's curricula options face are removed and our students are able to access more education than ever before.

3. Explain the plan for ensuring the curriculum aligns with state content standards while being rigorous, engaging, and effective for all students.

In grades K-7, our teachers utilize a standards-based report card for reporting progress, ensuring all instructional curricula tie to the appropriate state standards for that student. Our teachers utilize the State Standards in all lesson planning. All Reading A-Z leveled readers include ties to Indiana State Standards. Orton-Gillingham is grounded in the Science of Reading and aligned with K-2 "learning to read" standards for ELA. Math U See is more skilled based and does not perfectly align with Indiana State Standards until the Algebra level. Edmentum Plato Courseware is aligned with Indiana State Standards. Since we assess student needs and place them in curriculum individually, we are able to ensure that each curriculum is rigorous, engaging, and effective for all students.

4. Describe the proposed school's approach to serving students with disabilities and English learners.

Though many students who enter DMA will have a prior determination for special education services related to ASD, we understand and support the fact that a medical diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is not an automatic qualifier for special education services. We expect at least 95% of our client/student population to receive special education services.

DMA is committed to providing high-quality instruction and appropriate supplemental services to students with Individualized Education Programs, students with Section 504 plans, English Language Learners, and students at risk of academic failure or dropping out. Accordingly, DMA will implement a comprehensive assessment to identify any students with these needs and serve them appropriately.

The school will administer a home language survey to identify the first/native language(s) of all students enrolled in the school. This home language survey will be administered to ALL students enrolled in the school, and the survey will be used during the enrollment process to identify the native language of each new student at the time of enrollment into the school. Documentation of a student's native language will be recorded in the permanent record. DMA will implement an identification procedure to survey all students in the school with the following three questions:

- i. What is the native language of the student?
- ii. What language(s) is (are) spoken most often by the student?
- iii. What language(s) is (are) spoken by the student in the home?

DMA will provide equal educational opportunity to language minority students with the appropriate level of English language development to allow for meaningful participation of language minority students in the school's educational programs. Such instruction will take place during the regular school day. The majority of our current students with ILPs (Individualized Language Plans) receive services through Content-Based ESL services. This approach to teaching ESL makes use of instructional materials, learning tasks, and classroom techniques from

academic content areas as the vehicle for developing language, content, cognitive, and study skills. English is used as the medium of instruction.

DMA will maintain high expectations for all students, embracing their differences and modifying all areas of the educational and therapeutic environment to best meet their needs. This model is not an adjustment of the traditional "mainstream" educational model; it is a model built entirely for students with special needs.

5. Describe how the proposed school will ensure a safe environment conducive to student learning and development. Include the approach to student discipline and well-being.

At the center of the ethos of DMA is that children with ASD should be accepted as naturally different rather than abnormal or needing to be fixed. This is the premise that drives the therapy to include, but go far beyond Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) and into the realms of additional modern therapeutic services (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Naturalistic Teaching, Joint Attention Intervention, and relation-based developmental models). The culture is created and implemented through commitment to several shared beliefs and core values which include the following:

### **Students**

- All students can succeed
- Each student has his or her own pattern of unique learning
- Everyone involved has high expectations for learning
- Students with ASD have seamless educational transitions
- Students have access to the supports, services, programs, and range of placements they need to achieve their potential

### **Educators and School Board**

- Successful educational practices are evidence-based and founded on research
- Universal design and differentiated instruction provides teachers with effective methods to address the various learning needs of students
- Classroom teachers have the primary responsibility for a student's literacy and numeracy development. Programming for students with ASD will be designed and implemented in collaboration with the classroom teacher and other individuals involved with the student
- Therapy professionals and classroom teachers need to work collaboratively with the broader professional community and families, and have access to coordinated community resources and supports, to create a learning environment that supports students with ASD
- Educators and related professionals must have the competencies and current knowledge, gained through high quality professional development including mentoring, to understand and address the learning requirements of students with ASD
- Educators use instructional strategies that promote student capacity for independent learning and self-determination, including self-advocacy
- DMA fosters a sense of belonging for all students with ASD

### **Program Delivery**

- Fairness is not sameness
- Accessible, accountable, connected educational programs and services support coherent and sustainable models of delivery
- Special education services are measurable, responsive to change and enriched by proven innovations
- A coordinated approach among service providers enables student achievement

- *Programs, services and supports for students with autism spectrum disorders address the range of core components of effective educational practices, addressing individual strengths as well as needs (such as communication, social interaction, behavior).*

**Family and Community Involvement**

- *Parents and students engage actively and collaboratively with educators, therapists and community agencies in decisions related to providing effective programs and services for students with ASD*

**Student Discipline**

*Dynamic Minds Academy takes a therapeutic approach to student behavior and collaborates with The Hope Source clinical staff to develop plans when student behaviors occur in the DMA classroom. In some instances, disciplinary action is necessary, and these written procedures will be followed. Dynamic Minds Academy is unable to share details regarding a student’s behavior or disciplinary actions with anyone but that child’s parent or guardian.*

*Dynamic Minds Academy supports the ABA philosophy utilized by The Hope Source within its classrooms. We do not use tangibles (food, electronics) for reinforcement. Punishment procedures for maladaptive behavior are always used as a last resort and only for the safety and dignity of the student.*

**2.3 High School Graduation Requirements (High Schools Only)**

**Meets Standard Expectation**

- The founding team has developed a sound plan for meeting state and authorizer graduation requirements (including credits, GPA calculation, transcripts, electives) and compelling explanation of any additional requirements beyond the state’s and authorizer’s requirements.
- The founding team provides a clear, persuasive explanation of how the school’s graduation requirements will ensure student readiness for college and other post-secondary opportunities (trade school, military service, or entering the workforce).
- The founding team has built effective systems and structures for students at risk of dropping out or not meeting graduation requirements.

