



Charter School Application

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

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.

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	Organizational Charts for Governing, Managing, & Staffing <i>Submit an organization chart that shows school governance, management, and staffing structure for Year 1 and at full build-out.</i>	Innova Academy - Attachment 1
Attachment 2	Planned Curriculum <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>	Innova Academy - Attachment 2
Attachment 3	Enrollment Policy <i>Provide the school’s proposed enrollment policy. The policy should include a plan for compliance with any applicable desegregation order.</i>	Innova Academy - Attachment 3
Attachment 4	Proposed School Calendar <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 here.</i>	Innova Academy - Attachment 4
Attachment 5	A Description of Staff Responsibilities <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>	Innova Academy - Attachment 5
Attachment 6	Proof of Secured Facility <i>Provide proof of commitment for the facility.</i>	N/A
Attachment 7	Completed Budget and Staffing Workbook <i>Use the workbook provided by Education One.</i>	Innova Academy-Attachment 7
Attachment 8	Budget Narrative <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>	Innova Academy - Attachment 8
Attachment 9	Discipline Policy <i>Provide the school’s proposed discipline policy.</i>	Innova Academy - Attachment 9
Attachment 10	Start-up Plan/Timeline	Innova Academy

	<i>Provide a detailed start-up plan for the school, specifying tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals. Include when the charter school is expected to begin school operations and have students attending.</i>	Attachment - 10
Attachment 11	Non-Profit Status Proof/Board Policies <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>	Innova Academy - Attachment 11
Attachment 12	Signed Statement of Assurances <i>Submit one completed and signed Statement of Assurances on behalf of the board. Use the template provided by Education One.</i>	Innova Academy-Attachment 12
Attachment 13	School's Founding Team, Leadership Team, and Governing Board <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>	Innova Academy - Attachment 13
Attachment 14	Board Member Notice of Disclosure <i>Submit completed and signed information sheets for each board member. Use the template provided by Education One.</i>	Innova Academy-Attachment 14
Attachment 15	Board Code of Ethics & Conflict of Interest <i>Provide the board's proposed Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest policy.</i>	Innova Academy Attachment - 15
Attachment16	Term Sheet for Contract <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>	N/A
Attachment 17	Insurance/Levels of Coverage <i>Provide a list of the types of insurance coverage the school will secure, including a description of the level of coverage.</i>	Innova Academy - Attachment 17
Attachment 18	Evidence of Community Support <i>Provide evidence of support from community partners (i.e., letters of intent/commitment, memoranda of understanding, and/or contracts).</i>	Innova Academy - Attachment 18
Attachment 19	Historical Performance Workbook <i>If applicable, use the workbook provided by Education One.</i>	N/A
Attachment 20	3 Years of Audited Financials for IN Schools <i>If applicable, provide the last three years of audited financial statements for the school(s) and the most recent internal financial statements.</i>	N/A
Attachment 21	3 Years of Audited Financials for Whole Organization <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>	N/A
Attachment 22	Litigations <i>If applicable, provide a summary of the demand, any response to the demand, and the results of the arbitration or litigation.</i>	N/A

Executive Summary

Proposed School Information	
Name	Innova Academy
Address	Muncie IN
School District	Muncie Community Schools
Planned Year of Opening	Fall 2027
Model or Focus	Game Based Learning
Legal Group Name	Innova Academy
Primary Contact Person	Anteria Gross
Primary Contact Email	anteriacevans@gmail.com
Primary Contact Cell Phone	765-215-5419
Applying as a/an [New School] [Existing School][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>Insert Text Here</i>	
Does the applicant group seek approval for multiple campuses under a single charter? [Yes] [No] If yes, please indicate how many. <i>Insert Text Here</i>	
Does the applicant group already operate schools elsewhere in the United States? [Yes] [No] If yes, please indicate where. <i>Insert Text Here</i>	
Will the applicant group partner with an Education Service Provider (ESP)? [Yes] [No] If yes, please provide the name of the ESP. <i>Insert Text Here</i>	
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? [Yes] [No] If yes, please indicate the state, authorizer name, proposed school name, application submission date, and decision date for each applicable application <i>Previously applied with Education One, 2025</i>	

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.

Vision: Innova Academy envisions a future where every individual is a lifelong learner, equipped with the skills and mindset to thrive in an ever-evolving world.

Mission: Innova Academy's mission is to empower students to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally by embracing the power of play.

This work is grounded in our core values of Integrity, Inclusion, and Innovation, which shape both the student experience and the school culture.

At Innova Academy, integrity is instilled from day one. Students are supported in developing honesty, responsibility, and strong decision-making skills that prepare them to lead with purpose, both academically and personally. Inclusion lies at the heart of our model. We intentionally create a learning environment where every student feels seen, valued, and respected, while also honoring the rich diversity of our Whitley community, as well as the broader Muncie community.

Innovation drives how students experience learning. Through collaboration, active engagement, and meaningful communication, students are encouraged to think critically, take risks, and approach learning with curiosity and creativity.

Innova Academy’s holistic model reimagines both the school and learning experience by expanding the definition of student success to include academic achievement, social-emotional development, and community connection.

This model, known as the “INA Way,” integrates three key design elements:

1. **Game-Based Learning (GBL):** Engages students through immersive, mission-driven learning experiences that promote critical thinking, collaboration, and real-world application
2. **Rise and Thrive Framework:** Provides structured academic, behavioral, and social-emotional supports to ensure students feel safe, supported, and accountable
3. **Village Approach:** Connects students, families, and community partners to create a learning environment that extends beyond the classroom

Together, these elements create a dynamic and engaging environment where students are empowered to take ownership of their learning while developing the skills necessary to thrive.

Innova Academy is designed to serve the Muncie community, with a specific focus on the Whitely Community, where families have expressed a strong desire for additional school options that are both high-quality *and* rooted within the community. Muncie is a proud, close-knit community with a rich history. Families value educational environments that provide strong academics while allowing students to remain connected to their neighborhood and community. Innova Academy is intentionally designed to meet these needs.

The school begins with middle school as an entry point, addressing the critical stage where many students begin to disengage from school more generally (Evans, Borriello, & Field, 2018; Goldstein, Boxer, Rudolph, 2015). At the same time, INA is designed as a grades 6–12 model, ensuring that students not only remain enrolled and invested during middle school, but are also supported through a continuous pathway into high school, graduation, and postsecondary success.

Innova Academy is an excellent fit for the Whitely-Muncie community because our team co-created the school’s vision and values in partnership with families and community members. These key stakeholders clearly expressed their non-negotiables for their children’s education.

By combining an engaging instructional model, a strong support framework, and deep community connection, INA provides an educational experience that is both accessible and transformative. Through this alignment of mission, model, and community need, INA is positioned to not only improve academic outcomes, but to re-engage students, strengthen families, and create trajectory-changing opportunities for the community our school serves.

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
Anteria Gross		Founder / School Leader
Wilisha Scaife	Whitely Institute on Community Engaged Teacher Preparation, Convener	Family and Community Engagement Specialist
Tenika Holden-Flynn	Teacher for America - Indianapolis, Executive Director	Board Chair
Yesica Rufino-Perez	Illinois Network of Charter Schools, Director of Charter Growth and Support	Vice Chair

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

	Year 1 2027-28	Year 2 2028-29	Year 3 2029-30	Year 4 2030-31	Year 5 2031-32	Full Implementation
Grade Levels Served	6	6,7	6,7,8	6,7,8,9	6,7,8,9,10	6-12
Total Enrollment	80	160	240	330	410	590

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

Innova Academy plans to implement a slow-growth enrollment strategy to support steady, sustainable development of our school community. We recognize that meeting our enrollment targets is important, but it is equally essential to ensure that we have the resources necessary to fully support the families we serve. Our school model is distinct, and its approach to learning requires intentional time for families and staff to adapt to our methods for learning and teaching, to build relationships, and to establish routines. This method allows us to be mindful of our community’s evolving needs, ensuring that the administration of our school’s operations is sound.

In Muncie, there are currently 1,067 4th grade students. Our initial enrollment target of 80 students makes up 7.5% of this larger group. This target guards against over-projecting, while also ensuring our school is financially solvent in its first year.

With this approach, we will begin by focusing on one grade level, allowing us to refine our academic program and to build a strong foundation before adding more students to our learning community. Each year, we will add an additional grade level, giving our original cohort of 6th graders the opportunity to become the leaders and “student experts” of the school. This gradual expansion fosters a culture of mentorship and continuity, as each new cohort of students builds on the experiences and knowledge of the previous year.

Instructionally, we will maintain a consistent 20:1 student-to-teacher ratio, with staffing increasing proportionally as enrollment grows and specialized supports (i.e., supports for exceptional learners, etc.) scaling with student need. Financially, enrollment is the primary driver of revenue; year over year, our enrollment increases in anticipation of our expenses increasing. We believe it is prudent to launch lean, scale responsibly, and ensure that our school growth never outpaces the quality of Innova’s academic program.

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.

The middle school years are a time of transition and opportunity for growth. However, more often than not, middle school is looked at as the three years that students just need to "make it through". Our school founder's own lived experience as a middle school educator includes an essential observation: middle school students are often told – "Push through. You will survive. These years will be over sooner than you realize. When you get to high school it will be better." This mindset and skewed regard towards the intermediate grades could not be farther from the truth and is further underscored by the academic performance of middle school students, especially in Muncie. According to the Indiana Graduate Preparedness data, 40.5% of 6th grade students were proficient in ELA and 39.7% in Math. In Muncie local gaps are deeper and more persistent for students. In Muncie, 24.7% of students scored proficient in Math and 23.4 % in ELA. This data reveals there are still too many students entering high school drastically unprepared for the demands of earning a high school diploma. Starting in high school is far too late; students need connectedness and rigor before entering their first year of high school. They need to be set up for success during the vital years of middle schools.

The Muncie community expressed how they would like Innova Academy to be a school that:

- Is specifically of *and* within their community;
- Provides a learning environment that re-engages students during early adolescence;
- Fosters strong relationships, structure, and individualized support;
- Understands the realities of transportation, work schedules, and family responsibilities.

The question is not whether high-quality schools exist in the region; it is whether families in Muncie can realistically access them without leaving their community. In Muncie, 82.7% of Black students score below proficiency on the state's annual academic assessments. Even further, 93.6% of the special education population scores below proficiency. Research tells us male students of color are 2x more likely to be labeled as emotionally disturbed and 3x as likely to be given an IEP, leading to higher removal from classroom instruction and more punitive consequences in their learning environments (National Center for Learning Disabilities, 2020). INA brings quality where it is needed most: directly into the community. We know middle school is a turning point for kids. Curiosity is high and potential is vast. However, it is also the stage when too many students begin to disengage from school due to lack of investment and academic progress, and here in Muncie, the stakes are especially high.

INA's targeted student population is a community that is often overlooked - the Whately Community. Even more overlooked and underserved are Black middle school boys, particularly those who are over-identified for special

education services and those who struggle to perform well in a more traditional school setting. INA seeks not to replace what currently exists, but to become an option for the community that is tailored to the aforementioned groups of students. It is our goal to shift the narrative around what Black middle students are capable of by implementing trajectory changing pathways for our students and families. When community members and prospective family members learned of our proposal to do this through the power of play, we received resounding support for an unconventional and creative way to do school.

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.

In alignment with INA's third key design element, the Village Approach, community relationships have been central to school development from the earliest stages of planning. Before hosting formal community events, the founding team intentionally prioritized relationship building with trusted local leaders, recognizing that entering a community in a way that was both authentic and respectfully required listening, learning, and seeking guidance from those already living and serving within it.

Our founding school leader engaged in individual conversations over coffee, lunch, and other one-on-one and small group meetings with community leaders, educators, faith leaders, and neighborhood advocates to better understand local priorities and the neighborhood's and broader community's history.

Key stakeholders engaged include neighborhood leaders within the Whitely community, families, faith leaders, community advocates, and education partners (i.e., other community-based or non-profit organizations). Of note::

- Pastor Kevin Woodget of Church of the Living God, a well-known local faith and community leader whose insight shaped our early community engagement efforts;
- Wilisha Scaife, a local neighborhood and community advocate;
- Faith leaders at Union Missionary Baptist Church, a long-standing faith community in Whitely-Muncie..

Several other stakeholders have also expressed support through:

- Letters of support;
- Participation in planning meetings;
- Partnership conversations for youth programming;
- Willingness to host events and connect INA with families.

Support has been especially strong in response to INA's commitment to operate not as an outside initiative, but as a school built to complement or strengthen already-existing community assets. At this stage, no organized opposition has emerged. However, the founding team recognizes that questions often arise regarding charter school sustainability and transparency. To address these valid concerns proactively, INA continues to prioritize frequent communication and relationship cultivation with aforementioned stakeholders, as well as a visible community presence so that trust is built through authentic, consistent connection rather than one-time engagement.

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

As we shared in a previous section, our connection with the Whitely community has been integral to shaping INA's design and approach to serving students. We hosted two strategic local community events in the community as the kick off to this initial phase of school planning. These two events were set up to gather community insight and feedback with some of our most critical stakeholders. The first event was in the Industry neighborhood, where local community members joined the INA team and discussed the possibility of a future school option. The community shared their desires of what this could look like. We knew that especially in Muncie, community credibility was something we would need to earn, and this initial event was the first important step in this endeavor.

Our second event was held in the Whitely community with deeply-rooted community members such as church leaders, local non-profit organizations, and neighborhood advocates. We introduced an overview of our community-informed school model, but also sought feedback from this group on the following query: How could the local families, neighbors, and leaders come together with Innova Academy and build a true school for and of the community?

Gaining such great traction from both events, we recognized we needed to establish a committee within the community to continue having conversations and gathering input. We invited Wilisha Scaife, community advocate, to serve as our Community Engagement Liaison. Ms. Scaife has partnered closely with the founding team in strategizing and identifying immediate families and organizations that we can connect with to build broader community support for INA. Having this role alongside us in the development stage ensures as we continue to work towards school launch we are keeping the needs and desires of the community at the core of our practices.

We are also working with a local community partner to host a Spring Game based learning camp for students. Our purpose for this camp is to introduce the Game Based Learning experience through our curriculum while also meeting the needs of the community and providing a camp for the youth. We will use this opportunity to collect feedback from students and families on the specific parts of the curriculum and learning experience. Additionally, the Spring Camp allows us to pilot our Summer Camp at a smaller scale. Through the Summer Camp, we aim to reach a larger scale of families and community members, moving from once a week to a daily program offered for the students and families of the Whitely community. Both of these camps will allow INA to authentically implement student and community voice as we continue to work towards our school's launch.

Community is INA's third pillar and goes beyond just partnerships. Our founding school leader has been doing the work to ensure the community sees me as an ally who will come alongside them, anytime, to work with them and support their collective vision for a new learning community like INA. In Muncie, families and community partners are excited by the opportunity to build something intentionally different - an innovative school designed around the needs they have shared. Their input is guiding how we structure the school day, how we prioritize relationships, how we support families, and how we ensure students can thrive academically while remaining connected to the place they call home.

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.

One of INA's strongest coalition-building successes has been the ability to move from early curiosity to the development of active community trust across multiple stakeholder groups.

Initial conversations began with listening rather than recruiting, which allowed the founding team to build credibility with local leaders before formally introducing the school model. A major success has been the willingness of community leaders to open doors for additional conversations, connect INA to families, and help shape community facing opportunities such as youth programming and neighborhood engagement events. Another success has been the ability to build relationships across different sectors simultaneously, including neighborhood leadership, faith communities, family networks, youth-serving organizations, and local education advocates.

A key challenge has been that trust in new school initiatives requires time, especially in a community where families have seen educational promises that have not always resulted in long-term sustained presence nor positive outcomes. As the founding leadership team, we have responded by prioritizing visible consistency, direct communication, participation in community events, and active listening as a prerequisite to our decision-making.

Another challenge has been helping stakeholders understand that INA is not simply introducing a new school, but rather a "third way" to do school (game-based learning) that is anchored in community partnership. The founding team has been intentional in communicating that INA is not seeking to replace existing school options, but to expand what is available to families by offering a new community-based choice that may better align with their child's needs and provide an innovative approach to learning and teaching. To address this, INA continues to create opportunities for stakeholders to experience the model directly through our camps, public conversations, and student-centered demonstrations. Between now and school launch, coalition-building strategies include:

- Expanding family listening sessions;
- Growing student participation through camps;
- Formalizing additional local partnerships;

- Increasing community-based volunteer engagement;
- Maintaining regular communication with neighborhood leaders and local organizations.

