

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Our Mission.** The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will utilize the arts as a medium of teaching and learning in a stimulating academic environment, and the School's diverse population of students will be self-assured, accomplished, and responsible citizens of tomorrow. Our success will be demonstrated through the academic performance of our students, the satisfaction of our parents, and vitality of our faculty and administration.

**Meeting the Needs of Our Community.** We believe that a school must be connected to the community it seeks to serve. To be truly connected to the school, the community needs to be involved in the school in as many ways as possible. In turn, the school also must seek to serve the community in as many ways as possible. To guide this process of engagement, we propose the following standards for parent and community involvement: (i) Communication between home and the school is regular, two-way and meaningful; (ii) Parenting skills are promoted and supported; (iii) Parents play an integral part in assisting student learning; (iv) Parents are welcomed at the school, and their support and assistance are sought; (v) Parents are full partners in the decisions that affect their children and families; (vi) Community resources are used to strengthen schools, families, and student learning; and (vii) The school is a center for community activities. We are reaching out to the local arts and education communities for support, and we have received the support of local arts institutions, academic institutions, and a neighborhood group, and the parents of potential students. These organizations include: Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, Indianapolis Opera, Education Program – Clowes Memorial Hall, Eiteljorg Museum, Indianapolis Museum of Art and the CORE Program at Butler University.

**Our Education Program.** The fundamental intent of the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence is to give the children of Indiana an opportunity to achieve their highest potential. Toward this end, the School aspires to an innovative educational solution: the School will infuse its entire instructional approach with imagination and inspiration through the creative arts. The arts stimulate academic achievement and kindle in each student a spirit of passionate inquiry, innovation and regard for others. With a sound educational foundation, the students from the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will emerge prepared not just for college, but also for the unpredictable demands of the future. The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will create a learning environment that emphasizes instruction in all subject areas through the creative arts. Research and community input suggests that integration of the art into all aspects of the academic program not only helps students with their understanding, but also allows them to develop meaning through non traditional methods (drama, dance, music, and visual arts). Current research indicates that the arts enhance academic achievement in other areas such as math, and also help children learn about emotions, problem solving, and relating to other people. Through their experiences, students develop their imaginations and their confidence. At the heart of this strategic engagement of the arts is the idea that learning is a dynamic and creative process, not a passive transfer of information.

Our proposed educational program inverts the traditional formula of American education that promotes students from grade to grade regardless of academic growth. We believe that demonstrated learning, rather than measured time, is the true benchmark. Some students will need more time to achieve academic benchmarks, but all students can and will be expected to learn and to meet high academic standards. We will develop an Individual Learning Plan for each student. Each plan will include the standards, objectives, content and activities that make up each student's program in a given time period. The school year will be at least 190 days, with additional time provided during school inter-sessions for those students who need additional time and support to reach their individual objectives as well as for those who want to use the school's resources to accelerate their personal academic growth.

Our school will be operated in partnership with Chancellor Beacon Academies ("CBA"), a nationally recognized education management organization that has significant experience opening and operating charter schools across the country. One of the most significant reasons we selected Chancellor Beacon Academies is their Lightpoints Curriculum. The Lightpoints Curriculum draws upon a national database of standards, the high-caliber Core Knowledge Sequence academic program, advanced instructional strategies, and cutting-edge

technology to provide schools with an effective yet flexible educational program to fit the needs of our students. The Chancellor Beacon Academies' School Design consists of a rigorous and comprehensive standards-based curriculum that emphasizes teacher-directed instruction and project-based learning supported by back office administrative operations and financial reporting services.

The proposed core curriculum consists of a rigorous course of study at all grade levels in the five subject areas deemed essential by the Goals 2000 Program of the U.S. Department of Education: history and geography, English, mathematics, science and environmental studies. The educational program is an innovative program based upon: (i) the integration of technology; (ii) teacher presented instruction and project-based learning; and (iii) a standards-based education program based upon: (a) New Standards™ for Science, Mathematics and English/Language Arts, (b) standards from the National History Standards and the Geography Education National Implementation Project for History and Geography, and (c) Standards for Technology, Career Pathways, World Language, Health and the Arts from the national database. The program also emphasizes: (i) core values such as responsibility, integrity, diligence, perseverance, fairness, kindness, self-respect, and friendship; (ii) an extended school day and school year; (iii) the thoughtful integration of technology and related tools that are used extensively by staff and students to enhance planning, instruction, projects, assessment and reporting; and (iv) active parent involvement in their child's education program and charter school governance.