1. Describe the founding team’s capacity to design and implement a high school program that meets or exceeds Indiana’s graduation requirements and Education One’s performance standards. Include relevant team experience supporting students to earn Core 40 diplomas or higher, monitoring on-track status, and increasing graduation rates.

*Since opening in 2019, Dynamic Minds Academy has had a total of 36 graduates, with 8 additional graduates projected for this summer. We have provided access to all levels of diploma for our students through the use of Edmentum Plato Courseware and individualized instruction. The majority of our students, 40%, have graduated with a General Diploma. 33% have earned a Core 40 Diploma, 16% a Certificate of Completion, and 12% an Alternate Diploma. These students have completed their chosen path in an average of 6.15 years. We have one currently enrolled student, projected to graduate in 2027, completing their Academic Honors Diploma. This student is also currently enrolled in dual enrollment courses with Trine University. We have a local academic performance goal for 85% to 95% of our students to be on track to graduate by their predetermined date. According to our January 2026 data, 92.31% of our students are on track.*

*Our College and Career Coordinator has stayed up to date with Indiana’s ever changing graduation requirements by attending all webinars offered by the Department of Education. Our current 9th graders and any students projected to graduate later than 2028 have been moved to the new diploma seals. Our high school report cards are “graduation trackers” that show progress toward each students’ diploma and are sent to families each quarter. Our*

College and Career Coordinator also monitors progress via a spreadsheet that calculates the rate required to meet their graduation goal.

2. Explain how the school will ensure that all students graduate on time and are prepared for postsecondary success. Describe how students will earn credits, how progress toward graduation will be tracked, and how your proposed pathways align with Indiana Graduation Pathways, Core 40 diploma requirements, and Postsecondary-Ready Competency options.

*Dynamic Minds Academy is a designated alternative school program by the State of Indiana. We define "on time" individually for each student based on a graduation target date that is agreed upon by the student, staff, and family. We use that target date to determine how many credits per semester a student needs to earn to reach their goal. If they are not progressing at that rate, they are determined to be off pace for graduation. Students are able receive services from DMA until they age out of services at 22 so traditional 4 and 5 year cohort rates do not give an accurate picture of our program's success. We continue to offer a work-based learning and project-based learning pathway for the class of 2028 and older through our partnership with The Hope Source. Their therapy-based vocational apprenticeships and Purpose Projects meet the requirements for those pathways.*

3. Describe how the school will implement rigorous and relevant programs of study that support students in earning Indiana Employability and Postsecondary Readiness Seals. Include any plans for dual credit, CTE, internships, work-based learning, or industry certifications. Identify partners that will support these pathways.

*In anticipation of the new diploma changes involving employability and postsecondary readiness seals, our college and career coordinator created new graduation trackers outlining the requirements in alignment with our Edmentum Plato Courseware curriculum. We have students in grades 9 and older who have made the switch to the new diploma based on their anticipated graduation date. We currently utilize work-based learning apprenticeships through The Hope Source to help our students achieve their employability seal. We utilize Plato CTE courses to meet the CTE pathway requirements. Our goal as we expand into a new area of the city is to create additional partnerships to provide varied work-based learning opportunities. We already include the opportunities necessary for the Enrollment Seal in our courses and will be able to provide the Indiana College Core through our dual enrollment partnership with Trine University. We anticipate that the majority of our students will earn the base diploma or the employment seal based on our statistics of General Diploma attainment for alumni.*

4. What early warning systems and student support structures will the school use to identify and intervene with students at risk of falling behind, not graduating on time, or not meeting diploma strength expectations? How will these systems support continuous progress across all student groups?

*Our teachers report more than just grades each quarter to families, they also report on progress toward graduation on their "Diploma Tracker". This Diploma Tracker serves as a report card and visual tracker of progress for all high school students on a diploma path. Our College and Career Coordinator also maintains a spreadsheet to track credit attainment and the rate required to meet their graduation goals that is updated at the end of each semester. This spreadsheet flags any student who is falling behind on progress. The College and Career Coordinator will inform staff of any students falling behind to develop a plan of action. Once per year at the students annual IEP meeting, a full review of credit progress is shared with parents and their plan is adjusted as needed to help them reach their goals. These meetings also trigger a discussion on whether the diploma type they are seeking is appropriate to their abilities. We prefer to start the majority of our high school students working toward the standard diploma. However, it isn't always appropriate based on their cognitive abilities, so the Alternate Diploma or Certificate of Completion may be discussed at their annual case conference.*

## 2.4 Outcomes

### Meets Standard Expectation

- Goals are clear, rigorous, and relevant, and include indicators of performance for all students, including subgroups.

- Goals are aligned with the school's mission.
- Measures are aligned with the goals.
- The founding team has a clear plan for establishing goals and using data to track progress and inform practice.