INA views coalition-building not only as a launch requirement, but also as an ongoing responsibility essential to long-term school success.

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.

Innova Academy's founding team brings a complementary set of skills, knowledge, and experiences aligned to the core domains required to successfully develop, launch, and operate a high-quality charter school, including academics, governance, finance, operations, and community engagement.

During the planning phase, the team has intentionally organized around clearly defined areas of responsibility to ensure strong execution and alignment between the school's vision and implementation.

- **Anteria Gross** provides leadership across the domains of instructional design, school culture, and community engagement. With marked experience as both an educator and a leader, she ensures that the school's Game-Based Learning model, Rise and Thrive framework, and Village approach are coherently designed and aligned to student needs.
- **Dr. Tenika Holden-Flynn** brings expertise in instruction, organizational leadership, and finance. Her experience supports the development of academically rigorous systems grounded in strong operational and financial decision-making. At present, Dr. Holden-Flynn serves as Executive Director of Teach for America's Indianapolis region.
- **Yesica Rufino** leads charter authorization strategy, governance development, and regulatory compliance. Her work ensures that Innova Academy is building strong governance structures and aligning to state and authorizer expectations. At present, Ms. Rufino serves as Director of Charter Growth and Support at the Illinois Network of Charter Schools.
- **Wilisha Scaife** serves as our Family and Community Engagement Specialist, ensuring that family voice, local context, and authentic community engagement are embedded throughout our school's development process.

In addition to individual expertise, the founding team has demonstrated the capacity to work collaboratively, adapt based on feedback from multiple sources, and refine the school model through ongoing planning, community engagement, and external partnership. The team's collective experience reflects strategic prowess, execution capacity, and a commitment to continuous learning, ensuring Innova Academy is positioned to launch with clarity, coherence, and strong foundational systems.

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 has conducted an ongoing assessment of its strengths and growth areas to ensure Innova Academy is positioned for both a strong launch and long-term sustainability. Through this process, the team has identified finance and operations as key areas requiring additional development and capacity-building as the organization transitions from planning to implementation. While the team has foundational knowledge in both areas, it recognizes that successful school operation requires specialized expertise, particularly in financial management, compliance, and day-to-day operational systems. To address these gaps, the founding team has developed a multi-layered strategy:

- **Strategic Partnerships:** The team is actively pursuing partnerships with organizations that specialize in charter school operations and financial management to provide guidance, infrastructure, and best practices during the pre-opening and early operational years.
 - Our primary funding partner, **NewSchools Venture Fund**, is our lead investor. This support extends beyond financial backing. Their investment enables key capacity hires and funds comprehensive leadership development, board training, school site visits, executive coaching, cohort-based learning, and other critical startup resources. Through this partnership, our school founder and board are receiving the preparation and guidance necessary to ensure a strong and sustainable school launch.
 - Operationally and financially, we have partnered with **4th Sector Solutions**, a firm specializing in charter school finance and startup operations. For the past two years, they have worked alongside our leadership team and board to establish strong financial systems, ensure fiscal readiness, and build sound operational structures. Their expertise provides the technical foundation required to move from vision to execution with clarity and compliance.
 - To support the implementation of our instructional model, we have formed a peer partnership with Kindle Education middle school, a school with a similar approach and experience launching through a slow-growth model. This partnership provides both teacher and founder support grounded in real implementation experience. Founding teachers will be paired with mentor teachers for ongoing support in instructional planning, coaching, and execution of the Game-Based Learning model. At the leadership level, the founding School Leader will engage with Kindle’s founding leadership team to strengthen school design, startup decision-making, and the development of a strong instructional culture.
 - We are also participating in the **Indiana Department of Education’s Innovation CSP Technical Assistance** coaching cohort. This initiative pairs school leaders with domain-specific organizations to receive professional coaching and technical assistance in targeted areas essential to successful school launch. The cohort also fosters communities of practice and provides shared resources to strengthen leadership capacity across participating schools.
 - Our community partnerships further ground our implementation in local trust and engagement. **Union Missionary Baptist Church** has come alongside our initiative by supporting our work and opening its space for community events. The Whitely Institute on Community Engaged Teacher Preparation is partnering with us to ensure our school design authentically reflects and represents the Whitely community. We collaborate consistently with their leadership as we move toward launch. Additionally, **Motivate Our Minds**, a historically and longstanding youth-centered organization in the community, will host our spring and summer camps this year.

These partnerships represent the beginning of a long-term collaboration centered on serving Muncie’s youth.

- **Board Expertise:** The governing board is being intentionally developed to include members with strong finance and operational backgrounds to provide oversight, accountability, and strategic guidance.
- **Targeted Training and Development:** The Founder and School Leader is participating in the New Schools Fellowship, which provides structured training and support in areas including finance, operations, and school leadership. Additional targeted professional development will continue leading up to launch.
- **Early Capacity Building:** During the pre-opening year, Innova Academy plans to add leadership and operational capacity to support instructional implementation, school culture, and operational execution. In addition, the school plans to utilize contracted back-office support for finance and operations to ensure stability, compliance, and strong system implementation during the initial years of operation.

The founding team understands that the needs of the organization will evolve as the school grows. During the initial years, the focus will be on establishing strong foundational systems, maintaining operational stability, and ensuring high-quality implementation of the instructional model. As enrollment increases, INA will continue to build internal capacity, refine systems, and transition from external support structures to more fully developed in-house expertise. This approach reflects our commitment to building a sustainable organization - one that is not only prepared to launch successfully, but also equipped to grow, adapt, and sustain its mission and operations over time.

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.

Anteria Gross brings over fifteen years of instructional school leadership experience in both elementary and secondary school settings. Her professional background includes teaching, instructional coaching, and school leadership roles. As a result of her public education service for the past decade and a half, she possesses a deep understanding of student development across grade levels, as well as the instructional, cultural, and operational systems required to support students from early learning through high school and post-secondary readiness. Throughout her career, Anteria has led schoolwide initiatives focused on improving both academic outcomes and school culture. In roles such as Instructional Coach and Dean of Students, she has:

- Directly coached teachers on instructional practice and data-driven decision-making;
- Implemented restorative practices and behavior systems to strengthen school culture;
- Built systems that increased student engagement and improved classroom environments;
- Supported the design of intervention systems for diverse learners;
- Developed and led professional development aligned to instructional goals.

These experiences demonstrate her ability to lead both adults and students while aligning instructional and cultural priorities to the school’s mission in order to lead teams and school communities in increasing student achievement.

A defining strength of Anteria’s leadership is her ability to identify patterns in student experience and translate those insights into actionable school design. Throughout her work over the last decade, she has observed a consistent decline in student engagement during the middle school years, particularly among Black and Brown male students, whose strengths were often overshadowed by systemic barriers and deficit-based structures. Rather than treating this as an isolated challenge, she used these observations to inform the development of Innova Academy’s core design elements: Game-Based Learning, the Rise and Thrive Framework, and the Village Approach. These elements reflect her ability to move from problem identification to system-level solution design.

Anteria’s academic preparation through Columbia University–Teachers College Summer Principals’ Academy further strengthens her leadership capacity, providing formal training in school leadership, school design, instructional systems, and organizational management. As founder and school leader, Anteria has already demonstrated key startup leadership competencies, including:

- Leading the design of a full 6–12 school model aligned to student need;
- Building and facilitating a founding team with aligned roles and responsibilities;
- Engaging community stakeholders to inform school design;
- Developing core instructional, cultural, and operational frameworks;
- Participating in structured leadership development through the New Schools Venture Founding Charter School Leader Fellowship.

Her leadership reflects both vision-setting and execution, with a clear ability to align mission, model, planning, and implementation.

While Innova Academy will launch with middle school grades, Anteria’s experience across elementary, middle, and high school settings positions her to lead the school’s long-term growth into a full 6th through 12th grade model. She understands the importance of:

- Vertical alignment of learning standards, skills, and content across grade bands;
- Preparing middle school students for high school rigor;
- Ensuring systems scale effectively as the school grows;
- Maintaining consistency in culture while adapting to developmental differences.

Her approach reflects a clear understanding that high school success is built through a strong middle school academic foundation, and that systems must be intentionally designed to evolve as students progress.

Anteria also demonstrates strong emotional intelligence (EQ) and self-awareness as a leader, as well as a career-long commitment to continuous development. Through participation in leadership fellowships across the country, collaboration with experienced advisors, and ongoing reflection on practice, she continues to strengthen her capacity

in areas such as finance, operations, and organizational management.

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.

Innova Academy is committed to attracting and retaining high-quality educators by offering a competitive and sustainable compensation structure aligned with both regional benchmarks and the demands of the school's instructional model.

INA will offer salary ranges that are competitive with local public school districts and charter schools in the Muncie region. Estimated salary ranges for key roles include:

- **Teachers:** approximately \$51,000 – \$65,000, based on experience and qualifications;
- **Instructional/Leadership Roles:** approximately \$66,000 – \$95,000, depending on role and scope of responsibility;
- **Operational and Support Staff:** aligned to role-specific responsibilities and market rates (i.e., \$15 to \$17 per hour).

In addition to salary, INA will provide a comprehensive benefits package, including:

- Health, dental, and vision insurance options;
- Access to retirement benefits (e.g., state retirement system or equivalent plan);
- Paid leave, including holidays, sick leave, and personal days;
- Employer contributions toward benefits, where applicable.

As the school grows, compensation structures will be reviewed regularly in collaboration with our board to ensure competitiveness and sustainability.

Innova Academy's compensation system will also include opportunities to recognize and reward high-performing staff through [1] performance-based stipends or bonuses aligned to student growth and schoolwide goals, [2] leadership opportunities such as instructional leadership roles or mentoring responsibilities, and [3] additional stipends for extended responsibilities (i.e., moderating extracurricular activities, program development, or summer programming). These structures are designed to recognize excellence while providing pathways for professional growth.

INA's primary strategy for retaining high-performing teachers extends beyond compensation and is rooted in creating a professional environment where educators feel supported, valued, and encouraged to grow.

Key retention strategies are as follows:

Strong Instructional Support and Coaching: Teachers will receive consistent instructional coaching, feedback, and professional development aligned to Game-Based Learning, ensuring they feel confident and effective in delivering the school's model.

Clear and Supportive School Culture: Through the Rise and Thrive Framework, INA creates a school culture where expectations are clear, relationships are prioritized, and both students and staff are supported. This reduces burnout and creates a more sustainable teaching environment.

Meaningful Professional Growth Opportunities: Teachers will have opportunities to:

- Lead instructional initiatives;
- Formally mentor new teachers;
- Contribute to curriculum development;
- Grow into leadership roles as the school expands into a full 6–12 model.

Collaborative and Mission-Aligned Environment: INA prioritizes collaboration through team planning, shared mission alignment, and a culture of collective responsibility. Teachers are not working in isolation but as part of a cohesive team.

Teacher Voice and Feedback: Teachers will have structured opportunities to provide input on school decisions, instructional practices, and culture-building efforts, ensuring they feel ownership in the school's development.

Sustainable Work Expectations - INA's model is intentionally designed to balance rigor with sustainability by:

- providing structured curriculum systems
- using collaborative planning models

- embedding student engagement into instruction (reducing behavioral strain)

As Innova Academy grows, the school will continue to expand leadership and instructional pathways, creating opportunities for teacher advancement, specialization, and long-term career development within the organization. INA's approach to compensation and retention reflects a clear belief: strong schools are built by strong education practitioners.

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

Innova Academy is committed to recruiting and hiring highly qualified, mission-aligned educators who are prepared to implement the school's innovative instructional model and support the needs of its student population.

Hiring Strategy and Timeline: INA will implement a structured and phased hiring approach to ensure a strong founding team:

- Fall–Winter (Pre-Opening Year): Begin leadership hiring and early recruitment outreach;
- Winter–Spring: Actively recruit and interview instructional staff;
- Spring–Early Summer: Finalize hiring of all core instructional staff;
- Summer (Pre-Opening): Conduct onboarding, training, and professional development aligned to INA's model.

This timeline ensures staff are not only hired early, but also fully prepared to implement our Game-Based Learning curriculum model, Rise and Thrive framework, and other important school structures prior to the first day of school. As the school expands into a full 6–12 model, hiring will scale intentionally by grade level, with additional content specific and pathway-aligned staff added to support high school programming.

Recruitment Strategy: INA will use both targeted and ongoing recruitment strategies to attract strong candidates:

- outreach to local and nearby universities as part of ongoing partnership development efforts
- participation in education job fairs and educator networks
- outreach through professional organizations and social media platforms
- hosting information sessions and model-based workshops to introduce candidates to Game-Based Learning
- developing a pipeline of student teachers and early-career educators through emerging partnerships with universities and community-based educator development programs

In addition to traditional recruitment, INA will use its model as a recruitment tool by showcasing engaging, student-centered learning experiences that attract educators seeking innovative environments.

Highly Qualified Staff (ESEA Compliance): All teachers will meet the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and applicable Indiana certification standards.

- All teachers will hold, at minimum, a bachelor's degree and appropriate state certification
- Special Education, English Learner (EL), and other specialized teachers will hold required certifications in their assigned areas
- Paraprofessionals will meet all state and federal qualification requirements

Selection Criteria: In addition to certification requirements, INA prioritizes selecting educators who are aligned to the school's mission and instructional model.

Key selection criteria include:

- Demonstrated ability to build strong relationships with students and families;
- Commitment to equity and serving diverse student populations;
- Willingness to implement innovative instructional practices, including Game-Based Learning;
- Strong classroom management and culture-building skills aligned to restorative practices;
- Collaborative and team-oriented professional disposition;
- Growth mindset and commitment to continuous professional development.

Candidates will be evaluated not only on credentials, but on their ability to create engaging, inclusive, and student-centered learning environments.

Hiring Process: INA will implement a multi-step hiring process designed to assess both instructional skill and mission alignment:

1. **Application Submission:** Candidates submit an online application and materials
2. **Round 1 Interview:** Conducted by instructional leadership and/or teacher leaders
3. **Round 2 Performance-Based Interview:** Candidates complete performance tasks (e.g., lesson demonstration, scenario-based problem-solving) and interview with school leadership
4. **Final Review and Recommendation:** Leadership team evaluates candidate fit and makes hiring recommendation
5. **Pre-Employment Requirements:** All candidates must complete required background checks, credential verification, and reference checks in compliance with state and federal law

Staffing Supports and Coverage: To ensure continuity of instruction, INA will employ a full-time building substitute with teaching experience who will participate in all onboarding, professional development, and staff training. When not covering classes, this individual will provide small-group instructional support. As our enrollment grows, INA will expand staffing to include additional instructional support roles, including teacher assistants, aligned to student needs and school growth projections.

Long-Term Talent Development: INA's recruitment strategy is designed not only to hire strong staff for launch, but to build a long-term pipeline of educators prepared to grow with the school. While formal partnerships with local universities are still in development, this work is grounded in INA's existing community relationships and ongoing efforts to build educator pipelines within the community. INA is actively exploring opportunities to collaborate with local universities and community-based organizations initiatives, such as educator pipeline efforts within the Whitely community, to support mentorship, student teaching placements, and early-career development opportunities. As these partnerships are formalized, INA will expand opportunities for hosting student teachers, providing hands-on learning experiences, and connecting educators to innovative instructional practices aligned to the school's model. This approach supports both immediate staffing needs and long-term sustainability.

INA's staffing approach is intentionally phased to align with both student needs and long-term sustainability. During the initial years of launch, the school will prioritize hiring strong core content teachers in English Language Arts, mathematics, science, and social studies to ensure a rigorous academic foundation. Elective offerings will be introduced strategically and expanded over time based on student interest, staffing capacity, and program alignment. As Innova Academy grows into a full 6–12 model, this same approach will extend into high school staffing. Course offerings and staffing decisions will be aligned to graduation requirements, postsecondary pathways, and student interest, ensuring that the school builds a comprehensive yet sustainable program. INA will prioritize hiring staff whose expertise supports both required coursework and post-secondary pathway-aligned opportunities, allowing the school to expand intentionally without overextending resources or compromising our academic program's quality.

With our hiring strategy, INA demonstrates a clear commitment to recruit, develop, and retain educators and staff who are not only highly qualified but also deeply aligned to our school mission and are capable of delivering a rigorous, engaging, and supportive learning experience for the students of INA.

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.