**Plan for Exceeding our Educational Goals.** We are setting high educational goals for our school and our students. In addition, the school will strive to exceed our stated objectives. The following summary highlights the elements of our approach to meeting and exceeding our educational goals.

*Attracting a World Class Faculty and Staff.* We believe that the foundation to our school's success is the quality of the administration, faculty and staff that we attract to our school. We will aggressively seek to attract a high caliber, motivated and innovative team of education professionals to serve our students. We anticipate offering salaries above the regional average and will consider implementing creative merit based compensation and bonus structures to align the incentives of our educators with the needs of their students and with the educational goals of our school.

*Identifying Our Students' Needs.* Prior to the beginning of every school year, each student will receive an Individual Learning Plan that outlines the student's goals and expected minimum achievement levels for the year. A learning style inventory is used to ascertain the student's strengths and needs. Our staff will revise the plans as needed throughout the year to ensure that each student is progressing at an appropriate level. We will use these plans to help us monitor the development of each student and educator as well as the overall progress of our education program.

*Implementing Our Educational Program.* Once we have attracted our educators and identified the needs of each of our students, we will place the highest priority on successfully implementing the educational program outlined above. Through the implementation of our education program, we will ensure that each of our students is provided with appropriate opportunities to develop their character, to achieve their academic potential, and to experience personal growth.

*Student Assessment.* Assessment is an essential component of our educational plan. The school's educational format establishes standards at each grade level that provide a framework for assessment. Assessments will be constructed and integrated in accordance with the curriculum and will indicate overall achievement levels. The staff will utilize a curriculum and instructional management system for this purpose. This system will allow teachers to align national and state standards, to develop lessons and Individual Learning Plans, and to track student progress. The teachers will evaluate and provide feedback on student progress using a variety of assessment methods that value both the content and the process of academic achievement as described above. The emphasis on assessment is to ensure that students have ample opportunity to demonstrate what they know and are able to do. Teachers will provide written report cards four times a year and schedule parent conferences semi-annually. A portfolio night will be held twice a year for each class. Portfolio night will

be a time when students display their work samples for their parents and others. An end of the year parent conference will be used to develop the next year's Individual Learning Plan.

*Parent Education.* We believe that those who raise children are always their most important and most formative teachers. No one understands the needs of a student better than a parent or guardian. To be as effective as possible on behalf of their students, we consider families and concerned adults to be their greatest allies. They must take an active role in their children's intellectual, emotional, and physical development. Therefore, parental commitment, full participation and involvement in a school are expected and will be encouraged in creative and innovative ways.

**Business Plan.** We have developed a detailed budget and business plan for our school. We are working with Chancellor Beacon Academies to create a work plan that will ensure that we are able to cover the costs of developing and operating our school and to provide the school with a reserve fund for operational flexibility. Our Board is comprised of individuals that have significant training, expertise and experience in managing finances. In addition to the financial management capabilities of our Board, Chancellor Beacon Academies is providing our school with a development and operations team that includes experts with experience in handling the financial affairs of charter schools. Chancellor Beacon Academies will help us ensure that every dollar we spend is properly accounted for and that we are receiving good value for each dollar that the school spends. We have not yet entered into any formal partnership arrangements with any community organizations; however, we have been working on an informal basis with a number of local arts and education organizations for several months. It is our expectation that these informal arrangements will develop into true partnerships between now and the opening of the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence in the Fall of 2003. We are in the process of applying for available state and federal start-up grants as well as grants from several private foundations and charitable organizations. Chancellor Beacon Academies will provide additional start-up funds as a reimbursable expense in the Board's annually approved budget. In addition, we are seeking additional financial resources to cover the cost of developing and operating our school through the payment of the first portion of our per pupil funding from the state. In particular, we are working with a local developer who has expressed interest in developing a facility for the school and providing the school with a working capital loan.

**Founding Team's Capacity to Implement Our Educational Plan and Business Plan.** Our founding team is comprised of a group of civic minded community leaders. At the present time, we have seven members on our Board of Directors.