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

*The Indiana Department of Education requires multiple standardized assessments for students in grades K-11 throughout the school year. Students in grade K-2 participate in the dyslexia screener at multiple intervals throughout the year. Students in grade 2 also participate in I-Read testing twice a year if they do not pass the assessment the first time they take it. Students in grade 3-7 participate in I-Read testing twice a year if they continue to not pass the assessment, ILearn checkpoints at least 3 times per year in Math and Reading, and ILearn Summative assessments once per year in Math, ELA, and either Science or Social Studies. Grade 8 participates the same assessments as grades 3-7 but does not take I-Read whether they passed it or not. Students in grades 9 and 10 participate in the PSAT once per year and students in grade 11 participate in the SAT once per year. Students on an alternate assessment program take the I AM assessment once per year and multi-language learners take WIDA in addition to any other required state assessments for their grade level.*

*Due to the high amount of required standardized assessments in Indiana, we utilize more natural and authentic methods of assessing progress for our students. Standardized testing can be highly stressful for students with disabilities even when appropriate accommodations are provided. Teachers may assess progress using Universal Design for Learning Principles such as Multiple Means of Expression and Communication. Through these principles students can express their learning in flexible ways using multiple media for communication. Staff may also monitor progress through anecdotal and systematic data collection. We monitor progress on IEP goals quarterly. Teachers assess mastery of standards as each lesson progresses and includes this data in quarterly report cards. Our high school teachers assess mastery at the end of each course to award credit.*

2. Explain how the school will measure and evaluate academic progress – of individual students, student cohorts, special populations, and the school as a whole – throughout the school year.

*Teachers use a variety of assessment techniques to determine grades. Some of these techniques include projects, daily work production, tests, observation, rubrics, and review of goals accomplished. Our teachers will strive to create authentic assessments that focus on how, where, and why students use new skills. We believe that in order to provide students with valid measures of their understanding, we must create assessments that promote generalization of skills necessary for success in life, as well as in school.*

*Students in grades K-7 will receive skills-based report cards that report on their acquisition of foundational Mathematics and English/Language Arts and Reading skills.*

*Students in grades 8-12 will receive letter grades in the courses they enroll in via Plato as well as offline coursework completed with their classroom teacher.*

90% - 100%..... A  
 80% - 89%.....B  
 70% - 79%.....C  
 60% - 69%.....D  
 59% and below.....F

*How students demonstrate mastery of these standards is flexible. It could be through a discussion, essay, project, test, or classwork activities. Each type of activity will be weighted the same and recorded as one opportunity to*

demonstrate mastery. This allows our instructional staff the ability to individualize education and meet students where they are while still holding uniformly high expectations.

Each standard addressed in the course will have numerous opportunities to demonstrate progress towards, and hopefully ultimately result in, mastery of the standard.

Teachers will assess mastery of both the state standards and the content connectors, also known as "alternate standards." How we determine eligibility for earned credit towards a diploma is as follows:

- If a student masters at least 60% of standards --> credit awarded
- If a student is "approaching mastery" of at least 80% of standards --> credit awarded
  - This means if a student has any combination of mastery and approaching mastery of at least 80% of standards --> credit awarded
- If a student masters 100% of content connectors --> credit awarded
- If a student does not meet any of the above criteria --> either an applied credit will be awarded (which does not count towards a diploma), or the student will have an opportunity to continue the course and redo any standards not mastered.

Teachers analyze student performance data at monthly PLC meetings, quarterly when completing report cards and IEP progressing monitoring, and annual at Individualized Education Meetings. Our administration analyzes data quarterly and annually, identifying trends to inform instructional reforms.

3. Outline the proposed school's student outcome goals. Explain the rationale for these goals and targets. Include any mission-specific student outcomes you seek to achieve.

The following goals are outlined in our Accountability Plan Performance Framework for Education One to achieve a "Meets Standard" rating.

**State Summative Assessment Goals:**

- Proficiency: The percentage of legacy students at or above grade level proficiency is within 0-10.0% of the state's percentage of students at or above proficiency.
- Growth: The school's Median Growth Percentile is between 45 and 65. The Median Growth Percentile (MGP) is calculated utilizing individual Student Growth Percentiles (SGP) and finding the median, or midpoint, of those numbers.
- Comparison to Local Schools: The school's overall performance in proficiency and growth outpaces comparison schools 75.0-99.9% of the time. OR The school is meeting or exceeding standard in proficiency and median growth measures.
- 3rd Grade Literacy: The percentage of grade 3 students receiving a passing score is within 0-10.0% of the state's passing percentage.

**Special Education Compliance:**

- 75.0% or more of compliance characteristics are rated as Meets Standard.

**Local Academic Performance:**

- Instruction: The school receives an instructional rating within the range of 3.0-3.4 based on walkthroughs scheduled throughout the school year focusing on the areas of rigor and relevance, differentiated instruction, checks for understanding, growth feedback, classroom management, active engagement, learning objectives, and curriculum implementation.
- Attendance: The school's calculated attendance is between 90.0 and 94.9%.
- Historical Proficiency: Legacy students outperform non-legacy students by 5.0-7.5%. Or The percentage of legacy students meeting grade level proficiency standards is between 30.0-39.9%.
- Student Engagement: There will be a 60.0-69.9% decrease in maladaptive behaviors from September to May.

- Local Assessments: 30.0-39.9% of students demonstrate grade-level proficiency standards or meet growth targets.
- Graduation: 85.0-95.0% of students are on track to graduate by their predetermined date.
- Students on Alternate Paths: 85.0-95.0% of certificate students will meet academic IEP Goals.