Imagine a school where kids *love* learning. They are learning through real-life scenarios while developing 21st century skills. Imagine a school where teachers empower their students through play. Teachers are creating safe learning environments for all students while developing their academics and personal growth. Imagine a school where community members are not only welcomed but fully included in daily learning. The community does not stop at the door, they collaborate and build relationships within our walls and outside of them. This is the INA way.

At Innova Academy, our mission is to create a vibrant learning environment that goes beyond traditional education. We are dedicated to creating meaningful learning experiences that transcend the classroom. By embracing the power of play, we empower our community to discover the joy in learning. Our commitment is to nurture creative minds, foster collaboration, and instill a love for knowledge. Through this mission, we aim to shape individuals who not only excel academically but are also equipped with the skills, values, and enthusiasm needed to contribute meaningfully to their community.

Rooted and driven by our core values of Integrity, Inclusion, and Innovation, Innova Academy is a 6-12 middle and high school dedicated to reimagining how students learn during one of the most critical stages of development. INA will evaluate progress toward its mission through a balanced set of rigorous performance indicators that reflect both academic achievement and whole-child development.

Success will be measured through evidence of [1] student academic growth and mastery; [2] sustained engagement in learning; [3] consistent attendance and participation; [4] development of collaboration, communication, and problem-solving skills; [4] positive school culture and student belonging; and [5] progression toward readiness for each successive stage of learning.

Our mission extends beyond academic performance; success also includes students developing the confidence, ownership, and resilience needed to navigate challenges and to contribute positively within their school and community.

As a school leadership team INA will regularly review academic, culture, and student development data to monitor whether students are progressing toward mission-aligned outcomes and to determine if school systems are producing the intended impact. This review includes examining trends in student growth, participation, school climate, and developmental progress to ensure continuous alignment between mission, instruction, and student experience.

At Innova Academy, mission success means students are not only learning at rigorous levels, but are also actively engaged, growing in confidence, and building the skills necessary to thrive in school, in community, and in life.

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

Innova Academy envisions a future where every individual is a lifelong learner, equipped with the skills and mindset to thrive in an ever-evolving world.

Our vision is not simply to improve academic outcomes, but to transform how students experience learning so that curiosity, critical thinking, and personal growth become lasting parts of who they are. If Innova Academy successfully fulfills its mission, students will leave our school with a strong set of academic skills, a clear sense of identity, and the skills necessary to navigate life with confidence, purpose, and resilience. They will be prepared not only for graduation and postsecondary opportunities, but for trajectory-changing pathways that expand what they believe is possible for their future.

We envision students developing the ability to think critically, collaborate effectively, solve problems creatively, and apply their learning in ways that create meaningful opportunity in their lives and within their communities.

Our long-term vision extends beyond individual student success: **We believe that when students succeed, families are strengthened. When families are strengthened, communities grow stronger. And when communities are strong, education becomes a powerful force for lasting change.**

Through this work, Innova Academy seeks to cultivate a generation of students who are prepared not only to achieve personally, but to contribute meaningfully, lead with integrity, and thrive in whatever path they choose. This is the INA Way.

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.

Innova Academy's educational model is intentionally designed to respond to the academic, developmental, and social needs of students by integrating rigorous instruction, character development, and strong community partnership. Through community listening, local feedback, and research of currently existing effective school models, INA identified three key design elements that together bring the school's mission to life:

- Game-Based Learning;
- Rise and Thrive Framework;
- Village Approach.

We selected these elements because they address not only academic achievement, but also the habits, support systems, and relationships our students need to thrive regardless of their backgrounds or previous school experiences.

Game-Based Learning (GBL)

INA's instructional model is centered on Game-Based Learning, which transforms traditional instruction into mission-driven learning experiences where students actively solve problems, collaborate, and apply academic content in meaningful ways.

Each INA Mission is designed around standards-aligned inquiry and real-world challenges that require students to think critically, communicate effectively, and work collaboratively. Through this model, academic standards are not taught in isolation but embedded within purposeful learning experiences that increase engagement and deepen understanding.

GBL was selected because research consistently shows that students learn more effectively when they are actively engaged, challenged appropriately, and given opportunities for feedback and reflection (Jackson, 2011). The founding team studied schools and instructional models that successfully use project-based and game-centered learning to increase student ownership and academic persistence, particularly for students who may not thrive in traditional instructional environments. Our students' developing brains are hard-wired to achieve; however, certain conditions must be present to allow their brains to actually excel. GBL provides rich learning experiences that meet these conditions, empowering every student to excel.

The pedagogy of GBL involves integrating the principles of effective teaching and learning with unique features of games, such as interactive storytelling, problem-solving challenges, and immersive environments, to create engaging and compelling learning experiences (GCU, 2021). A key lesson from this research is that learner engagement alone is insufficient. It must be paired with rigorous academic alignment. As a result, INA's missions are intentionally built backward from Indiana's Academic Standards to ensure strong content mastery while preserving the excitement and motivation that game structures promote amongst learners.

Games also create a low-risk environment where students are encouraged to take risks, learn through iteration, and understand that productive struggle is part of learning. This is especially important for reigniting and reengaging students during the middle school years. Students who will benefit from structures that normalize revision, reflection, and resilience are further set up for their future success in their high school years.

Rise and Thrive: Character Building

At INA, we understand that while academics are a top priority, learning cannot fully happen unless students first feel safe, supported, and connected. This belief drives our second key design element: Rise and Thrive, our character development and student support framework designed to build a culture of resilience, accountability, and belonging.

Rise and Thrive integrates restorative practices, social-emotional learning, and multi-tiered student supports to ensure every scholar has what they need to grow academically, socially, and emotionally. At its core, the framework helps students develop the skills necessary to regulate emotions, build healthy relationships, resolve conflict constructively, and take ownership of their growth - key traits for lifelong success and to contribute positively to their communities.

A central structure within this framework is Homeroom Advisory: dedicated daily time for students to connect with a trusted adult, build community, reflect, and strengthen key character traits known as "Nova Powers". Advisory creates a consistent space where students are seen, supported, challenged, and held accountable while developing habits that strengthen both personal growth and school culture. Students, staff, and families come together to celebrate these achievements, recognizing both academic and character successes.

Rise and Thrive is also grounded in the evidenced-based practice Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), designed to respond proactively to anticipated student needs. Based on local feeder patterns, INA anticipates approximately 20% of scholars will initially require Tier 3 intensive wraparound supports, 50% will require Tier 2 targeted interventions, and 30% will be supported primarily through Tier 1 universal systems. Because we anticipate that many scholars will enter needing more than universal supports, the school is intentionally planning staffing, scheduling, and resources to meet these needs in the first several weeks of the school year. Tier 1 supports focus on proactive culture-building and rigorous instructional strategies; Tier 2 provides targeted academic and behavioral interventions; and Tier 3 delivers individualized wraparound support for students with most intensive behavioral and academic needs. Our goal is not simply to categorize students within tiers, but to intentionally move students toward Tier 1 over time through structured interventions, strengths-based practices, and consistent progress monitoring.

While Rise and Thrive is grounded in compassion and support, accountability remains non-negotiable. Students are held to clear, consistent expectations and are supported in taking ownership of their choices. INA believes true success happens when students are both supported and held accountable.

Through Rise and Thrive, Innova Academy creates the conditions for students to rise with confidence and thrive within a culture that values support, resilience, and responsibility.

Village: Community Engagement

INA's Village Approach reflects the belief that student success is strengthened when families, educators, and community partners work together as active contributors to learning. This design element was chosen because community feedback consistently emphasized the need for a school that not only educates students, but also serves as a trusted community anchor where authentic and trusting relationships matter. The Village Approach ensures that learning extends beyond the classroom by creating authentic opportunities for students to connect academic work to community, identity, and service. This includes:

- Relationship building;
- Cultural competency;
- Community leadership.

The founding team has had the opportunity through the New Schools Venture Founding Charter School Leader Fellowship, as well other graduate programs like Summer Principals Academy, to study schools who have successfully integrated family partnership and community engagement into school culture. The key lesson learned here is that meaningful engagement must move beyond attendance at events towards shared and collective ownership of school identity and student growth. At INA, this learning will be applied through:

- Parent and community engagement opportunities;
- Game nights that extend the school model into family experiences;
- Service learning connected to classroom missions;
- Community partnerships that bring outside expertise into student learning;
- Alumni engagement that creates long-term belonging.

Additionally, INA's holistic model directly addresses educational disparities by providing:

- Accessible, high-quality education for all students;
- Inclusive practices that embrace diverse learning styles and backgrounds;
- Resources to close achievement gaps through rigorous, standards-aligned assessments embedded in missions.

These three elements are intentionally interdependent.

In summary, GBL, Rise and Thrive, and Village, when implemented in a coherent manner, create a school model designed not only to improve academic outcomes, but also to empower students to excel in the skills needed for lifelong learning and leadership and navigate how to today's dynamic world.

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

Innova Academy's instructional approach is built around Game-Based Learning (GBL) as the primary delivery model for teaching and learning. When we say "games," we don't just mean entertainment; students learn through intentionally designed, student-driven missions that are immersive, structured, interactive, and inclusive.

Instruction is designed to be immersive, interactive, and student-centered while maintaining clear academic rigor. Teachers serve as facilitators of learning, guiding students through lessons that balance direct instruction, guided practice, collaborative challenge, reflection, and independent application.

How Instruction Happens:

Each unit is organized around a mission that frames learning within a meaningful challenge or problem. Teachers begin by identifying priority Indiana Academic Standards and then execute backwards-design instruction so that every lesson, task, and assessment promotes mastery of those standards.

Within each mission, students engage in:

- Explicit mini-lessons that introduce core content and skills;
- Guided instruction and modeling;
- Collaborative problem-solving tasks;
- Structured gameplay or challenge-based application of new skills and content;
- Reflection and revision cycles;

- Mission and quest checkpoints that monitor progress towards mastery.

This instructional sequence ensures that students learn via a consistent academic structure, as well as opportunities for active engagement. Rather than relying primarily on lecture-based instruction, INA emphasizes learning by doing. Students are expected to think critically, communicate their reasoning, test ideas, revise work, and apply learning in authentic ways.

INA's GBL framework reflects research showing that students learn most effectively when instruction includes engagement, challenge, feedback, and reflection (GCU, 2021). These conditions support optimal cognitive development and increase student motivation, persistence, and retention of knowledge. Games naturally create conditions where students are encouraged to take risks, solve problems, and learn through iteration. This is especially valuable for middle school students, who often respond positively to learning environments where academic challenges are visible, purposeful, and collaborative. Within INA's model, productive struggle is normalized. Students understand that failure is not final but part of the learning process, and teachers intentionally use feedback cycles to help students improve over time.

Because instruction is delivered through multiple modalities, INA's instructional approach is particularly responsive to students with varied learning needs. Students access learning through:

- Visual supports;
- Oral discussion;
- Physical movement;
- Collaborative tasks;
- Written analysis;
- Learning demonstrations (entitled "Final Missions" for students as a culminating opportunity at the end of each learning unit or module)..

This allows students to engage with content in multiple ways while building confidence in how they learn. GBL also supports inclusion because every student has a role in the learning process. Students contribute different strengths, work collaboratively, and engage in tasks that allow multiple entry points to rigorous content. This is especially important given local student data showing high rates of academic underperformance among historically underserved student groups, including students receiving special education services. Through this approach, INA aims to strengthen not only academic mastery, but also the habits and competencies students need for long-term success. Instruction is intentionally designed so that rigorous learning feels active, meaningful, and achievable for every student.

Why Games?

INA's instructional approach was not chosen simply because games are fun; it was selected because the founding team identified a clear gap in how traditional instructional models often fail to fully engage and support the needs of many students, particularly students who have experienced disengagement, underperformance, or exclusion within conventional classroom structures. The efficacy of our GBL model is supported by research indicating that gamification in education increases student engagement and motivation, leading to improved learning outcomes (GCU, 2021). Studies have shown that such approaches enhance retention of information, promote active participation, and cater to diverse learning styles, thereby enriching the educational experience for all students (GCU, 2021).

The founding team observed that many students, especially Black and Brown students, and particularly male students, are too often disconnected from learning environments not because of a lack of ability, but because instruction does not consistently create conditions where they feel challenged, valued, and actively involved. In many settings, students are removed from learning opportunities for behavioral reasons before academic strengths are fully cultivated, which contributes to long-term disengagement and disrupted academic progress.

This concern is especially significant given broader patterns showing that students from historically underserved communities are disproportionately identified for special education services and often experience lower access to rigorous, engaging instructional opportunities. Research continues to show that these patterns can contribute to reduced academic confidence, lower graduation rates, and diminished long-term opportunity when instructional environments fail to respond effectively to diverse learner needs.

INA selected GBL because it creates the type of learning environment where curiosity is reignited, participation is

expected, and students are positioned as active contributors rather than passive recipients of instruction. For INA, GBL is both an instructional strategy and an equity strategy. It is designed to re-engage students early on so they remain on a strong trajectory toward high school readiness, long-term success, and expanded post-secondary opportunity.

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

Innova Academy's curriculum is designed to ensure that creativity and innovation are anchored in strong academic rigor across both middle school and high school. While instructional experiences are delivered through Game-Based Learning (GBL), every unit of study begins with clear alignment to Indiana Academic Standards and is intentionally structured to ensure students engage deeply with grade-level content, increasingly complex thinking, and authentic application of learning over time.

Standards Alignment Across Grade Levels

At INA, curriculum development begins with backward design. Teachers first identify priority standards, essential learning outcomes, and grade-level expectations, then design missions, lessons, and assessments that require students to demonstrate mastery through meaningful academic work. Each content area is supported by:

- Standards-aligned scope and sequence documents;
- Pacing guides across grade levels;
- Unit learning targets;
- Common success criteria;
- Mission-based performance tasks;
- Common rubrics for academic mastery;

This process ensures that standards are not added after instruction is designed, but instead serve as the starting point for all curriculum planning. Serving multiple grade levels makes vertical alignment a top priority and critical in our systems and approach. The curriculum is intentionally designed so students build foundational knowledge and habits in middle school that prepare them for greater complexity, independence, and interdisciplinary application in high school.

We define Rigor as the level of thinking students are expected to demonstrate in multiple ways, not simply by the amount of class or homework assigned and completed. Teachers are expected to intentionally use Bloom's Taxonomy to design learning experiences that move students beyond recall and into deeper levels of analysis, application, evaluation, and creation. Across grade levels, students are expected to:

- Analyze information;
- Justify reasoning;
- Apply concepts in unfamiliar contexts;
- Synthesize learning across disciplines;
- Defend ideas using evidence;
- Revise work based on feedback.

During Mission work, as students progress, mission complexity also increases intentionally through grade-level content, stronger academic independence, and greater ownership of long-term work. In middle school, Final Missions occur at the end of each semester and help students apply learning through structured presentations and performance tasks that grow in complexity by grade level. In high school, this same structure continues through increasingly sophisticated Final Missions that function more like capstone-level work, where students apply cumulative learning over multiple years and demonstrate readiness for postsecondary pathways.

In alignment with Indiana Code IC 20-32-8.5-2, Innova Academy will implement a defined, schoolwide core reading framework aligned to the science of reading for all students in grades 6–8. This framework ensures consistent, explicit instruction in foundational reading skills, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension across all classrooms.

At INA, Game-Based Learning serves as the vehicle for instruction, not a replacement for academic rigor. The expectations for student mastery remain high, and the core components of structured literacy are non-negotiable within our instructional model. The science of reading framework provides the foundation for what students must learn, while the GBL model defines how students engage with and apply those skills.

Within this model, explicit reading instruction will be delivered through dedicated literacy blocks, targeted mini-lessons, and small group instruction based on student need. These foundational skills are then reinforced and applied within mission-based learning experiences, where students engage in reading, writing, analysis, and problem-solving tasks that require them to use these skills in authentic and meaningful contexts. This ensures that students are not only developing foundational literacy skills, but are also able to transfer and apply those skills in complex, real-world scenarios.

INA will select or align its literacy framework to high-quality instructional materials identified by the Indiana Department of Education's High-Quality Curricular Materials Advisory List to ensure full alignment with state expectations. Additional support will be provided through a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), including targeted interventions and progress monitoring for students who require additional reading support.

Assessment and Progress Monitoring

INA uses multiple layers of assessment to ensure the curriculum remains rigorous, engaging, and effective for all students.