Our Board of Directors is currently comprised of

a former President of Marian College in Indianapolis,  
a Member of the City-County Council,  
a Senior Decision Scientist at Eli Lilly and Company,  
an Assistant Professor at IUPUI,  
a First Vice President of Bank One  
the General Counsel for the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute, and  
a Community Development Director for the YMCA of Greater Indianapolis

The members of the Board of Directors come from a diverse set of backgrounds and bring a wide array of skills and experience to the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence. Each member has the passion, dedication, and commitment necessary to creating and operating a world-class academic institution. The Board of Directors also has the integrity and responsibility necessary to ensure that the school will maximize the educational opportunities and achievements of the students while implementing the fiscal controls necessary to ensure that the school is a good steward for the public funds that will support the school.

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## I. OUR VISION

**The evidence of the value of arts education is all around us: In well-designed cities, in creative competitive workplaces, in schools where academic excellence is the norm, in the eloquence of our most noted leaders, and in the faces of the children who will lead us into the 21st Century.**

**- Robert L. Lynch, President & CEO - Americans For The Arts**

The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence is committed to the principles outlined in Mr. Lynch's statement:

The value of arts education can be seen everywhere,  
Art plays a pivotal role in the development of our cities, communities, and economies,  
Fine and performing arts are an integral part of educational excellence,  
Artistic expression and artistic freedom form a foundation for our nation's leadership,  
and  
A commitment to a rich arts-based education plays an important part in the development of the children, who will grow up to be the leaders of tomorrow.

### A. MISSION AND VISION

The fundamental intent of the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence is to give the children of Indiana an opportunity to achieve their highest potential. Toward this end, the School will offer students to an innovative educational solution: the School will infuse its entire instructional approach with imagination and inspiration through the creative arts. The arts stimulate academic achievement and kindle in each student a spirit of passionate inquiry, innovation and regard for others. With an enduring educational foundation, the students from the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will emerge prepared not just for college, but also for the unpredictable demands of the future. To ensure that these fundamental objectives are at the foundation upon which the School will operate, the board of directors has adopted the following mission statement:

**The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will utilize the arts as a medium of teaching and learning in a stimulating academic environment, and the School's diverse population of students will be self-assured, accomplished, and responsible citizens of tomorrow. Our success will be demonstrated through the academic performance of our students, the satisfaction of our parents, and vitality of our faculty and administration.**

### B. STATEMENT OF NEED

The Board of Directors has solicited input from the community to determine the level of demand for a school emphasizing education through the arts. Through the input of educators, parents, and both business and community leaders, the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence has refined its mission to respond to the input it has received during the past year to ensure that the School meets the need for an increase emphasis on arts education in Indianapolis public schools. Board of Directors has refined the School's approach from one with a extra concentration on the fine and performing arts to the creation of a learning environment that emphasizes instruction in all subject areas through the arts. Research suggests that integration of the art into all aspects of the academic program not only helps students with their understanding, but also allows them to develop meaning through non traditional methods (drama, dance,

music, and visual arts). Current research also indicates that the arts enhance academic achievement in other areas such as math, and also help children learn about emotions, problem solving, and relating to other people. Through their experiences, students develop their imaginations and their confidence. At the heart of this strategic engagement of the arts is the idea that learning is a dynamic and creative process, not a passive transfer of information.

Inspired by Leonard Bernstein's vision that music and the arts could be used to improve a child's academic achievement and instill a love of learning, the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence has designed an innovative and invigorating instructive model where exploration of all disciplines occurs through integration of conceptual, tactile and creative capacities. The school presents each area of the curriculum through the creative arts that address both cognitive and experiential development. Immersed in the creative arts while exploring all disciplines, each student develops lifelong skills in critical thinking, teamwork and creativity, as well as self-esteem.

The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence is partnering with local organizations to bring experts, from musicians to zoologists, into classrooms to work directly with students and teachers using hands-on, student-oriented, creative projects to teach the academic curriculum. Several local organizations that have experience working with schools to integrate art with the curriculum have expressed support for the School. These organizations include but are not limited to Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, Indianapolis Opera, Education Program – Clowes Memorial Hall, Eiteljorg Museum, Indianapolis Museum of Art and the CORE Program. For sample letters of support see **Attachment I.B.**

By teaching mathematics through music and structural design, writing through dramatic narratives and artistic criticism, social studies through musical and dance interpretation, or science through materials and sculpture, the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will foster the faculties of imagination and creativity as well as cognitive growth. Indeed, our educational approach fuses fact and feeling, inquiry and creation, art and science, school and community.