We utilize multiple, alternate measures for our local academic performance due to the nature of our program. Ninety-nine percent of our current enrollment have an IEP. Historically we have had 24% of our students on a Certificate of Completion track and 3% on an Alternate Diploma track. Additionally, behavior is a factor for our students which is why we track student engagement, focusing specifically in recent years on refusals.

4. Describe how internal and external stakeholders, including the public, will know the extent to which the school is achieving its mission.

Families receive a monthly newsletter from the Education Director including updates on progress toward goals. At least quarterly, but often more frequently, the Board of Directors receives updates from the Education Director and Education One on Local Academic Performance measures. These reports include an update each semester on local assessment performance and high school credit attainment. Each June the board receives an update on all other measures through the annual report process with Education One. This annual report is posted to the Education One website. All monthly Board of Directors meetings where progress is shared are open to the public and a virtual option to join is available.

5. Describe the corrective actions the school will take if student academic achievement falls short of expectations and goals at the school-wide, classroom, or individual student level.

Dynamic Minds Academy is tiered each year by Education One for the level of support required based on the indicators in the Performance Plan Accountability Framework. Schools are re-tiered each January based on the progress monitoring during the first half of the school year. The tiers are differentiated for Academic Performance, Financial Performance, and Organizational Performance. For Academic Performance, Tier I schools receive 2 site visits and Major Assessment Data Dives. Tier IIa schools have 3 site visits and targeted support checks based on School Initiatives. Tier IIb schools have 4 site visits and targeted support checks based on deficiencies. Tier III schools have 6 site visits and targeted support checks based on their SIP. Our current location is identified as a Tier IIa school.

**School-wide level:**

If we are not successful on a school-wide level at our new location, we would look to determine if it is our curriculum or our instructional strategies that are falling short. We would continue to research the most current best practices in reading, writing, math, science, and social studies and modify our curriculum and/or instructional strategies to ensure students are successful.

**Classroom level:**

If we are not successful on a classroom level, then we would first look at the practices taking place in that classroom (i.e., the teacher). If it appears a teacher is not effective, the educational director will implement an improvement plan. The teacher will be observed, given feedback, and fully supported to ensure steady improvement. The amount of time that a teacher is given to improve will depend on the initial struggles. If at the end of the improvement plan timeline the teacher is still not making gains, the teacher will be removed from the position.

**Individual student level:**

*When an individual student is not successful, the multi-disciplinary team will convene to identify the struggles and name the interventions necessary. The interventions will depend on the student's needs. The interventions could be behavioral, academic, or social. If, after the interventions are in place, the student continues to struggle academically or behaviorally, the multi-disciplinary team will reconvene to evaluate the current interventions and identify next steps. The team may propose additional interventions or they may refer a student for an educational evaluation. Corrective actions could be triggered in many ways. If a student, or group of students, is not performing well on an assessment we would assess necessary actions to improve results. If multiple students in one class are not performing well, we would investigate if it is related to teacher effectiveness or if it is an anomaly with that particular group. The educational director is ultimately responsible for overseeing that the necessary changes take place either school-wide, in a classroom, or on an individual level.*

## **2.5 Addressing Community Needs, Challenges, and Opportunities**

### **Meets Standard Expectation**

- The founding team presents an evidence-based assessment of the challenges and opportunities this school is acting on and articulates how the proposed school addresses an unmet need in the target community.
- Current student and parent demand suggests that the proposed school will meet projected enrollment targets for Year 1 through full enrollment.

1. Detail how the current options available to families do not meet the expressed needs of the community (academic, programmatic, access, demographic, other).

*Data released by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) in March 2018 estimates the prevalence of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) across the United States in 2014 to be 1 in 59 (1 in 38 boys and 1 in 152 girls). A more recent study released by the CDC concluded that 1 in 31 children in the United States have a diagnosis of ASD. According to a memo from the Indiana Department of Education, the number of students with ASD in Indiana on April 1, 2024, was 19,895, an increase of 1,465 students from April 2023 to April 2024. Indiana school enrollment for the 2023-2024 school year was 1,032,724 making the rate of ASD within Indiana schools 1 in 52. According to Indiana's child count data, ASD is only behind Language/Speech Impairment, Other Health Impairment, and Specific Learning Disability as the fourth most common disability for students. In April of 2019, Indiana had identified 16,073 students as having autism spectrum disorder per their IEP. The need for Dynamic Minds Academy has only increased since opening in July 2019 as evidenced by a 23% increase in students identified as having ASD by the State of Indiana. These numbers could be higher as they do not include students at the preschool level nor those receiving full-time ABA who have not been evaluated by a school district.*

*Programs focused on full inclusion of students with ASD are important on the continuum of services, however, it is not the optimal choice for all. Among the most prevalent problems with full inclusion is bullying. A 2012 study of bullying among adolescents with ASD in school settings reported 46.3% victimization with an additional 8.9% determined to be both victims and perpetrators of bullying. According to the Autism Society children with ASD are 60% more likely to be a victim of bullying than neurotypically developing children. Because such victimization can be so crippling to social, emotional, and academic growth, some families prefer a more controlled method of integrating social skills and coping mechanisms into the routines of their children. An innovative and safe educational choice is needed.*

*Traditional public school programs also differ from the DMA model in the length of services provided. Students with ASD struggle significantly with major changes in routine or lapses in intervention. As a result, most students would benefit from Extended School Year as part of their IEP plans according to state guidance on the service. However, none of the students who have enrolled in Dynamic Minds Academy thus far have had those services in their most recent IEP. Additionally, though these programs may extend the school year through IEP-designated extended-year mandates, staffing is often reduced, and routines are changed during the extension. Even extended school years will*

frequently offer no more than 200 instructional days, and the majority of students will remain on a traditional 180-day schedule. To provide best practice and full support for the students, DMA offers a year-round program. DMA is open to students approximately 48 weeks per year with specific holidays off plus two weeks of set closures. This provides approximately 242 instructional days or an instructional year 33% longer than the traditional school calendar. This allows all our students to have access to an extended school year that is no different than any other school day for them. Traditional public schools cannot offer this choice.