These include:

- Embedded instructional checkpoints
- Formative assessments
- Benchmark assessments
- Standards-based rubrics
- Performance tasks
- Final Missions
- NWEA MAP assessments
- ILEARN checkpoints where applicable

These measures allow teachers to monitor both mastery of academic content and student growth over time. Student progress is tracked across all content areas, with attention given not only to academic performance but also to student habits, skills, and readiness indicators connected to INA's broader school model. Data review is embedded into INA's instructional systems through consistent analysis by teachers, instructional leaders, and school leadership. Teachers will engage in student work analysis, data discussions, standards mastery review, intervention planning, and instructional adjustment cycles. Leadership teams will also use data dashboards to monitor trends across classrooms, student groups, grade levels, and content areas. This ensures that curriculum decisions remain responsive and best instructional practices are implemented based on real student performance rather than assumptions.

INA believes engagement strengthens rigor when academic expectations remain clear. Through Game-Based Learning, students experience standards through inquiry, challenge, and authentic application while still being held accountable to clear performance expectations utilizing rubrics and checklists. Allowing students to actively demonstrate success in their learning with multiple forms of evidence through missions, presentations, assessments, and reflection. At INA, curriculum effectiveness is measured not only by assessment performance, but by whether students can think critically, apply learning independently, and demonstrate readiness for increasing levels of challenge across their academic journey.

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

Following the guidelines of our core values of inclusion, integrity and innovation we take pride in ensuring our model truly meets the needs of all of our students. Our model is designed to naturally lend itself to uniquely support itself to the various learning styles of students with its engaging approach through play. At INA, students are not separated from high expectations; rather, supports are layered so that all learners can fully participate in grade-level instruction while receiving the targeted services they need.

At INA, supports are designed to evolve as students progress through grade levels. In middle school, students receive strong foundational scaffolds that build academic confidence, routines, and learner habits. In high school, these same support systems continue while increasing student independence, strengthening self-advocacy, and ensuring students remain on track for graduation and postsecondary readiness

Across grade levels, students access learning through multiple modalities that support diverse learning needs while maintaining common academic expectations. Instruction regularly includes

- visual supports
- oral language opportunities
- movement and hands on learning
- collaborative problem solving
- structured discussion
- written and performance based demonstration

With our instructional model prioritizing active learning, INA students will encounter content through varied pathways that allow multiple entry points into rigorous academic work. While middle school missions often provide more direct scaffolding and structured support, high school learning increasingly requires students to apply these same habits with greater independence, sustained analysis, and deeper academic ownership.

Students with IEP's

Students with IEP's will receive services aligned to their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) while fully participating in grade-level instruction. Special education teachers, general education teachers, and student support staff will collaborate to ensure accommodations, modifications, and targeted interventions are embedded into instruction across content areas.

This includes:

- co-planning instructional access
- accommodation implementation
- progress monitoring toward IEP goals
- targeted intervention through MTSS
- individualized service coordination

As students move into high school, support also includes monitoring graduation progress, course access, and transition readiness to ensure students remain on a successful long-term pathway.

Because many game-based learning experiences include multisensory engagement, visual structure, and collaborative participation, students with disabilities are often able to access content through multiple pathways while strengthening both academic and social skills.

INA also recognizes that instructional engagement alone is not sufficient; students requiring specialized support will receive legally required services, individualized intervention, and ongoing monitoring to ensure strong academic progress.

English Language Learners (ELLs)

English learners will engage in grade-level content while receiving targeted language supports throughout instruction.

Teachers will use:

- visuals and graphic organizers
- sentence frames
- structured peer discussion
- vocabulary development routines
- modeled academic language

Because missions require authentic communication and collaborative problem-solving, English learners regularly practice language in meaningful academic contexts rather than isolated exercises. This dual focus supports both content mastery and English language development. Student language progress will be monitored regularly, and supports will be adjusted based on language proficiency data and classroom performance.

As students progress into high school, language development continues alongside increasing expectations for academic communication, written analysis, and content-specific vocabulary.

Gifted and Talented Students

INA's instructional design allows teachers to increase complexity without separating students from the broader learning community.

Teachers can extend learning through:

- deeper inquiry
- independent research
- expanded problem-solving complexity
- leadership roles within collaborative work

- creative extensions connected to mission outcomes

As students advance through high school, opportunities for interdisciplinary application, long-term project development, and capstone-level thinking become increasingly prominent

Students Performing Below Grade Level/ Behavior Challenges

INA anticipates that some students will enter below grade level academically or with prior school experiences that have affected confidence, engagement, or behavior.

Through the Rise and Thrive Framework and MTSS, students receive layered support that includes:

- targeted academic intervention
- small group reteaching
- structured behavior support
- restorative response systems
- goal-setting and progress reflection

Middle school support focuses heavily on foundational habits, routines, and re-engagement. High school support increasingly emphasizes self-management, credit monitoring, academic planning, and persistence toward graduation goals.

The school's mission-based approach helps students see progress in real time while building persistence and ownership. The learning is active, visible, and collaborative, students often re-engage more quickly than in traditional instructional settings. All special population supports are strengthened through INA's Multi-Tiered System of Support. Student needs are reviewed regularly through progress monitoring, data review, and student support team meetings to ensure interventions remain responsive. For students who face behavioral challenges, the GBL model provides a structured yet flexible environment that supports both academic and social-emotional growth. The integration of our Rise and Thrive Framework encourages positive behavior, while the collaborative nature of mission-based activities promotes teamwork and peer support. Flexible pacing and individualized interventions allow these students to progress at their own pace, addressing both their behavioral needs and academic challenges in a way that keeps them engaged and motivated to learn.

By tailoring instruction to meet the diverse needs of all learners, the GBL model ensures equitable access to high-quality education. Across middle school and high school, the goal remains consistent: every student should experience challenge, support, belonging, and a clear pathway toward long-term success.

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.

INA serves a diverse student population, including students across varying socioeconomic backgrounds, racial and ethnic identities, English Learners, students receiving special education services, gifted learners, and students requiring targeted behavioral support. Because our targeted population includes a high percentage of students of color and a higher projected special education population, our school culture model is intentionally designed to address both engagement and belonging through proactive systems rather than reactive discipline alone.

The Rise and Thrive Framework establishes the common expectations for how students learn, interact, solve conflict, and develop responsibility across grade levels. Our visual identity intentionally such as our mascot and school colors intentionally reflects the school culture and is embedded within Rise and Thrive: purple represents creativity, excellence, and individuality, while the elephant symbolizes strength, connection, and community, together reinforcing a school environment where students are valued, accountable, and empowered to grow.

This framework promotes:

- student voice
- emotional awareness
- personal accountability
- restorative problem solving
- community responsibility

- positive identity development

At the middle school level, this includes strong adult guidance, explicit routines, and daily opportunities to practice social and academic habits. As INA expands into high school, the framework continues while increasing student independence, self-advocacy, leadership, and long-term accountability connected to graduation and postsecondary readiness.

INA utilizes a proactive discipline model to equip students with strong conflict resolution and emotional intelligence skills. While restoration is a crucial component of discipline procedures, its principles are embedded within our model by design. At INA, restorative practices refer to methods and resources utilized to address conflict and harm in a manner that prioritizes healing and repairing community connections. Our approach emphasizes fostering relationships, fixing harm, and promoting accountability through dialogue and community involvement. Our goal is to create an inclusive and supportive environment where students feel empowered to take responsibility for their actions and uphold integrity. Restorative practices help students understand the impact of their actions and provide teachers with effective communication tools to redirect students. Implementing restorative practices will aid our students in overcoming barriers to maximizing their learning.



Three Tiers

INA uses logical consequences to redirect students, as defined by Responsive Classrooms ([Responsive Classroom, 2007](#)). This approach calls for all adult staff members to involve children in practicing appropriate attitudes and behaviors rather

than focusing on negative behaviors. Logical consequences are categorized as “Loss of Privilege,” “Time and Space,” and “Break It, Fix It.”

Our fundamental expectation is that our students maintain integrity, demonstrate respectful behavior, and use inclusive language during interactions with themselves and others. Behaviors outside of Innova's fundamental expectations are rated on a three-tier structure. Staff use rational decision-making to align action with a consequence to maximize the possibility of restoration ([University of San Diego, 2018](#))([Monash University, 2019](#)).

Teachers and administrators follow a comprehensive Three-Tiered system:

- Preventative and Proactive Strategies
- Responsive Strategies
- Intensive Interventions and Supports

This approach ensures a versatile and adaptive framework tailored to each student’s unique needs. These tiers are implemented both laterally and as a continuum, allowing us to respond effectively to student behaviors. By operating flexibly, we can restore and repair relationships, promote positive behavior, and provide the necessary support to foster student growth and success. This holistic approach is designed to create a nurturing and supportive educational environment for all students.

Tier 1: Preventative Measures and Proactive Strategies		
Student	Teacher	Administrator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently demonstrates positive behaviors and attitudes • Participates in instructional and community-building activities • Follows the established classroom and school rules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly define and communicate expectations for behavior, integrity, respect, and inclusive language • Provide opportunities for students to practice and reinforce positive behaviors through role-playing, group discussions, and other interactive strategies. • Use positive reinforcement, such as praise and recognition, to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly define and communicate expectations for behavior, integrity, respect, and inclusive language • Provide opportunities for students to practice and reinforce positive behaviors through role-playing, group discussions, and other interactive strategies. • Use positive reinforcement, such as praise and recognition, to

	<p>encourage desired behaviors and attitudes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role model the core values and serve as a mentor to all students • Celebrate and acknowledge small wins during instructional and advisory times 	<p>encourage desired behaviors and attitudes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide ongoing professional development and coaching for staff members to ensure consistency and effectiveness in implementing restorative practices. • Role model the core values and serve as a mentor to all students
Tier 2: Responsive Strategies and Interventions		
Student	Teacher	Administrator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor disruptions • Disrespectful or inappropriate language, • Failure to complete assignments • Constant tardiness or incomplete attendance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use logical consequences, such as non-invasive redirection, loss of privilege, or time and space, to address minor misbehaviors • Conduct restorative conferences to address more serious incidents of harm or conflict and facilitate repair and healing • Involve families in addressing and resolving behavior issues as appropriate • Refer student for Champion Program • Create a relevant reflection assignment based on Nova Powers and student accountability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct restorative conferences to address more serious incidents of harm or conflict and facilitate repair and healing • Provide additional support and resources for students who demonstrate persistent or challenging behaviors, such as counseling or mentoring • Provide additional support to staff members who are struggling with reacting and processing • Involve families and caregivers in addressing and resolving behavior issues as appropriate • Induct into the Champion Program
Tier 3: Intensive Interventions and Supports		
Student	Teacher	Administrator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistent or challenging behaviors that disrupt the community and/or learning spaces • Aggression towards self and/or others including mental, social, and/or physical behaviors • Persistent defiance that disrupts the community and/or learning spaces and/or creates a disregard for safety • Vandalism • Bullying and/or any form of discrimination based on sex, gender, race, religion, nationality, etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer student(s) to administration • Maximize safety efforts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop individualized behavior plans or contracts for students who require more intensive support and intervention in collaboration with family and teachers • Provide additional counseling or mental health services to address emotional or behavioral issues. • Use a team to develop and implement plans that address aspects of the student's needs and challenges. • Consider alternative placements or programs for students who require more specialized support or intervention.

Innova's Pledge of Accountability

By committing to restorative practices, teachers will maximize learning and create a safe and nurturing community for all. All individuals representing Innova Academy abide by the five pledges of accountability. As a member of the Innova Academy community:

- Pledge to embrace restorative practices in all aspects of my life, including my interactions with fellow students, teachers, administrators, and families.
- Prioritize healing and community repair by building relationships, developing self-awareness, and promoting accountability for injustices.
- Understand that every action I take has a positive or negative consequence, and I will strive to make choices that positively contribute to our supportive and inclusive environment.
- Use constructive and responsive language when interacting with others.
- Hold themselves and others accountable for our actions.

At INA, culture is not separate from instruction; it is embedded within how students experience school every day. This comprehensive approach combines restorative practices, proactive discipline models, and game-based learning to create a nurturing and effective educational environment. By fostering strong community bonds and providing a holistic support system, we ensure that every student is equipped with the skills and resilience needed to succeed academically and personally. This commitment to both emotional and academic growth underscores our dedication to developing well-rounded individuals ready to thrive in all aspects of their lives.

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.

Innova Academy is intentionally designed as a 6–12 slow-growth model, creating both the time and capacity necessary for the founding team to thoughtfully design and implement a high school program that is responsive, rigorous, and aligned to evolving state expectations. Students who enroll in 6th grade in 2027 will not enter 9th grade until 2030, giving school leadership three full years of implementation experience to refine instructional systems, analyze student outcomes, and use that learning to shape a high school model grounded in the actual needs of the students it will serve.

This phased approach is especially important given Indiana's evolving diploma framework. By the time the first cohort of INA enters high school, Indiana will be fully operating under its newer diploma structure, which will move beyond the Core 40 framework. The new diploma is hoped to place greater emphasis on flexibility, intentional pathway design, readiness experiences, and demonstration of postsecondary competencies. INA views this shift as well aligned to the school's design, because the new diploma expectations increasingly value applied learning, student agency, and authentic demonstrations of readiness which are central to our school model.

The founding team's capacity to design high school is strengthened by INA's core instructional and cultural framework. The school's three key design elements GBL, Rise and Thrive, and Village Approach are intentionally designed to scale across grade bands. Research supports learning environments that integrate applied problem-solving, collaboration, and student ownership as strong predictors of deeper engagement and long-term readiness. Rather than building a high school program in advance of the students it serves, INA's approach is to design a high school in partnership with our first student cohorts. During the school's first three years, the leadership team will use implementation data, family

feedback and input, student performance trends, and evolving state guidance to refine high school structures, pathway opportunities, and readiness experiences. This deliberate planning process allows the founding team to align future high school design not only to state requirements, but also to what students demonstrate they need to be successful.

The founding team also recognizes that successful high school implementation requires intentional preparation beyond instructional design. As part of long term and future planning, the school leadership team in collaboration with the board will continue to build capacity through ongoing review of Indiana diploma requirements, graduation pathway expectations, and postsecondary readiness requirements to ensure that the high school program remains compliant, and aligned to Education One graduation standards as well.

High school at Innova Academy is not intended to represent a shift in model, but rather an extension and continuation of the learning systems students will already have experienced in middle school. As a secondary educator and school leader with experience implementing instructional and culture systems across both middle and high school environments, the founder understands the importance of maintaining coherence across grade bands while also making intentional developmental adjustments so that high school reflects the distinct expectations, structures, and opportunities appropriate for older students. This experience includes leading schoolwide implementation efforts that required staff alignment, systems development, and sustained onboarding to ensure successful execution. That experience directly informs the founding team's approach to building a high school model that is both consistent in vision and intentionally designed for high school readiness.

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.

Innova Academy will ensure that students graduate on time and are prepared for postsecondary success through a combination of clear academic planning, ongoing progress monitoring, individualized student support, and pathway-aligned learning experiences embedded within the school's instructional model.

As students enter high school, they will earn credits through successful completion of required coursework aligned to Indiana high school standards and diploma requirements in effect at the time of enrollment. Core academic courses will be designed to meet required seat time expectations while also incorporating interim assessments and standards-based performance measures to ensure students are mastering grade-level content as they progress toward graduation.

Student progress toward graduation will be monitored through the school's Student Information System (SIS), where credits, course completion, attendance, and academic performance will be tracked regularly. The school counselor will play a key role in monitoring graduation progress by conducting ongoing transcript audits, reviewing student schedules, and identifying any credit gaps. Ensuring students remain aligned to required coursework and pathway expectations. For students enrolling from other schools, transcript reviews will be conducted during enrollment to ensure accurate placement and alignment to graduation requirements.

In addition to traditional coursework, Innova Academy's high school design will continue the school's Game-Based Learning model through an intentionally sequenced annual "Mission" Capstone experience connected to students' graduation pathways and postsecondary readiness development. Each year, students will engage in a progressively more advanced learning experience that builds research, writing, presentation, and problem-solving skills while connecting to real-world application and community impact.

The Annual Mission Capstone sequence is designed as a developmental progression:

- 9th Grade – Discovery: students explore interests, strengths, and possible pathway connections
- 10th Grade – Development: students deepen applied skill-building and begin more formal pathway exploration
- 11th Grade – Design: students engage in advanced project planning, research, and solution development
- 12th Grade – Senior Capstone "Final Mission": students complete a culminating project that demonstrates readiness, application of learning, and pathway connection

These projects will include common rubrics, benchmark checkpoints, and progress-monitoring structures to ensure students are developing required competencies over time.

Progress toward completion will be supported during advisory in alignment with our middle school model, which serves as a consistent structure for goal setting, reflection, project monitoring, and postsecondary readiness development. While advisory itself will not function as a credit-bearing course, it will provide dedicated time for students to receive feedback, build accountability, strengthen executive functioning, and connect academic work to long-term goals through both the Game-Based Learning model and the Rise and Thrive framework.

This design aligns closely with Indiana's evolving graduation expectations, which increasingly emphasize demonstration of readiness, applied learning, and postsecondary competency development in addition to traditional credit accumulation. INA's instructional model is intentionally positioned to support students not only in meeting graduation requirements, but also in building the habits, skills, and evidence of readiness needed for college, career, and community contribution. Naturally lending itself to support opportunities for students to demonstrate critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and applied problem-solving through authentic learning experiences.

Our mission is not simply for students to complete required coursework, but to graduate with a clear sense of direction, demonstrated competence, and meaningful preparation for life beyond high school.

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.

INA's high school model is intentionally being designed to align with Indiana's evolving diploma framework, including opportunities for students to earn Indiana Employability and Postsecondary Readiness Seals through rigorous academics, applied learning experiences, and pathway-connected opportunities that prepare students for multiple postsecondary options.

This work is grounded in INA's third key design element, our Village Approach, which recognizes that preparing students for success beyond high school requires strong partnerships between schools, families, community organizations, and workforce partners. INA views community partnerships not simply as external opportunities, but as an extension of the learning environment itself. By intentionally building relationships with universities, workforce partners, and community organizations early in the school's development, the school aims to ensure that students have access to authentic learning experiences that connect classroom learning to real-world application.

As students move from the middle school years and into the high school years, these Village partnerships deepen into pathway experiences. A student interested in health sciences might engage with a community health partner through a GBL mission in 7th grade, explore a CTE pathway in 10th grade, and complete a work-based learning or internship experience in 11th or 12th grade. All through relationships that were built and developed through our Village framework over the years of interaction with our students, not just introduced transactionally at the end of high school. INA's GBL Mission Capstone Sequence reinforces this connection at every grade level. Each year students complete a culminating capstone experience in partnership with real community stakeholders. Over the course of their enrollment at INA, students build a body of evidence demonstrating communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and real-world application all in alignment with the competencies Indiana's Employability Seal framework recognizes and values.

The School Leader will work in collaboration with the assistant Principal and other members of the leadership team by overseeing the long-term vision and alignment to graduation requirements. Key components will be to lead the development of academic pathways and instructional systems by mapping course sequences, aligning middle school learning progressions to high school expectations, and developing early frameworks for capstone assessment and performance-based learning. Beginning in Year 1, the leadership team will prioritize foundational planning steps, including identifying initial partnership opportunities, mapping potential pathway areas aligned to student interest and community workforce needs, and establishing early structures for advisory-based progress monitoring. By Years 2 and 3, this work will expand to include the establishment of formal partnership development, early dual credit alignment conversations, and the design of capstone expectations that connect directly to postsecondary readiness.

This is important specifically in the local Muncie context, where dual credit opportunities can provide significant long-term value for our students and families. As this part of the program develops, INA's goal is to ensure students

entering dual credit experiences are academically prepared to succeed in college level coursework, and not simply participating for credit accumulation alone.

In addition to dual credit planning, INA intends to build career connected pathway options that reflect both student interests and regional workforce opportunities. As the high school model develops, the school will identify course sequences, program materials, and pathway experiences that allow students to explore multiple areas of interest while remaining aligned to graduation expectations. This includes intentional planning around Career and Technical Education (CTE), recognizing that industry certification pathways may serve as strong elective and graduation supportive options for students pursuing career-aligned preparation. As pathway planning advances, the leadership team will continue evaluating certifications, technical experiences, and career-connected opportunities that align both to student interests and to fields where meaningful future employment opportunities exist within the surrounding community. This phased approach ensures that INA's high school programs of study are not only aligned to state expectations, but also grounded in strong relationships, thoughtful planning, and opportunities that reflect both student goals and community realities, all grounded in the INA Way.

To ensure this works remains a priority alongside our grade level expansion, high school planning will strategically be intentionally placed into existing leadership structures such as instructional and strategic planning meetings and data review cycles. This design work is intentional to take place alongside our middle school development and not after.

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?

Innova Academy will use a structured early warning system that combines academic monitoring, attendance review, advisory check-ins, credit oversight, and MTSS-aligned intervention planning to identify students at risk of falling behind graduation benchmarks or readiness expectations before challenges become long-term barriers.

This work builds directly from INA's Rise and Thrive framework, which begins in middle school as the school's character development and student support structure. In high school, advisory will continue as an extension of that model while evolving to meet the developmental and academic needs of older students. In addition to providing a consistent space for relationship-building, accountability, and reflection, high school advisory will serve as a structured setting for goal-setting, progress monitoring, and Mission capstone support as students move through increasingly complex academic and social expectations.

Advisors will serve as a first line of support by reviewing student progress, monitoring Mission capstone benchmarks, and identifying early signs that a student may need additional intervention. Because advisory is embedded within the school schedule, students will have regular access to a trusted adult who can respond early when concerns emerge and connect them to appropriate supports.

The school counselor will play a critical role alongside advisory by overseeing graduation progress through transcript audits, course scheduling, enrollment review, credit monitoring, and analysis of student academic standing. Using the school's Student Information System (SIS), the counselor will monitor credits earned, course completion, attendance patterns, and academic performance to ensure students remain aligned to graduation expectations and pathway requirements.

Student performance indicators such as missed assignments, declining grades, attendance concerns, delayed capstone benchmarks, or course completion gaps will trigger review through the school's MTSS process. Through this structure, the student support team will work collaboratively to determine the underlying cause of concern and identify targeted interventions based on individual student needs.

Interventions may include academic support during the school day, after-school tutoring, structured pull-out support, lunch interventions, additional advisory check-ins, individualized student conferences, or coordinated counseling support. Progress check-ins will occur at consistent intervals to review student standing, establish short-term goals, and determine whether interventions are producing improvement.

Families will remain active partners throughout the process through regular communication, progress updates, and scheduled meetings when concerns emerge. Expectations will be communicated clearly so families understand both graduation benchmarks and the support structures available to help students remain on track.

For students who have attended Innova Academy since middle school, this preventive work begins before high school through 8th grade transition planning, early academic review, and readiness conversations designed to identify support needs before students enter 9th grade. For students enrolling later, including transfer students entering high school from other schools, transcript review, enrollment conferences, and early academic analysis will guide immediate support planning when needed.

Intervention frequency and intensity will be tiered-based according to student need, allowing the school to respond proportionately while ensuring students have meaningful opportunities to recover progress before larger graduation concerns emerge. Through this integrated system of advisory, counseling, MTSS, and family partnership, Innova Academy will create continuous support structures that help all student groups sustain progress toward graduation and postsecondary readiness.

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.

Innova Academy will use a balanced assessment system that combines formative assessment, interim assessment, standards-based performance tasks, and nationally normed assessments to monitor student learning needs and academic progress throughout the school year. This system is designed to measure both academic mastery and student development while remaining closely aligned to Indiana academic standards, school performance goals, and the school's holistic school model

The school's primary interim assessments will include NWEA MAP, IXL diagnostic and skill progress data, and ILEARN Checkpoints where appropriate to monitor standards progression ahead of state accountability assessments. These assessments will provide nationally normed and standards-aligned data that help teachers identify student strengths, growth trends, and learning gaps at regular intervals during the year.

In addition to interim assessments, teachers will use ongoing formative assessments embedded within daily instruction and quests. These include exit tickets, written reflections, classroom discussion, quick checks for understanding, quizzes, student response activities, and game-based tasks that provide immediate feedback during instruction. Digital practice platforms and standards-based classroom assessments will also be used regularly to monitor skill development and instructional readiness.

Summative assessment at INA will include curriculum benchmark assessments, standards-based performance tasks, and Final Mission assessments. Curriculum benchmark assessments will occur at regular intervals within each instructional cycle to evaluate mastery of key standards before students move into more advanced content. The Final Mission serves as a core summative assessment within the school's instructional model. At the middle school level, students complete and present a Final Mission at the end of each semester, with increasing complexity across grade levels. These performance tasks require students to apply academic knowledge, communicate thinking clearly, solve problems, and demonstrate learning through authentic application.

At the high school level, the same Final Mission structure continues through a multi-year progression of increasing rigor. Students engage in a sequenced Final Mission experience across grades 9–12 that culminates in a senior-level presentation demonstrating academic readiness, pathway development, and real-world application of learning.

Rubrics are central to INA's assessment system. Standards-based rubrics aligned to academic standards and Final Mission expectations will be used across subject areas to evaluate written assignments, performance tasks, classroom discussion, game-based activities, and summative assessments. Rubrics will be developed collaboratively by teachers and instructional leadership to ensure consistency, transparency, and alignment to school expectations. Students and families will have access to rubrics in advance so expectations remain clear throughout the learning process.

Our layered assessment system aligns directly to our instructional model, performance goals, and state standards by ensuring all students are assessed not only on content mastery, but also on application, problem solving and skill development throughout the year.

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.

INA will measure and evaluate academic progress of individual students, student cohorts, special populations, and schoolwide throughout the school year using a structured cycle of assessment review, instructional analysis, and progress monitoring that examines performance at each level. This process is designed to ensure that data is used consistently to improve instruction, strengthen interventions, and monitor progress toward both academic mastery and student development.

Individual Student Level Progress Monitoring

Academic progress will be measured through multiple data points, including interim assessment results, curriculum benchmark assessments, classroom formative assessments, standards-based rubric scores, and summative performance tasks on a cyclical basis (i.e., six to eight weeks). Student performance data from tools such as NWEA, ILEARN Checkpoints, IXL, classroom assessments, and Mission-based performance tasks will be reviewed regularly to identify strengths, skill gaps, and growth trends over time. Teachers, supported by the instructional coach, will use this information to adjust instruction, group students strategically, and provide targeted academic support. Families and students will also receive regular progress updates through report cards, student led conferences, and consistent and ongoing communication.

Cohort Level Progress Monitoring

Assessment data will be reviewed by grade level, classroom, and student groups to identify patterns and trends in achievement and instructional effectiveness. This allows the leadership and instructional team to analyze and monitor how cohorts are performing against academic expectations and determine whether additional support, pacing adjustments, or targeted instructional strategies are needed across groups of students. Our review cycle will also be six to eight weeks in this domain.

Progress Monitoring for Special Populations

Progress will be monitored using both schoolwide assessment data and individualized measures aligned to student learning plans. For students with IEP's, progress toward IEP goals will be reviewed alongside academic performance data to ensure interventions remain effective. For multilingual learners, language growth and academic performance will both inform instructional decisions and intervention planning. Our review cycle will also be six to eight weeks or quarterly for exceptional learners with specific IEP goals.

Schoolwide Progress Monitoring

Leadership will conduct regular data reviews to evaluate overall student performance, subgroup progress, and trends across content areas. These reviews will include analysis of benchmark assessment results, standards mastery, student growth, attendance, and performance on project-based learning outcomes. Schoolwide findings will inform professional development priorities, instructional coaching, and school wide academic planning.

In alignment with INA's model, academic progress is measured through more than traditional assessments. We also use performance tasks, rubric based projects, and student driven demonstrations of applied learning. Mission assessments provide an additional lens into how well students are transferring academic knowledge into real world application skills. These same structures will continue into our high school model through their Final Mission project, with the addition of

transcript review, credit monitoring, and post-secondary pathway readiness analysis. This ensures students remain on track for graduation and postsecondary success.

In addition to academic measures, INA's report card structure reflects both academic performance and Commitment to Learning, allowing the school to monitor not only content mastery, but also student habits connected to the school's core values of Integrity, Inclusion, and Innovation. This dual focus supports the school's belief that academic success and character development must be measured together in order to fully evaluate student progress.

- 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 goals below were selected to reflect both the academic expectations required for strong school performance and the broader student outcomes central to INA's mission. Our academic targets intentionally combine state accountability expectations with nationally normed measures to ensure our students are progressing competitively during their learning journey. Mission specific goals related to self efficacy, academic mindset, and school culture ensure the school remains accountable for the character development and student experience outcomes that define our holistic model.

INA's academic targets are intentionally grounded in the reality of the community we serve. According to Indiana's Graduate Preparedness data, Muncie students currently score at 24.7% proficiency in Math and 23.4% proficiency in ELA on recent ILEARN assessments. These figures represent the baseline from which many of INA's incoming students will begin their journey. INA's goals are set in direct response to this context, ambitious enough to signal genuine transformation, and attainable through the intentional structures, relationships, and supports that define the INA Way. High school readiness and SAT goals reflect INA's long-term commitment to postsecondary preparation

Academic Achievement and Growth Goals by cohort

A new 6th grade cohort enrolls each year beginning at the Year 1 baseline. As cohorts advance through grade levels, targets increase to reflect cumulative years within the INA model.

Grade Level	Year1 Cohort 1	Year 2 Cohort 2	Year 3 Cohort 3	Year 4 Cohort 4	Year 5 Cohort 5
Color Key:	Cohort 1 Founding	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Cohort 4	Cohort 5
Grade 6 Year 1 in INA model	ILEARN Math: 65% proficient ILEARN ELA: 65% proficient NWEA MAP: 65% meet growth target	ILEARN Math: 65% proficient ILEARN ELA: 65% proficient NWEA MAP: 65% meet growth target	ILEARN Math: 65% proficient ILEARN ELA: 65% proficient NWEA MAP: 65% meet growth target	ILEARN Math: 65% proficient ILEARN ELA: 65% proficient NWEA MAP: 65% meet growth target	ILEARN Math: 65% proficient ILEARN ELA: 65% proficient NWEA MAP: 65% meet growth target
Grade 7 Year 2 in INA model	<i>Not yet enrolled</i>	ILEARN Math: 70% proficient ILEARN ELA: 70% proficient NWEA MAP: 70% meet growth target	ILEARN Math: 70% proficient ILEARN ELA: 70% proficient NWEA MAP: 70% meet growth target	ILEARN Math: 70% proficient ILEARN ELA: 70% proficient NWEA MAP: 70% meet growth target	ILEARN Math: 70% proficient ILEARN ELA: 70% proficient NWEA MAP: 70% meet growth target
Grade 8 Year 3 in INA model	<i>Not yet enrolled</i>	<i>Not yet enrolled</i>	ILEARN Math: 75% proficient ILEARN ELA: 75% proficient NWEA MAP: 75% meet growth target	ILEARN Math: 75% proficient ILEARN ELA: 75% proficient NWEA MAP: 75% meet growth target	ILEARN Math: 75% proficient ILEARN ELA: 75% proficient NWEA MAP: 75% meet growth target
Grade 9 Year 4 in INA model	<i>Not yet enrolled</i>	<i>Not yet enrolled</i>	<i>Not yet enrolled</i>	PSAT: 65% meet college readiness benchmark NWEA MAP: 78% meet growth target	PSAT: 65% meet college readiness benchmark NWEA MAP: 78% meet growth target

Grade 10 Year 5 in INA model	<i>Not yet enrolled</i>	<i>Not yet enrolled</i>	<i>Not yet enrolled</i>	<i>Not yet enrolled</i>	PSAT: 70% meet college readiness benchmark NWEA MAP: 80% meet growth target
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Mission Specific Outcomes

The following schoolwide goals ensure INA remains accountable for the character development, social-emotional growth, and school culture outcomes that define the INA Way. These goals apply to all students in all grade levels in every year of operation.

Goal Area	Measure	Year 1 Target	Year 3 Target	Year 5 Target
Self-Efficacy	Student surveys and CASEL-aligned measures	75% demonstrate growth	85% demonstrate growth	90% demonstrate growth
Academic Mindset	Surveys, advisory reflections, mission evidence	75% demonstrate growth	85% demonstrate growth	90% demonstrate growth
Culture and Belonging	Annual climate survey	85% positive response	88% positive response	90% positive response
Safety	Climate survey and discipline data	90% report feeling safe	93% report feeling safe	95% report feeling safe
Suspension Reduction	Discipline records	Below 5% suspension rate	Below 3%	Below 2%

INA's first high school students will enroll in Year 4 when the founding cohort reaches 9th grade. The goals below are not about making college the singular destination for every student, they are about ensuring college is a real and accessible choice. There is a meaningful difference between a school that pushes students toward college and a school that builds the skills, confidence, and academic foundation that makes college possible if a student chooses it. INA is committed to the latter. These targets reflect our belief that every student deserves to graduate with options whether that path leads to a four-year university, a two-year college, a workforce certification, military service, or entrepreneurship. What matters is the choice is genuine and not forced by gaps in preparation that could have been addressed in earlier learning years.