Students at DMA benefit from a small school environment, in which all staff are ASD specialists in education or therapy. Traditional public school programs, no matter how extensive the services, will separate education and therapy by requiring students to be transported to separate facilities for each aspect of their program. These types of programs lack consistency, efficiency, and lapses in communication between the educational and therapeutic entities. DMA's integration of education and therapy in one location, provided by our experts, helps ensure that children are set up to thrive and meet their optimal abilities.

The most important indicator of need over the last decade is the personal testimonies from hundreds of families. As The Hope Source began to grow, providing therapeutic services for an ever-increasing number of children, the outcry from parents looking for a more effective education solution for their children with special needs grew as well. The availability of consistent, high-quality educational services for families of children with ASD is one of the biggest challenges within the ASD community. On our re-enrollment form for the 2026-2027 school year we asked families whether they are interested in transitioning to DMA South when the campus opens. Out of these families, 21% responded that "yes", they are interested in transferring locations and 13% responded "maybe". Our current waitlist of families interested in a tour includes 105 students in grades K-4, 32 students in grades 5-7, and 28 students in grades 8-12. Once we begin sharing our expansion to the south side, we anticipate a flood of inquiries for enrollment at that location as those calls are already starting to come through. Additionally, Dynamic Minds Academy has consistently increased its retention rates since 2019 with a current retention rate for the 2025-2026 school year of 97%.

2. Describe how the school will meet an unmet need among the target community and students.

Dynamic Minds Academy- South will meet the unmet need referenced in question 1 of this section by providing an additional 121 seats for students with autism spectrum disorder. Our unique model of a public school education co-located with an ABA therapy center, provides a service to the south side community they do not currently have. There are options for families looking for education for their special needs child—Damar Charter Academy and RISE Learning Center. However these schools do not specialize in strategies for students with autism spectrum disorder. Additionally, there are options for families who want ABA therapy, but families would miss out on education or have to participate in ABA after hours. Dynamic Minds Academy- South will provide a safe, specialized option for families so that they do not have to choose between education or therapy for their child with ASD.

3. Explain how the evidence of community demand, included in the attachment section, supports the school's ability to meet its proposed enrollment.

Our parent testimonials included in the attachment section describe how our program has changed their family's lives. Two families who spoke in person at our public hearing to be able to purchase Raymond Brandes 65 and one of our written testimonies, discuss the distance they have personally traveled for their child to be able to attend our school. I have also included our current re-enrollment data, indicating that 33% of our re-enrollment has responded "yes" or "maybe" to re-locating to the southside location. I have also included our February 2026 Board of Directors Enrollment Update showing a total of 165 students interested in enrollment.

## Section III: Execution

This section evaluates the founding team's ability to carry out a detailed and realistic plan to launch and sustain a high-quality public charter school. Successful applicants will demonstrate that they have established the systems, structures, and governance necessary to operate effectively and responsibly. Reviewers will look for evidence of a sound organizational framework, clearly defined roles and responsibilities, strong governance practices, and thoughtful planning across critical operational areas such as facilities, student recruitment, transportation, and finance.

The applicant must also show that the school is positioned to meet legal obligations, respond to unforeseen challenges, and maintain long-term fiscal and operational sustainability while advancing its stated goals for students and families. The strength and viability of execution plans are a key indicator of the school's readiness to open and thrive.

### 3.1 Organizational Systems

#### Meets Standard Expectation

- The school's organizational design supports the fulfillment of the commitments and responsibilities of a public school, implementation of the key design elements, oversight of school finances, and achievement of the school's mission.
- Governance structures and systems ensure that the board meets its governance and fiduciary responsibilities while avoiding infringement on management's prerogatives and obligations.

1. Describe the proposed school's organizational structure. Include the rationale and any research basis for this structure. Describe how the organizational structure will support the school's governance plan.

*Dynamic Minds Academy- North and Dynamic Minds Academy- South will be governed by a single Board of Directors. Our current board is comprised of six members, including a Chair, Vice Chair, and Treasurer. Under the Board is the Chief Education Officer (CEO). The CEO will also act as the Education Director for Dynamic Minds Academy- South until enrollment grows at the location. All staff at the DMA-S will report to the CEO initially until an Education Director is added to the team. The Special Education Coordinator, College and Career Coordinator, and the DMA North Education Director will all report to the CEO. Instructional staff at the North location will report to the DMA North Education Director. As enrollment grows two instructional coaches will be added, which will report to the Special Education Coordinator and College and Career Coordinator. This structure has been utilized with our current location and has been successful. Having one singular person at the top under the governance of the board has allowed for clear alignment on expectations and adherence to our model.*

2. Describe how the board will be organized to manage and provide strategic direction for the proposed school, including any board committees.

*DMA-S will be governed by the governing board and managed by its Chief Education Officer (CEO) pursuant to the school's charter and duly adopted by-laws. The governing board will be responsible for adopting policy, overseeing the management of the school, and ensuring financial compliance with fiscal policy. In addition, the governing board will ensure that the mission and goals of the charter are carried out by engaging in strategic planning. The governing board will not be involved in the daily operations of the school but will hire a Chief Education Officer, who will be evaluated at least annually. The governing board will ensure the CEO manages DMA in compliance with the school's charter and with all state and federal laws and regulations.*

*The governing board will perform ongoing assessments of the school and its programs and operations. It will also routinely assess its own performance. Governing board members will participate in and develop short and long-range plans for the school. The board will monitor the effectiveness of the school's programs and their implementation to determine if the school has met its stated goals.*

*The CEO will report to the governing board at regular meetings about the school's operations. The CEO will serve as liaison between DMA and the school's authorizer. The CEO will present his/her recommendation to the governing*

board on any subject under consideration prior to action taken on the subject, if requested. The CEO will be required to attend all governing board meetings.

The CEO and Education Director(s) (EDs) will be responsible for overall instructional leadership for the charter school, including the discipline of students if needed, and the planning, implementation, and supervision of the educational program of the school. The CEO and ED(s) will have authority over all personnel matters, including hiring, disciplining, and terminating all school employees, subject to board approval. The CEO and ED(s) will periodically evaluate DMA's employees as provided for by Indiana law and policy.

The CEO will establish and maintain an appropriate community relations program. He/she shall uphold and enforce the charter, DMA's governing board policies, and local, state, and federal laws and regulations.

The Board of Directors will approve all contractual relations including contracts for the educational service provider and therapy service providers. The board will evaluate, at least annually, these service providers.

The governing board will include between five and nine members. Board committees will be formed as needed. The board of directors will seek to always maintain expertise in the areas of children with ASD, finance, board membership / governance, legal experience, and parent / community interests.

### 3.2 Plan of Execution

#### Meets Standard Expectation

- The founding team understands the necessary steps and timeline to effectively launch a new school and is making sufficient progress toward the start-up. The school's core components are well-planned-for: education program, facility, transportation, enrollment, staffing, governance, etc.
- The founding team effectively plans for a sustainable organization with measurable benchmarks to assess progress and adjust course as needed.

1. Discuss the key milestones achieved to date and the key milestones that must be achieved to successfully launch this school.

#### Achieved to Date:

- **June 2025-** We secured support in school launch through the Mind Trust's Indiana Charter School Fellowship.
- **September 2025-** Dynamic Minds Academy submitted a letter of interest to Education One to apply for a 2nd charter which was accepted.
- **December 2025-** Dynamic Minds Academy was awarded the rights to purchase Raymond Brandes 65 located at 4065 Asbury Street from Indianapolis Public Schools for \$1.
- **January 2026-** DMA was awarded \$300,000 from The Mind Trust to support pre-development costs for the new location. DMA also signed a contract with Together Ed to support the pre-development phase.
- **February 2026-** Environmental study and general contractor walkthroughs of the building were completed. DMA began negotiations with IPS on the purchase agreement for the building.

#### Milestones to Come:

- **Spring 2026-** Close on purchase agreement for Raymond Brandes 65 with IPS. Complete long-term financial planning, select construction team, and determine design and pricing of the building. The team will also submit an application for CSP Quality Counts Grant Funding.
- **Summer/Fall 2026-** Receive permits for construction and secure financing for the project. Due to the small initial enrollment, we are able to renovate the building in phases if necessary.
- **Winter/Spring 2027-** Complete construction on the building, preparing it for instruction.
- **Winter/Spring 2027-** Securing enrollment to fill seats at DMA-S and back fill DMA-N open seats from transfers

- **Spring/Summer 2027-** Recruiting and hiring a highly qualified staff to serve both locations (some DMA-N staff may transfer south)
- **July 2027-** Open Dynamic Minds Academy- South to serve at least 36 students in grades K-12 by the October 1st count date.

2. Describe the marketing, outreach, and student recruitment strategies the school will employ in the pre-opening year and once operational, to reach proposed enrollment targets.

*We plan to continue to utilize word of mouth primarily as our student recruitment strategy as it has grown our current waitlist to over 160 students. In addition, we will be speaking to several media outlets and utilizing social media to spread the word that there is a new location in a different section of the city available. We may consider taking out ads through Facebook, Google, and other local media that specifically target families of children with autism. We will also contact local school districts, educating the Special Education departments about our program and services. We frequently hear from school districts near our current location hoping to reduce their costs by finding a more appropriate placement for their students. With 34% of our current families expressing interest in transferring south and the size of our current waitlist, we anticipate year one enrollment targets being easy to meet. Since we continue enrolling year round, not just at the start of a semester, we will continue to grow through each year to meet growth targets for the subsequent year.*

3. Outline the proposed school's approach to future gathering and use of input from families, students, staff, and the community.

*Dynamic Minds Academy completes annual surveys from all stakeholders—families, students, and staff—to drive changes in our model. We will expand these survey efforts to include community members. We have begun a relationship with the University Heights Neighborhood Association and plan to continue to be an active participant in their meetings.*

4. Briefly describe the desired or current facility(ies), including location, size, and amenities. Include facility needs based on the educational program and projected enrollment. Provide the current status of any facilities search, if started.