The goals below readiness targets. They measure whether students have developed the mathematical reasoning, analytical reading, and communication skills that allow them to succeed beyond enrollment, in the coursework, careers, and communities they will enter after graduation. These targets are built on the foundation of academic acceleration beginning in 6th grade through INA's GBL model, advisory structures, and Rise and Thrive framework, ensuring that by the time students reach high school they are not catching up but advancing forward with purpose.

- **SAT College Readiness Floor:** By full build-out, 80% of graduating seniors will meet both College Board SAT college readiness benchmarks: a score of at least 480 in Evidence-Based Reading and Writing and 530 in Math. Meeting both benchmarks predicts a 75% probability of earning at least a C in first-semester college coursework. Nationally, fewer than 45% of SAT takers meet both benchmarks, placing INA's target well above the national average.
- **SAT Composite North Star:** By full build-out, INA's average SAT composite score will reach 1,150 or above, progressing toward the 1,204 average of students who enroll in and complete four-year college programs. This target signals that INA graduates are not simply college enrolled but are on track to persist and complete.
- **SAT Equity Goal:** By full build-out, 75% of Black and Latinx students, 70% of English Learner students, and 65% of students receiving special education services will meet both SAT college readiness benchmarks, with no subgroup average composite falling below 1,050. Explicit subgroup floors make equity non-negotiable and reflect INA's core mission of serving students most impacted by systemic educational gaps.
- **SAT Acceleration Goal:** Students who enter INA performing in the bottom quartile nationally will demonstrate SAT composite score growth at 1.5 times the expected national conditional growth rate annually. This target

signals that catching up is a planned outcome grounded in INA's GBL model, MTSS framework, and intensive advisory support structures.

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

INA will use a transparent and structured reporting system to ensure internal and external stakeholders can understand the extent to which the school is achieving its mission through its school outcomes, academic goals, and student success targets with clarity.

Internal Stakeholder Monitoring

Internal stakeholders, including school leadership, teachers, and the governing board, will review student outcome data through a regular and consistent cycle of internal reporting at strategic intervals throughout the year. School leadership and instructional staff will engage in scheduled data review cycles following each interim assessment window, benchmark assessment period, and grading cycle.

These reviews will examine:

- Student mastery of standards
- Subgroup performance
- Growth trends across grade levels
- Intervention effectiveness
- Attendance patterns
- Behavior trend
- Mission-based character outcomes.

Teachers will use classroom-level and cohort-level data to adjust instruction, plan interventions, and refine support strategies. Instructional coaching and professional development priorities will also be informed directly by these data reviews.

The governing board will receive regular academic and organizational performance reports that include schoolwide academic progress, subgroup performance, attendance, discipline trends, enrollment stability, and progress toward key student outcome goals. These reports will allow the board to monitor whether the school is delivering on both academic commitments and mission expectations.

Family and Student Communication

Families and students will receive regular updates on student progress through report cards, student-led conferences, progress reports, and ongoing communication from teachers and advisors. Our school will operate a parent portal through our student information system, where parents can check student progress in real time.

In addition to academic grades, families will receive information connected to INA's broader student development goals, including feedback related to student habits, commitment to learning, and Final Mission performance.

Student-led conferences will serve as an important opportunity for students to reflect on their own growth, present evidence of learning, and discuss both academic progress and personal development with families.

At the high school level, students and families will also receive regular updates related to credit accumulation, transcript progress, graduation readiness, and Final Mission completion benchmarks to ensure clear understanding of long-term graduation progress.

Public and External Accountability

INA will communicate school performance publicly through annual reporting processes, board meetings, required accountability submissions, and school-level performance updates shared with families and the community.

Public reporting will include:

- overall academic growth and achievement trends
- subgroup performance
- school climate outcomes
- attendance and discipline indicators

- progress toward mission-specific student outcomes and character development

Required reporting to the authorizer and state will include all accountability measures associated with academic performance, organizational health, and legal compliance. INA also intends to develop a clear annual performance summary that reflects both state accountability outcomes and the school's own internal visionary goals, including national growth benchmarks and mission-specific indicators.

INA's mission includes student growth beyond traditional academics, evidence of mission achievement will also be visible through Final Mission presentations and public demonstrations of learning. With this structure remaining consistent across grade spans, students build familiarity with the process over time while developing increasing levels of independence, depth of analysis, and real-world application. These experiences allow stakeholders to see how students apply academic knowledge, solve problems, collaborate, communicate, and demonstrate growth through the school's Game-Based Learning model.

Together, these structures ensure that success at INA is visible, measurable, and creates a clear visual across multiple audiences while maintaining accountability to both academic outcomes and the broader mission of preparing students for long-term success.

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.

Innova Academy will respond to student academic performance concerns through a structured corrective action process that operates at the schoolwide, classroom, and individual student levels. Corrective action will be driven by regular review of academic data, interim assessment results, growth measures, classroom performance, and subgroup trends to ensure that concerns are identified early and addressed before they become long-term barriers to student success.

Schoolwide Academic Performance and Progress Monitoring

If schoolwide academic performance falls short of established goals, leadership will conduct a formal review of assessment data, subgroup trends, curriculum implementation, instructional practices, and intervention effectiveness to determine root causes of underperformance.

This review will examine:

- standards showing low mastery across grade levels
- subgroup performance gaps
- curriculum pacing and alignment
- intervention effectiveness
- assessment trends across content areas

Based on these findings, leadership may implement corrective actions such as:

- adjusting curriculum pacing
- strengthening instructional expectations
- increasing instructional coaching cycles
- revising assessment schedules
- targeting professional development toward specific content or instructional needs

Schoolwide findings will also inform leadership reporting to the governing board and guide continuous improvement planning

Classroom Level Plan for Student Progress Monitoring

At the classroom level, teachers will regularly review formative assessments, benchmark data, standards-based rubric scores, and interim assessment outcomes to determine whether students are mastering required standards.

If classroom data indicates students are not progressing as expected, teachers will work with the instructional coach and leadership team to adjust instruction through reteaching, differentiated grouping, revised pacing, and strengthened formative assessment practices.

Corrective actions may include:

- targeted reteaching during the instructional cycle

- small-group instruction
- strategic use of digital practice tools such as IXL
- revised game-based learning tasks to strengthen standards alignment
- increased checks for understanding
- additional scaffolded support within quests and daily lessons

Because Game-Based Learning is central to INA’s instructional model, corrective action at the classroom level also includes ensuring that game design, mission tasks, and academic standards remain tightly aligned when student mastery gaps emerge.

Individual Student Plan for Progress Monitoring

At the individual student level, students showing signs of academic risk will be identified through INA’s early warning and MTSS process using indicators such as:

- missed assignments
- declining grades
- attendance concerns
- benchmark performance gaps
- delayed Final Mission progress
- course completion concerns

Once identified, the student support team will determine targeted interventions based on both academic performance and underlying barriers affecting progress.

This work is closely aligned with Innova Academy’s Rise and Thrive Framework, which serves as the school’s structured approach to student growth, accountability, and support. Through Rise and Thrive, intervention planning considers not only academic need, but also student habits, self-management, motivation, relationships, and barriers that may be impacting performance.

Interventions may include:

- targeted academic support during the school day
- small-group intervention
- after-school tutoring
- lunch support sessions
- structured advisory check-ins
- individualized student conferences
- counseling support when non-academic barriers are present

Advisory serves as a consistent support structure within this process by providing students regular access to a trusted adult who helps monitor progress, reinforce goals, and connect interventions to student ownership.

Subgroups and Special Populations

If data shows underperformance among student subgroups, including students with disabilities, multilingual learners, or other identified populations, corrective action will include targeted review of accommodations, intervention design, instructional access, and service delivery.

This may include:

- reviewing IEP implementation
- strengthening differentiated instruction
- adjusting language supports
- increasing collaboration between classroom teachers and specialized staff

Family Partnerships

INA values our family partnerships and aims to keep our families connected consistently and engaged frequently even before intervention is necessary. When intervention planning is required, families will be engaged throughout intervention planning through progress updates, conferences, and ongoing communication.

This includes:

- progress updates

- intervention meetings
- student conferences
- regular communication regarding next steps

INA defines student success through both academic achievement and student development, corrective action will also consider whether students are progressing in habits, mindset, and engagement that support long-term success. When needed, Final Mission benchmarks, advisory supports, and Rise and Thrive framework will be strengthened alongside academic interventions to ensure students receive comprehensive support rather than isolated academic remediation. This approach ensures underperformance leads to a timely response with targeted intervention and continuous improvement across all levels of the school.

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).

While Muncie offers a range of school options, both data and community engagement indicate critical gaps remain, particularly during the middle school years and in the transition to high school readiness. Academic outcomes reflect a persistent challenge, with a significant number of students not meeting proficiency benchmarks prior to entering high school. These trends suggest that many students are not being adequately prepared during early adolescence, a pivotal stage for both academic development and identity formation.

However, the gap is not solely academic. Through direct community engagement, families consistently identified a deeper disconnect between students and their learning experiences. Middle school is often where students begin to disengage, and current models are not consistently designed to re-engage learners during this critical period. At the same time, families expressed concern about long-term outcomes. The issue is not only whether students are successful in middle school, but whether they are prepared to enter high school on track, persist through graduation, and access meaningful postsecondary opportunities.

Additionally, access remains a barrier. While options may exist across the broader region, families shared that those options are not always realistically accessible due to transportation challenges, work schedules, and the importance of remaining connected to their community.

Taken together, these challenges are indicative of a dual gap: [1] a need for stronger engagement and support during middle school and [2] a need for a more intentional pathway into high school success and beyond. Families are not simply seeking more options, they are seeking an option that is intentionally designed around engagement, support, and accessibility within their own community. They are seeking an option with them in mind. These gaps highlight the need for a school model that re-engages students during early adolescence, strengthens academic foundations, and is both physically and relationally connected to the community it serves.

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

Innova Academy is intentionally designed as a 6–12 model to address both the immediate and long-term needs identified within the community. The school's phased approach begins with middle school, where the need for re-engagement is most urgent. Through Game-Based Learning, INA creates an environment where students are actively involved in their learning, building curiosity, confidence, and foundational academic skills during a critical developmental stage. At the same time, the model is designed to extend beyond middle school. As INA grows into a full 6–12 school, it will provide a continuous pathway that supports students from early adolescence through high school graduation and postsecondary readiness.

This approach ensures:

- Middle school is not treated as a transitional period to “get through,” but as a critical foundation for future success;
- Students build both academic skills and learner identity before entering high school;
- High school is not a separate experience, but a continuation of a coherent and intentionally designed learning model.

The Rise and Thrive Framework and Village Approach further ensure that students are supported academically, socially, and emotionally throughout this continuum, while maintaining strong connections to family and community. More importantly, INA addresses access by bringing this model directly into the community ensuring students can benefit from high-quality and engaging instruction without leaving their neighborhood. By combining immediate re-engagement with a long-term pathway to success, INA’s holistic model is designed to change not only student outcomes, but the overall educational trajectory for our future students.

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

Community demand for Innova Academy reflects strong alignment between the school’s design and the needs expressed by families and community members.

Through consistent engagement, including community conversations, local events, and relationship-building efforts, the founding team has gathered clear evidence that families are seeking an additional school option that is both located within their community and intentionally designed to re-engage students. This demand is demonstrated through both participation and direct expressions of interest.

Across two community engagement events, over 50 community members attended to learn about and provide input on the proposed school model. In addition, the founding team has collected 30 surveys of interest from families seeking to learn more about the school model and also the opportunity of enrollment options aligned to INA’s design. Early student engagement efforts further reinforce this demand. Our Spring Game-Based Learning Camp has already enrolled 25 students that will be taking place in April. We have established a target of 80 students for the Summer camp based on expressed interest from families in the community. These programs not only provide early exposure to the school’s model, but also serve as a direct pipeline for future enrollment by building relationships with prospective students and families. These figures represent early-stage demand prior to formal enrollment, and the founding team anticipates continued growth as outreach efforts expand and community awareness increases.

Families have also expressed interest in a school model that begins in middle school but also continues into high school, providing a consistent and supportive pathway through graduation. INA is not just seeking enrollment, we are seeking our future families to come alongside, build relationships and provide support along their educational journey. This sustained interest strengthens INA’s ability to both meet initial enrollment targets and retain students as the school expands.

Taken together, community participation, expressed family interest, and early student enrollment in programming indicate that Innova Academy is well-positioned to meet its Year 1 enrollment targets and sustain enrollment growth over time. INA’s approach to enrollment is grounded in authentic community relationships, early engagement, and a model that directly reflects what families have asked for, creating both immediate interest and what we hope will be long-term commitment (6th grade through high school graduation) to our learning community on the part of our families.

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.

Innova Academy's organizational structure is intentionally designed to support strong governance, clear accountability, and efficient decision making during the school's launch and early growth years. The structure reflects the needs of a start up school by maintaining a lean leadership model while ensuring both governance and day-to-day operations are clearly defined.

The governing board currently consists of 5 voting members, and 1 non voting member, representing a range of professional backgrounds and expertise that support the school's mission and long term sustainability. Each board member brings diverse experience across leadership, education, finance, community engagement, and organizational development. The INA Board's primary responsibility is to ensure that Innova Academy fulfills its obligations to students, families, and the broader community through effective oversight, strategic decision-making, and policy governance. Consistent with Innova Academy's village-centered model, the Board is intentionally designed to include designated opportunities for student, family, and community representation as it continues to grow. This ensures that governance remains inclusive, equitable, and responsive to stakeholder perspectives. These voices strengthen shared leadership and help ensure decisions remain informed by those most directly connected to the school community.

Research confirms diverse school boards significantly strengthen school governance and sustainability. The INA Board embraces diversity across multiple domains, including age, experience, gender, race, and professional expertise. This diverse range of perspectives strengthens decision-making, strategic planning, and long-term success.

The school's day-to-day operations will be led by the Founder and School Leader, who will be responsible for instructional leadership, staff supervision, school culture, family engagement, and operational execution. Instructional staff, student support staff, and operational personnel will report directly to the School Leader, creating a clear chain of responsibility and efficient communication during the school's initial years.

This structure is intentionally designed to support a strong start up model by keeping leadership lines clear, allowing for responsive decision making, and aligning staffing with our projected enrollment growth. As enrollment increases, our structure will expand to include additional leadership capacity as needed to support academics, student support, and operations.

The overall rationale for this structure is grounded in research and best practice for early-stage charter school development, which emphasizes clear separation between governance and management, lean staffing during initial enrollment years, and strong board oversight of academic, financial, and organizational performance.

To strengthen oversight and support effective governance, the Board is continuing to formalize structures that allow members to provide focused leadership in key operational areas as the school moves toward launch.

This organizational design directly supports INA's governance plan by ensuring the Board remains focused on strategic oversight, accountability, and long-term sustainability, while school leadership is responsible for implementation of the educational program and daily school operations.

Compliance

Pursuant to Indiana Charter School Law and relevant Indiana statutes, the governing board of Innova Academy will oversee and ensure that school complies with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and all relevant Indiana statutes to provide an accurate accounting of the school's finances. In order to mitigate waste, fraud, and abuse, Innova Academy will:

- Confirm adequate segregation of duties between staff and outsourced consultants (should Innova Academy outsource its financial management);
- Establish and follow financial policies and procedures (FPP);
- Regularly educate staff on the school's FPP manual, and revise when needed;
- Create "cheat sheet" flowcharts to summarize major processes from the FPP manual;
- Secure financial and human resource records in double-locked cabinets; and
- Store funds to be deposited, stock of blank checks, and credit/debit cards when not being used in a locked safe.

The Board shall conduct a comprehensive financial audit at least once a year via an external firm that specializes in this area, in accordance with the state of Indiana and national nonprofit law.

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

The board of INA is intentionally organized to provide strategic oversight and domain specific leadership that will allow for long term accountability leading to the schools academic, financial and organizational success. This structure reflects the needs of a start up school by ensuring key competencies are represented while building clear systems for oversight and strategic decision making.