*Our facility is located at 4065 Asbury Street in Indianapolis and is currently owned by Indianapolis Public Schools. It has been vacant since the conclusion of the 2022-2023 school year. The building is approximately 43,000 square feet and the total property is 10 acres. The building includes a cafeteria but it does not have full cooking equipment as IPS utilized a food warming system for meals. It does have a gymnasium with a stage, a media center, and several small office spaces. It is structured into 21 classrooms, with 5 classrooms having individual restrooms.*

*According to a Building Condition Assessment conducted by MGT Consulting Group for IPS in November 2020, 2.5 years before the school closed to instruction, the building was rated with a score of 72% putting it in the "Fair" range. The report was broken into sections such as Structural, Mechanical, Safety/Fire Protection, ADA, Paved Surfaces, Landscaped Surfaces, Playgrounds, Utilities, and Fencing. Some major areas of concern from this report are the exterior windows being unsatisfactory. We would plan on replacing these windows with a more durable option. Many of the plumbing systems are rated as fair or poor, so these items may need upgrades to remain usable. HVAC was rated as fair, stating that the boilers and chillers worked fine but exceeded the age to be rated as good. It was also rated poor in relation to the phone, security system, intercom, and card access just due to the age of the systems. The Fire Alarm System was rated as unsatisfactory due to being beyond its useful service life and needing frequent maintenance. Outside of the building, the parking lots have significant cracking. We would require additional parking space for our staff and families, so we will likely repave and expand the lot. The lawn shows significant drainage issues that will need to be remedied and the playground equipment is outdated and unsafe. Fencing along the north side of the property and enclosing the courtyard is worn and may need to be replaced.*

A Technology Readiness Assessment was also completed in November 2020 which gave the school an "Excellent" score of 95%. The only area of concern with technology was with Network Performance. The report stated "The school has areas with difficult wireless connections. The school is already scheduled for wireless upgrades." Since there is a gap of 2.5 years between the report and when the school closed, we are unsure if those upgrades were completed.

Since closing to instruction in Summer 2023, there has been significant vandalism to the building. Several windows have been broken throughout the building. Additionally, all copper piping has been stolen from the building in addition to the building's chiller system. When we had an opportunity to tour the building in February 2026, the boiler heat system and lights in the building were functional. The key fob lock system and alarm system also seemed functional. We were unable to test the water due to the missing pipes. Since the damage to the building occurred between the time the building closed and our acquisition, it will be the responsibility of IPS to cover the cost to return the building to working condition.

In addition to completing repairs to major building systems prior to instruction outlined above, we plan a few upgrades to the building to align with our specific programming. Our students require a secure facility with interior and exterior key fob access at each exterior exit. We also section off specific sections of the building using the fob system. In each area of the building, we will need to add "calm rooms" or seclusion rooms for the safety of our students during crisis. These rooms will have walls that are not easily damaged, but safe for students to make physical contact with. They also have calming lighting and lock from the exterior using a fob system. Depending on the final design decisions, we may wall off smaller spaces within the larger classroom environment for 1:1 therapy or a less complex instructional space.

5. Explain the contingency plan if a facility is not acquired in time, or if construction timelines delay the completion of the facility plan.

We are required by the \$1 law to complete the purchase of the building within 90 days of IPS being notified of our intent to purchase. This occurred on January 22, 2026 so we will be able to complete the purchase by the end of April 2026. Since we have already started the process of engaging with a general contractor, we should be able to stay on track to begin construction by November or December 2026. The only concern would be securing financing in time. However, Together Ed is currently reviewing our long-term financial projections to determine the most appropriate financing options for our program. If construction is delayed, we have a buffer of time before we are required to begin instruction in the building per the \$1 law. We plan to open in July 2027 but have until January 2028 to begin instruction to meet the requirements of the law. We will structure our construction plan in stages to allow for the "building-wide" renovations to be completed first so that instruction can start even if the full project is not complete in time.

6. Describe the proposed school's transportation plan

Our current plan is for families to transport their children. We are a part of the Transportation and Facilities Pilot being conducted by Together Ed at the behest of the Indiana General Assembly, so additional transportation options may be available for our families in the future.

### 3.3 Policies and Assurances

#### Meets Standard Expectation

- The founding team is aware of and is devoting staff capacity to ensure adherence to laws applicable to charter schools, including those related to governing a public organization and protecting the rights of all students, including students with disabilities and English learners.
- The founding team provides approved organizational and school policies or drafts/plans to develop such policies related to organizational founding, conflicts of interest and code of ethics, school discipline, school safety, and commitments to serving and ensuring access for all students.

1. Identify any existing relationships that could pose actual or perceived conflicts if the application is approved; discuss specific steps the board will take to prevent any actual conflicts and mitigate perceived conflicts.

*Our Board of Directors complete a statement of assurances every year regarding any conflicts of interest. At this time, there are no conflicts to be concerned about.*

### 3.4 Financial Plan

#### Meets Standard Expectation

- The budget is realistic, viable, and aligned with the educational model and execution plan.
- The financial plan includes the resources, fiscal planning, and expertise necessary to carry out effective budgeting, financial management, and oversight, and achieve the school's mission and intended outcomes.
- The proposed school is likely to be financially viable.
- The contingency plan ensures and includes services to all students consistent with the school's mission, key design elements, and execution plan.

1. Present the start-up and five-year budget projections, including start-up and Year 1 cash flow projections, using the authorizer-provided templates and/or workbooks. Include assumptions and metrics used to project revenues and expenditures.

*Budget projects and narrative are attached.*

2. Describe the school's approach to meeting its financial needs and ensuring its success, consistent with the mission and key design elements, if enrollment/revenues are lower than anticipated or unanticipated costs occur.

*Dynamic Minds Academy is strategic when hiring to make sure that our staffing does not outpace our actual needs. This helps maintain a lower cost over time as we continue to grow. Administrative staff will share locations and wear several hats as we continue to grow to keep costs down. We also are strategic in our use of grant funding to supplant costs versus supplement when possible. DMA is engaging in coaching in the area of School Finance during the predevelopment phase to develop a fiscally responsible growth plan.*

3. Describe how the school will approach the development of financial policies and systems. Include any financial services expected to be contracted for by the school; describe the selection process and the criteria to select and evaluate these contractors. Or, if financial management will be handled by in-house staff, describe the qualifications of key internal finance staff and the hiring plan.

*DMA intends to contract with Indiana Charters to establish accounting, purchasing, and payroll processes. Indiana Charters' approach is to assist the school in finding the best possible administrative staff prior to start-up. Depending on the skills of the individuals the school hires, accounting processes will be customized to take best advantage of the on-site staff. Indiana Charters has been a part of the Dynamic Minds Academy team since pre-opening of the current location. Kevin Davis, the CEO of Indiana Charters, consulted in the writing of the first charter and has provided mentoring to the board and administrative team since opening. Indiana Charters was chosen due to Kevin's strong track record supporting alternative charter school models and he was a part of the original charter school movement. Indiana Charters is evaluated annually and contracts are updated based on these evaluations.*

*Regardless, all processes will require at least three different individuals to be involved from the beginning to the end of each business transaction. Indiana Charters will provide qualified individuals to either carry out all accounting functions or to provide training and oversight to school staff. Software, forms, and all components of the accounting system will be State Board of Accounts (SBOA) compliant and, more importantly, will be the property of DMA.*

*Monthly management reports, including a statement of net assets, statement of revenue and expenditures, actual vs. budget analysis, and cash flow projections will be provided to school leadership and the board.*

*Indiana Charters will also assist DMA in the selection of a qualified CPA firm to conduct the annual audit and prepare appropriate non-profit informational tax returns.*

*Dynamic Minds Academy contracts with a PEO, ADP TotalSource, for payroll management. As the responsible party, ADP TotalSource submits all taxes for payroll and assumes liability.*

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

*Dynamic Minds Academy contracts with Donovan CPAs to conduct an annual audit which is submitted to the State Board of Accounts for approval.*

## Section IV: Performance Evaluation Information

This section applies only to pre-existing schools or applicants partnering with an established EMO or CMO. Education One will heavily weigh the historical performance of the operator or management organization in determining whether to advance the application. Applicants must provide information about all schools currently or previously operated by the organization or its partner. Education One reserves the right to request additional documentation throughout the review process.

1. Provide an analysis of your school or organization's academic performance, highlighting both areas of consistent success and areas of challenge. Describe the key factors that have contributed to strong student outcomes and sustained performance as well as contributing causes of any persistent academic struggles. Discuss how the organization has responded to both types of outcomes, including what lessons have been learned, what strategies have been scaled or abandoned, and how these insights are shaping the approach moving forward. Analysis should be consistent with the Historical Performance Workbook.

*Dynamic Minds Academy is a school with a 100% special education population. Approximately 28% of our students in grades 2-12 participate in alternate assessment and will earn either a Certificate of Completion or Alternate Diploma when they graduate. Another 11% of our students are in Kindergarten or First Grade and their assessment level has yet to be determined. Additionally, we do not enroll a set number of students per grade level. We enroll in grade bands with our K-4 students being grouped in Littles, 5-7 being grouped in Middles, and 8-12 being grouped in Bigs. These factors, as well as the high level of test anxiety students with autism face, make it difficult to analyze and compare standardized test data.*

*Our Historical Performance Workbook, includes ELA and Math I Learn Achievement data as well as ELA and Math I AM Achievement data. Due to the size of our school and the nature of our program, we only have three subgroups—White, Male, and Special Education. According to the CDC, boys are 4 times as likely to be diagnosed with autism than girls. Additionally, white children are about 30% more likely to be diagnosed with autism than Black children, and around 50% more likely than Latino children.*

*While our proficiency rates in Math and ELA are low with 5% and 8% respectively, they show an increase from previous years. Conversely, we are seeing some fluctuation in our I AM proficiency, but much of that is due to an increase in participation rates. In 2023-2024 we had 6 students engage with the ELA assessment and we raised that number to 21 students in 2024-2025. Since a goal of our program is to decrease student anxiety in the school setting, we see this increase in participation as a success. When looking at subgroup specific data, there is little variation from overall rates due to the majority of our students falling into all three of the listed subgroups.*

*The final two data measures included are attendance rates and graduation rates. Our attendance has stayed fairly consistent between 92% and 93%. Our attendance rate tends to be slightly lower than 95% due to our extended school year and families having the option to take additional vacation time while school is in session. We have added a Family Services Director shared with THS who is able to support families struggling to maintain attendance. Finally, our 4-year graduation rates are inconsistent over the past 3 years. This is due to our alternative school status. Our graduates have needed an average of 6.15 years to complete their chosen diploma which skews our state rates. Included is our graduation data by student for reference as well.*

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

*Not applicable*

3. List any and all charter revocations, non-renewals, shortened or conditional renewals, or withdrawals /non-openings of schools operated by the organization and provide an explanation.

*Not applicable*

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

*Not applicable*

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

*Not applicable*