Our current board reflects key competencies across academic excellence, governance, finance and operations, and engagement, ensuring strong leadership for both launch and long-term sustainability. We intentionally selected members with expertise in the domains of Academic Excellence, Finance and Operations, Governance, and Engagement to strategically position the school for success. We intentionally identified overlapping strengths to provide multiple layers of oversight and perspective in each domain. The board's collective expertise ensures clear domain ownership across academics, governance, finance, operations, and community engagement positioning the school for long-term excellence.

Meetings

The Board currently meets quarterly, with additional committee (bi-monthly) meetings as needed to address specific operational areas. As the Board has transitioned from an advisory structure to a full governing body, we are also intentionally increasing the frequency of our meetings to strengthen oversight and responsiveness. During Year 0, the Board will move from quarterly meetings to approximately eight meetings annually, and will transition to monthly meetings in the first year of school operations. This increased cadence ensures consistency, supports the evolving needs of the school during each phase of opening, and allows for timely decision-making. At each meeting, the School Leader will provide a comprehensive report on the school's academic performance, school culture, and operational and financial health.

Composition

The Board of INA will consist of no more than 10 members and no fewer than 5 members. In order to ensure community input, student representation, and equity of voice, the Board will reserve two positions for the parent/guardian of a child attending Innova and a committed Muncie community member. The Board will also reserve one non-voting slot for a current Innova student or recent alumni (less than 5 years).

Board Rotation

One-third of all initial Board members will be assigned terms of two years with renewal for one year up to two times, for a total of four years. One-third of all initial Board members will be assigned terms of three years with renewal for one year up to two times, for a total of five years. Moving forward, all other Board members will be elected for a three year term that can be renewed for two years up to two times, for a total of seven years.

To strengthen oversight, the Board is continuing to formalize committee structures aligned to the school's key operational priorities, including finance, governance, facilities, and academic oversight. This committee-based structure allows board members to engage more deeply in critical planning areas while maintaining clear board-level accountability.

Currently INA's board committees consist of

- Academic Committee - responsible for monitoring academic planning, instructional priorities, and student outcomes aligned to the school's educational model
- Facilities committee - responsible for guiding facility planning, site exploration, and long-term space strategy

We will begin implementing our Financing committee during our 4th quarter board training rounds.

- Finance Committee - budget oversight, financial monitoring, and long-term sustainability planning.

Committees will serve as working bodies that review information, monitor progress, and develop recommendations within their assigned focus areas, while major decisions remain under the authority of the full Board. This structure allows the Board to manage complex start-up priorities efficiently while maintaining strategic oversight across academics, finance, facilities, governance, and long-term sustainability. The full Board will continue to meet regularly to review committee recommendations, monitor organizational progress, and make decisions aligned to Innova Academy's mission, charter commitments, and growth plan.

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.

Since its founding in 2023, Innova Academy has intentionally operated within a structured planning and development phase to build the governance, financial, instructional, and community foundations necessary to successfully launch a high-quality public charter school in Fall 2027. The founding team has prioritized early development of the school's core components, including governance, facilities planning, instructional design, financial sustainability, and community engagement to ensure readiness for authorization and long-term organizational stability. The following milestones represent the progress achieved to date and the critical milestones that remain to ensure a successful launch.

Planning Phase Accomplishments (2023–2026)

Since 2023 when our Board was founded, Innova Academy has operated in a deliberate planning and development phase to build the governance, financial, instructional, and community foundations necessary for a strong Fall 2027 launch as a 6–12 school, beginning with 6th grade.

Board Development and Governance Readiness

- Established a formal governing board with defined officer roles and domain ownership across academics, governance, finance, operations, and community engagement.
- Conducted regular quarterly board meetings to practice formal governance structures.
- Initiated transition from advisory to full governing board in preparation for authorization.
- Clarified committee priorities including finance, facilities, governance compliance, and academic oversight.
- Began recruitment of additional board members with strong Muncie context to strengthen long-term sustainability.

- Engaged in ongoing governance and leadership training to build capacity for effective oversight and regulatory compliance.
- Designated board-level leadership for facilities planning and financial stewardship.

Hiring Strategy and Instructional Capacity

- Developed an enrollment-aligned staffing model that scales responsibly with projected growth.
- Established Year 1 staffing plan aligned to 80 students with a 20:1 student-to-teacher ratio and special education support.
- Defined staff profile aligned to the school's instructional model and core values of innovation, inclusion, and integrity.
- Designed a pre-opening professional development plan to ensure readiness for Game-Based Learning implementation.
- Established instructional coaching and performance management structures to support academic excellence.
- Developed curriculum planning systems aligned to Indiana Academic Standards.

Continued Community Engagement and Research

- Hosted structured community engagement meetings in the Industry and Whitley neighborhoods.
- Engaged local leaders, church partners, and grassroots organizations to inform model refinement.
- Established a Parent Engagement Committee to ensure ongoing family voice in school development.
- Participated in community events to build authentic relationships and visibility.
- Designed Spring and Summer Game-Based Learning camps to pilot programming and gather student and family feedback.
- Developed Community Game Nights to support enrollment strategy and continuous improvement.
- Incorporated community insights regarding transportation, structure, and individualized support into model design.

Facilities Planning and Acquisition

- Identified board-level leadership responsible for facilities oversight.
- Initiated formation of a facilities-focused committee to guide site selection and compliance.
- Defined space requirements aligned to phased grade expansion and enrollment projections.
- Integrated facilities planning into long-term financial modeling.
- Engaged operational and financial partners to support sustainable facilities acquisition.
- Developed contingency planning structures to protect launch timeline and ensure operational continuity.
- Identified one viable facility with deep community roots.

Financial Planning and Operational Execution

- Established an enrollment-driven financial model with clearly identified cost drivers.
- Built a five-year growth projection aligned to phased expansion.
- Secured New Schools funding and a fellowship for our Founder and School Leader.
- Engaged 4th Sector Solutions to strengthen financial and operational readiness.
- Initiated compliance planning for charter authorization and regulatory alignment.
- Structured refinement plan for post-authorization operational execution.

The following pre-opening milestones represent the final phase of execution required to ensure full operational readiness and high-quality implementation at launch.

Authorization and Regulatory Readiness

- Secure charter authorization approval.
- Finalize all state and regulatory compliance requirements.
- Implement student information and data systems aligned to Indiana reporting standards.
- Complete comprehensive policy and procedure manuals, including enrollment, discipline, and special education frameworks.

Governance Capacity and Board Development

- Complete transition to a fully functioning governing board with formally adopted committee structures.
- Recruit and onboard additional board members to strengthen local Muncie representation and long-term sustainability.
- Finalize board training in academic oversight, financial stewardship, regulatory compliance, and charter

accountability.

- Establish formal performance monitoring systems to ensure clear oversight of academic, financial, and organizational outcomes prior to Year 1.

Facilities Planning and Operational Readiness

- Identify and secure a facility aligned to Year 1 enrollment and long-term phased expansion.
- Finalize lease or purchase agreements with financial sustainability in mind.
- Complete all required renovations to ensure safety, accessibility, and compliance.
- Obtain occupancy permits and required inspections prior to opening.
- Equip classrooms and shared spaces with instructional technology and mission-aligned learning resources.

Enrollment Execution and Family Partnership

- Execute enrollment strategy to meet the Year 1 target of 80 sixth-grade students.
- Continue Spring and Summer camps to refine programming and strengthen enrollment pipeline.
- Host structured family onboarding sessions and orientation events.
- Finalize transportation coordination and family communication systems.
- Establish clear retention strategies centered on relationship-building, advisory structures, and proactive family engagement.

Financial Sustainability and Fundraising

- Secure pre-opening start-up capital aligned to launch timeline.
- Finalize multi-year financial projections aligned to phased enrollment growth.
- Confirm long-term sustainability assumptions based on enrollment stability and high retention.

Talent Acquisition and Instructional Readiness

- Recruit and hire founding instructional and operational staff aligned to the school's mission and instructional model.
- Conduct intensive pre-opening professional development focused on Game-Based Learning, Rise and Thrive implementation, restorative practices, and standards-aligned assessment systems.
- Finalize employee handbook, evaluation frameworks, and performance management systems.
- Implement structured onboarding processes that reinforce expectations, culture, and instructional coherence.

Academic and Organizational Systems

- Finalize Year 1 curriculum scope and sequence aligned to Indiana Academic Standards.
- Establish assessment calendar and structured data review cycles to monitor student progress.
- Fully operationalize multi-tiered systems of support embedded within the Rise and Thrive framework.
- Finalize financial systems including payroll, accounting, internal controls, and vendor contracts.
- Secure required insurance coverage and operational service agreements.

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.

Innova Academy will implement a marketing, outreach, and recruitment strategy designed to build strong community awareness, establish authentic relationships with families, and ensure that the school meets and sustains its enrollment targets. Recruitment efforts will focus on the Whitely neighborhood of Muncie while remaining open to students across the surrounding community. The school's strategy prioritizes direct engagement with families, community-based programming, and mission-aligned marketing that introduces families to the school's Game-Based Learning model prior to enrollment.

Pre-Opening

During the pre-opening year, Innova Academy will focus on building awareness of the school and creating meaningful opportunities for families to experience the school's instructional model firsthand.

Game-Based Learning Camps

A key component of this strategy includes the launch of Game-Based Learning Camps during the spring and summer prior to opening. These camps will serve as both pilot programming and recruitment opportunities. Students will participate in hands-on learning experiences that reflect the school's instructional model while families gain direct exposure to the school's approach to learning, culture, and student support.

The camps will:

- Introduce students to the Game-Based Learning model used at Innova Academy;
- Provide families with opportunities to meet school leadership and learn about the program;
- Build an early pipeline of prospective students and families;
- Gather feedback that informs final program development.

Community Game Nights

In addition to camps, Innova Academy will host Community Game Nights and family engagement events that create informal opportunities for families to learn about the school, ask questions, and build relationships with staff and board members. These early engagement opportunities allow families to experience the school's culture and approach before making an enrollment decision, strengthening both recruitment and future student retention.

Once Operational

Once operational, Innova Academy will continue to prioritize relationship-based recruitment and community engagement to sustain enrollment and maintain a strong student pipeline for future grade levels.

The school will continue hosting:

- Annual Summer Game-Based Learning Camps;
- Community Game Nights and family engagement events;
- Open houses and family information sessions for prospective students;
- Community-hosted events throughout the school year.

These events allow families to experience the school's learning environment while creating opportunities for current students and families to serve as ambassadors for the school. In addition, the school will implement a family referral strategy, recognizing that strong family satisfaction and word of mouth recommendations are among the most effective enrollment drivers for public charter schools.

Recruitment efforts will also include ongoing communication with local community partners and organizations that serve youth and families to ensure that families are aware of the educational opportunities available at Innova Academy.

Marketing Strategy

Innova Academy will implement a targeted marketing strategy designed to reach families throughout Muncie while prioritizing outreach through the GBL camps and Community Game Nights.

The marketing strategy will include:

- Development of a school website that clearly communicates the mission, instructional model, and enrollment process
Social media outreach to share school updates, events, and student learning experiences
- Distribution of informational materials including flyers, brochures, and digital content throughout community gathering spaces such as libraries, churches, and neighborhood centers
- Participation in community events to build visibility and awareness of the school
Outreach through community partners including local organizations, churches, and neighborhood groups
- Family information sessions designed to explain the Game-Based Learning model and enrollment process

The founding team has already begun to build relationships with local leaders and community organizations, which will continue to serve as a key channel for sharing information about the school and connecting with prospective families.

Monitoring

The school leadership team and governing board will monitor enrollment progress throughout the recruitment cycle using clearly defined benchmarks. Outreach strategies will be adjusted as needed to ensure the school meets its Year 1 enrollment target of 80 sixth-grade students and continues to grow enrollment as additional grade levels are added.

INA's recruitment and outreach efforts are grounded in the school's belief in a village-centered approach to education. We recognize strong schools are built through authentic relationships and meaningful collaboration with the communities they serve. Our strategy prioritizes direct engagement with families, community leaders, and local organizations because we believe sustainable enrollment and student success are achieved when schools are developed alongside the community, not simply introduced to it. By creating opportunities for families to experience our model, share feedback, and participate in the development of the school, Innova Academy is intentionally building

a network of support that reflects the collective investment of the Muncie community. This village-centered approach ensures that recruitment efforts are not only about meeting enrollment targets, but also about establishing the strong partnerships necessary to support students and families once the school is operational.

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

At Innova Academy we value continuous feedback and improvement. We will consistently implement systems and procedures to receive valuable feedback from our students, families, staff, and community members. This feedback will be used to inform school improvement, strengthen relationships, and support student success.

These opportunities will include but are not limited to:

- A **Family Engagement Committee** that meets regularly with school leadership;
- **Annual student, staff, family and community surveys** focused on school culture and climate, communication, student support, and school operations feedback;
- **Family conferences and advisory structures** that support ongoing communication between families and teachers;
- **Student advisory and leadership opportunities** that provide feedback on school culture and learning experiences connected to school events and programming;
- **Regular professional collaboration meetings among staff** focused on instruction, staff culture, and student support;
- **Leadership team discussions** that incorporate teacher perspectives into decision-making.

Community Engagement

Innova Academy will maintain strong partnerships with the Muncie community and will intentionally gather input from community members to inform school improvement and strengthen local collaboration. The school will use several strategies to ensure community voices are regularly included in planning and decision-making, including:

- Community listening sessions hosted throughout the year to gather feedback from residents, community leaders, and local organizations.
- Partnership meetings with local organizations, churches, and youth-serving agencies to discuss student needs and opportunities for collaboration.
- Community advisory conversations that invite neighborhood stakeholders to provide feedback on school initiatives and programming.
- Participation in neighborhood and citywide community events to maintain visibility and gather informal feedback from families and residents.
- Post-event feedback opportunities following camps, game nights, and other community programs to gather insights from participating families and community members.

These engagement strategies ensure that Innova Academy remains responsive to the needs, priorities, and insights of the community it serves while strengthening the network of support available to students and families.

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.

Innova Academy is currently in the early stages of its facilities acquisition process as the school awaits charter authorization. The founding team and governing board have prioritized a facilities strategy to ensure that any site selected supports the school's instructional model, projected enrollment growth, and long-term financial sustainability.

Facility Needs and Educational Program Alignment

The facility must support Innova Academy's instructional model and community centered culture. Key facility priorities include:

- Flexible instructional spaces that support collaborative and project-based learning aligned with the school's Game-Based Learning model;
- Classroom spaces sufficient to support Year 1 enrollment while allowing for future grade-level expansion;
- Common gathering areas that support community-building, advisory meetings, and school-wide events;

- Space for small group instruction and student support services, including special education and intervention support;
- Technology infrastructure to support digital learning components of the instructional model.

Based on projected enrollment, the school anticipates a modestly sized facility appropriate for approximately 80 students in Year 1, with the ability to expand or transition to a larger facility as enrollment grows in future years.

Facilities Strategy

The INA leadership team and governing board understands facilities acquisition is an ongoing cycle and not a single decision process. The governing board views facilities planning as a strategic process designed to secure a space that protects the school’s mission while allowing for sustainable growth. The board has begun implementing a phased facilities strategy that includes:

- Establishing a Facilities Committee to lead site identification and planning efforts;
- Engaging in board-level facilities training to build capacity for responsible decision-making related to facilities acquisition and financing;
- Defining instructional and operational space requirements aligned with the educational program;
- Modeling 2-year and 5-year enrollment growth scenarios to guide facility size and long-term planning;
- Establishing financial parameters to ensure facility costs remain sustainable within the school’s operating budget.

Current Status of INA’s Facilities Search

Innova Academy has begun preliminary exploration of potential facility opportunities within the Muncie community. Initial conversations have taken place with several community organizations regarding the possible use of existing community spaces during the school’s early years of operation. These conversations are being explored as potential short-term solutions that would allow the school to launch in a space within the anticipated community while continuing to evaluate long-term facility options as enrollment grows.

Over the coming months, the Facilities Committee will continue advancing the search process by:

- Engaging a commercial broker or real estate advisor to support the property search;
- Exploring both lease and purchase opportunities within the Muncie area;
- Conducting preliminary site visits and feasibility reviews;
- Assessing potential renovation or build-out needs;
- Refining financial models to evaluate the sustainability of potential options.

The governing board will review potential facility options and make final decisions once the school has identified a site that aligns with the school’s instructional needs, projected enrollment growth, and long-term financial sustainability. Through this deliberate and phased approach, Innova Academy is working to ensure that its facility not only supports the successful launch of the school but also provides a stable foundation for long-term growth and service to the Muncie community.

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

Innova Academy has developed a contingency strategy to ensure that facility-related delays do not prevent the school from opening as planned. The governing board recognizes that facility acquisition and potential construction timelines can present challenges for new schools, and therefore the school is pursuing a phased and flexible approach to facilities planning.

As part of the facilities exploration process, the founding team has begun preliminary conversations with several community organizations regarding the potential use of existing community spaces during the school’s early years of operation. These locations may include spaces within community centers, churches, or other educational facilities that could support the school’s initial enrollment while long term facility plans are finalized.

Because INA will open with a slow growth model only serving 80 6th grade students during initial enrollment, the school has flexibility to launch within a smaller footprint if necessary. This phased enrollment model allows the school to operate effectively within a temporary or shared facility during its initial years while continuing to pursue a permanent long term site.

In addition, the governing board has established a Facilities Committee responsible for closely monitoring the facilities search timeline, reviewing potential risks, and adjusting strategies as needed. The committee will work with external advisors, including a real estate broker and financial partners, to identify viable options and ensure that the school maintains multiple facility pathways throughout the planning process.

If construction or renovation timelines for a selected facility are delayed, INA will prioritize securing a short-term lease or shared community space that meets health, safety, and instructional requirements so that the school can open on schedule. This approach ensures that students can begin learning without disruption while permanent facility plans are completed.

Through this flexible and proactive planning process, INA is working to ensure that facility-related challenges do not delay the successful launch of the school.

6. Describe the proposed school's transportation plan

Innova Academy recognizes that transportation is an important factor in ensuring equitable access for students and families. The Muncie community has consistently identified transportation as a key desire for a school in their neighborhood.

At this stage of planning, the school has been actively exploring partnership-based transportation solutions that could expand access for families while remaining financially sustainable during the school's early years of operation. The founding team has begun conversations with a potential local transportation partner regarding options for student transportation support and is reviewing what a feasible service model could look like for families if implemented.

As part of this exploration, the school is engaged in early planning around a potential partnership that could offer coordinated transportation support for families, helping reduce access barriers while allowing the school to maintain a financially responsible Year 1 operating model. These discussions also include reviewing preliminary cost estimates and service considerations to better understand what level of transportation support may be feasible as the school finalizes its pre-opening operational plans.

Final transportation decisions will be made during the pre-opening year based on enrollment patterns, family need, operational feasibility, and cost sustainability. As those decisions are finalized, transportation communication will be clearly shared with families during enrollment and onboarding.

In addition to exploring transportation partnerships, INA's facility selection process includes consideration of accessibility, neighborhood proximity, and ease of family access in order to minimize transportation barriers wherever possible. Through this approach, INA is working to respond thoughtfully to community needs while ensuring that transportation planning remains realistic, sustainable, and aligned to the school's long-term operational capacity.

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.

Board members are expected to act with honesty and integrity, prioritizing the school's mission above any personal or professional interests. Every action and decision is guided by Innova's commitment to ethical governance, transparency, and accountability, ensuring that decisions are made objectively and in the best interest of the school and community. To safeguard impartiality, board members at Innova are required to avoid any conflicts of interest,

whether real or perceived. A conflict of interest may arise if a board member's personal, financial, or professional interests could compromise, or appear to compromise, their objective judgment.

When a board member identifies a potential conflict, they must disclose it fully and promptly to the board chair and recuse themselves from relevant discussions or votes. This recusal is recorded in the meeting minutes to maintain transparency and integrity in our decision-making processes. Any failure to disclose a conflict may result in disciplinary measures, as we are committed to holding each board member accountable to our standards.

All board members complete a conflict of interest disclosure form annually, listing any affiliations, financial interests, or relationships that could present a conflict. Throughout the year, they must report any new conflicts that may arise. When a disclosed conflict is relevant to a particular decision or discussion, board members are required to recuse themselves to ensure impartiality, with the recusal noted in the board minutes for transparency.

INA board members have access to sensitive information about the school, such as proprietary plans, financial data, and records relating to students and staff. As guardians of this information, board members must maintain confidentiality, upholding the privacy of all stakeholders by not discussing or sharing sensitive information outside of their official responsibilities. Each member signs a confidentiality agreement upon joining the board and reaffirms this annually. Any breach of confidentiality could result in disciplinary actions, including potential removal from the board, to preserve trust and the security of operations.

INA values diverse perspectives and strives to approach all issues impartially and with fairness, prioritizing the well-being of students, families, and staff in every decision. By fostering a culture of collaboration and inclusivity, we ensure that each member has the opportunity to contribute insights and that decisions are made with careful consideration of all perspectives. To promote transparency, the rationale behind board decisions is to be documented in meeting minutes.

To reinforce the importance of ethical conduct, violations of these standards carry clear consequences. Depending on the nature and severity of an infraction, the board may issue a formal warning or reprimand. In cases of significant or repeated violations, the board holds the authority to vote for a member's removal, a decision that requires a two-thirds majority vote to uphold the integrity of the board.

To keep ethical standards at the forefront, the board of INA conducts an annual review and training session. This training ensures that all board members remain well-versed in the standards governing conflicts of interest, confidentiality, and impartiality, and it provides an opportunity to discuss real-world scenarios, reinforcing the practical application of these ethical standards.

INA's commitment to these ethical standards and procedures creates a foundation for trustworthy, transparent, and accountable governance. By adhering to these principles, the board effectively serves the school community, ensuring that our values guide every decision and action. This integrity strengthens our school's mission and maintains the trust and respect of all who support our school.

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.

See Attachment

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.

Innova Academy is committed to upholding its mission and core design elements, Game-Based Learning, the Rise and Thrive Framework, and the Village Approach, even in the event of revenue shortfalls or unanticipated expenses. The contingency approach is proactive and data-driven, designed to protect student learning and well-being while maintaining compliance and financial stability.

INA will maintain a Board-approved annual budget and a rolling 12-month cash flow forecast, reviewed at least monthly by school leadership and the Board finance committee. INA will also use Board-approved early-warning triggers (reviewed annually), including: (a) enrollment at or below 95% of plan; (b) projected year-end fund balance below the Board's reserve target; (c) cash-on-hand below the Board's minimum threshold (not less than two months of operating expenses); or (d) any total revenue or expense variance exceeding a policy-defined materiality level. When a trigger is met, leadership will update the forecast, identify root causes, and present corrective actions for finance committee/Board approval.

INA employs early-warning triggers and phased responses to proactively identify and address financial risks before year-end, ensuring corrective actions are taken promptly and allowing the school to maintain control over solution implementation while staying accountable for outcomes.

If INA engages a back-office financial services partner such as 4th Sector Solutions (4SS), the partner may support implementation of these financial management practices under school leadership and Board direction - for example, maintaining rolling cash flow forecasts, producing board-ready budget-to-actual reports, supporting compliance calendars and reimbursement tracking, and helping leadership model the financial impact of enrollment or cost variances. Any partner support would supplement (not replace) INA's internal oversight and Board decision-making.

When Board-approved early-warning indicators, such as actual enrollment below target, cash reserves dropping below policy thresholds, or significant unbudgeted variances, are activated, leadership initiates the appropriate corrective phase to swiftly mitigate risks and uphold financial stability.

Phased corrective actions (designed to protect mission-critical services):

Phase 1: Immediate stabilization (typically 0–30 days): freeze nonessential discretionary spending; defer noncritical purchases; tighten purchasing approvals; pause discretionary hiring and review open positions; ensure grant and categorical reimbursements are submitted on time; and renegotiate near-term vendor deliverables where feasible.

Phase 2: Structural adjustments (typically 30–90 days): right-size staffing and non-instructional supports through attrition, reassignments, and schedule optimization; scale contracted services to the minimum needed to remain compliant and operational; delay non-urgent facility upgrades; and re-forecast budgets based on updated enrollment and revenue. Throughout Phase 2, INA will prioritize classroom coverage and legally required services while reducing nonessential costs first.

Phase 3: Program redesign (if needed): if variances persist, INA will implement Board-approved reductions that preserve classroom instruction; required special education (IDEA) and Section 504 services; English learner identification and services; and student safety/health staffing and coverage. Any redesign will include a documented equity and student-impact review and a plan to ensure continuity of required services for all student groups.

INA's financial contingency plan prioritizes maintaining core instructional staffing and essential academic delivery, as well as ensuring uninterrupted compliance with IDEA, Section 504, and English learner services, including evaluations, service minutes, and progress monitoring. Student safety, health services, required assessments and reporting, and family engagement functions central to the Village Approach will remain protected. In the event of budget reductions, INA will focus on non-instructional savings and reallocations, ensuring that legally mandated services and critical student supports are preserved without compromise.

Board oversight and transparency: the Board will review and approve material budget amendments, use of reserves, and major contract changes. INA will document the rationale and student-impact analysis for significant decisions and will share material updates through public Board meetings and regular stakeholder communications.

Example: If opening enrollment is 10% below plan and the updated forecast shows the year-end reserve would fall below the Board target, INA will implement Phase 1 controls immediately and update the cash flow forecast to reflect funding timing. Leadership will then present a right-sized staffing and purchasing plan to the Board. If the variance persists into the next monitoring cycle, INA will move to Phase 2 adjustments (e.g., attrition-based staffing changes, reassignment of duties, and resizing non-instructional contracts) while preserving classroom coverage and required IDEA/504/EL and safety/health services.

INA's contingency planning balances fiscal responsibility with mission fidelity. Through monthly monitoring, defined triggers, phased corrective actions, and Board oversight, INA will respond quickly to changing conditions while preserving high-quality learning experiences and required student services.

In addition to monthly reviews, the Board will consider budget amendments as needed and will receive periodic updates on cash flow, enrollment, and key risk indicators. This governance structure keeps financial decisions documented and aligned to student outcomes and the school's mission.

INA's budget incorporates staffing and fixed costs to determine a break-even enrollment—the minimum number of students required to cover operating expenses and maintain required reserves. This break-even figure will be reviewed quarterly against actual enrollment to guide hiring, class sectioning, and purchasing decisions. INA will closely track projected cash balances for each pay period and maintain at least two months of operating expenses as a cash cushion. If projections show a temporary cash shortfall, leadership will promptly implement Phase 1 controls and adjust spending schedules to match expected revenue timing.

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.

INA will adopt Board-approved financial policies and systems prior to opening, anchored by a Fiscal Policies and Procedures Manual. Policies will cover: annual budgeting and multi-year forecasting; GAAP-aligned accounting and financial reporting; purchasing/procurement and accounts payable; payroll and benefits; cash management and banking; segregation of duties and approval authorities; asset capitalization and inventory; grants management (including Uniform Guidance, when applicable); document retention; and financial reporting to the authorizer and Board. INA will use a chart of accounts aligned to Indiana State Board of Accounts guidance to support required submissions (including Form 9 and the Annual Financial Report) and timely Board oversight.

INA anticipates contracting for selected business and finance functions (e.g., bookkeeping/accounting support, monthly close and reconciliations, monthly financial statements, budget-to-actual monitoring, cash flow forecasting support, compliance calendars/checklists, and payroll processing/coordination). One potential vendor for these back-office services is 4th Sector Solutions (4SS), a charter-sector support-services firm with experience providing finance, accounting, compliance, and operational support to schools and mission-driven organizations. If engaged, 4SS would support reliable monthly reporting, audit readiness, and disciplined execution of Board-approved financial policies—while the school retains appropriate internal approvals and governance controls.

Vendors will be selected through a documented, competitive process (e.g., scope of work, solicitation/RFP, and structured evaluation) that promotes full and open competition and, when applicable, meets federal procurement standards. Selection criteria will include: charter school experience; knowledge of Indiana reporting and compliance requirements; strength of internal controls and documented processes; staffing qualifications and service model; implementation timeline; data privacy/security practices as applicable; references and performance history; and cost/price reasonableness. Contracts will define deliverables, timelines, service-level expectations, and remedies for nonperformance (e.g., corrective action plans, contract modification, rebid, or termination).

Oversight, controls, and ongoing evaluation: The Director of Operations (or equivalent) will oversee day-to-day financial management, including purchasing within delegated authority, monthly close, and preparation of Board financial reports. The School Leader will review monthly financial statements and cash flow forecasts prior to Board reporting. The Board Treasurer/finance committee will review financials at least monthly and recommend budget amendments or corrective actions to the full Board as needed. INA will maintain segregation of duties, and no third-party contractor will have signature authority over school bank accounts. Vendor performance will be monitored against contract deliverables at least annually (and more frequently during start-up), with renewal decisions based on documented performance, compliance, and responsiveness.

These systems reflect quality authorizing expectations for clear performance standards and strong ongoing oversight and evaluation, including regular financial reporting, well-defined internal controls, and annual independent audits.

All financial policies, procedures, and contracted services will comply with applicable Indiana Department of Education requirements and, when federal funds are received, Uniform Guidance (2 CFR Part 200), including procurement and allowability standards. INA will train relevant staff and contractors and will review and update the Fiscal Policies and Procedures Manual at least annually (or as guidance changes) to ensure continuous compliance and strong financial stewardship.

If financial services are outsourced, INA will pair the vendor's technical capacity with strong internal ownership and Board oversight. The Director of Operations (or equivalent) will serve as the day-to-day relationship owner, ensuring the vendor's work aligns to the school's calendar, reporting deadlines, and Board expectations; the School Leader will review key monthly reports and cash flow forecasts before Board presentation; and the Board Treasurer/finance committee will use monthly reporting to monitor financial performance, liquidity, and compliance.

4th Sector Solutions (4SS) background (if selected): 4SS is a provider of back-office support services for charter schools and mission-driven organizations. Its service scope commonly includes accounting and financial management, budgeting and forecasting, board-ready financial reporting, compliance support, and audit preparation/coordination and (as defined by contract) HR/payroll coordination and operational support. 4SS has an established presence in Louisiana, including offices in Baton Rouge and New Orleans, and brings charter-sector experience that can be adapted to support Indiana requirements as defined in the contract scope.

Any engagement of 4SS (or any other provider) would be contingent on Board approval and execution of a written agreement that clearly defines scope, deliverables, timelines, confidentiality/data protections as applicable, and performance expectations. INA will maintain segregation of duties and clear approval authority; no third-party contractor will have signature authority over INA bank accounts. INA will evaluate vendor performance at least annually (and more frequently during start-up) and will take corrective action if deliverables, timelines, or compliance standards are not met.

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

Starting in Year 1, Innova Academy (INA) will engage an independent, Indiana-licensed Certified Public Accountant with charter school audit experience to conduct an annual audit of the school's financial and administrative operations. The audit will be conducted in accordance with Indiana State Board of Accounts requirements, applicable Indiana Department of Education guidance, and generally accepted auditing standards. The auditor will be selected through a competitive process that ensures independence, relevant qualifications, and cost reasonableness.

The audit will include planning and risk assessment, verification of required schedules, testing of internal controls, and examination of financial statements and compliance with adopted fiscal policies and applicable laws. If INA expends \$1,000,000 or more in federal awards in a fiscal year, INA will obtain a Single Audit (or program-specific audit, if permitted) in accordance with Uniform Guidance (2 CFR Part 200, Subpart F), including testing of major programs and related compliance requirements.

If INA engages a back-office financial services provider (such as 4th Sector Solutions (4SS)), the provider may support audit readiness and coordination under management's direction (e.g., preparing audit deliverables and schedules, organizing "prepared-by-client" documentation, supporting reconciliations, and responding to auditor information requests). The independent CPA firm will retain full responsibility for audit procedures, independence, and issuance of the audit opinion (and, if applicable, Single Audit reporting).

Audit results - including findings and recommendations - will be presented to the Board and its finance or audit committee. School leadership and the Board will review the audit report, prepare a management response, and develop a corrective action plan within 30 days, specifying actions, responsible parties, and deadlines. The Board finance committee will monitor progress at each meeting, providing status updates until all items are fully resolved to ensure timely remediation and ongoing compliance. Recurring or unresolved issues will be escalated to the full Board and, if warranted, may prompt an external review or corrective action by the authorizer. INA will document actions taken to prevent recurrence, including policy revisions and staff training.

Audited financial statements and related materials will be submitted to required state entities per applicable timelines and retained in accordance with Indiana public records requirements. This supports transparency to the authorizer and public, reinforcing INA's commitment to sound financial stewardship and fiscal integrity.

Additionally, INA will comply with any Indiana State Board of Accounts agreed-upon procedures, State Examiner Directives, or other mandated compliance engagements for charter schools and private examiner audits, as required by state law or regulatory guidance.

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.

N/A

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."

N/A

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.

N/A

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.

N/A

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.

N/A