### **C. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

**“Charter schools are the most important type of school reform...”<sup>1</sup>**

Both proponents and critics of charter schools agree that charter schools have had a profound impact on the landscape of public education in the United States over the past decade. Most scholars agree that the reason charter schools are the “most important type of school reform” stems from a single word: accountability.

Accountability is at the heart of every goal and objective that Board of Directors has set for the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence. The Board has already developed and revised a robust set of academic and non-academic goals and objectives for the School. What follows is the most critical goal in the three areas requested.

#### **1. Academic Performance**

The School’s most important academic performance goal is to produce students who demonstrate high academic performance. The School will measure achievement of this objective in a number of different ways, as outlined in the discussion under the heading Assessment in Section III.C of this

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<sup>1</sup> David A. DeSchryver, STRONG CHARTER SCHOOL LAWS: A NECESSARY CONDITION FOR THE "RIPPLE EFFECT" 11 Stan. L. & Pol'y Rev. 311, 311 (2000).

Prospectus. One of the central ways the School will be able to demonstrate high academic performance to the public is through student achievement on national assessment measures, such as the Stanford 9. The Board has adopted a two pronged student performance objective to reflect the differing needs of students:

On average, students who pre-test in the fall at or above the national average in a subject area will show at least a two percentage point increase in relative performance as measured by annual post-test conducted in the spring.

On average, students who pre-test in the fall below the national average in a subject area will show at least a four percentage point increase in relative performance as measured by annual post-test conducted in the spring.

**IN THE EVENT THE SCHOOL DOES NOT MEET THIS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE, THE SCHOOL IS PREPARED TO OFFER THE STATE A MONEY BACK GUARANTEE.**

## **2. Organizational Viability**

The pillars of every organization's viability rests on the shoulders of its leadership. The Board has assembled a tremendous leadership team to develop and operate the School. Our founding team is comprised of a group of civic minded community leaders. At the present time, we have seven members on the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors is currently comprised of

a former President of Marian College in Indianapolis,  
a Member of the City-County Council,  
a Senior Decision Scientist at Eli Lilly and Company,  
an Assistant Professor at IUPUI,  
a First Vice President of Bank One  
the General Counsel for the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute, and  
a Community Development Director for the YMCA of Greater Indianapolis

The ability of the School to maintain the quality of School's leadership team will be the most critical element in the School's long-term viability and success. This objective will be measured in three ways:

The leadership team will demonstrate sound financial management of the School's operations by having a budget surplus at the end of every academic year, which will be used to develop an operating reserve and reinvest in the School and its students.

The leadership team will demonstrate its ability to sustain the quality of its membership through the high quality, strong credentials, and fervent dedication of the individuals selected to join the leadership team.

## **3. School-Specific Objective**

The most significant school specific objective is successfully utilize the arts as a medium of teaching and learning. The School's ability to infuse the arts into all aspects of the education program and to use the arts to spark students' interest in learning. The School's success in achieving this objective will be measured in three ways: (i) the quality of our staff, (ii) the satisfaction of parents, and (iii) the performance of our students.

The School will demonstrate its success in recruiting a world-class faculty, staff, and administration by tracking the institutions from which our education professionals earned

their degrees, their academic performance throughout their education, and their performance on the job and in the classroom.

The School will demonstrate parent satisfaction through the periodic surveys of the parents/guardians of our students with a goal of a 3.0 average overall score on a 4.0 scale.

The performance of our students will be measured in a number of ways, including portfolio reviews of our students' work, which will show demonstrable improvement in the skills, knowledge and capabilities of our students.

## **II. WHO WE ARE**

### **A. BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The founding Board of Directors of the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence is comprised of educators, civic and business leaders in the Indianapolis community. The Board of Directors is responsible for the oversight of the School's affairs. The following is a short summary of the skills, experience, and expertise that each member brings to the Board of Directors. Copies of the resumes, background waivers, and memoranda of the members of the Board of Directors are located at **Attachment II.A.**

#### **Robert Abene**

Dr. Abene is the former president of Marian College in Indianapolis. He has a distinguished career as an educational administrator and fundraiser. Dr. Abene received his Bachelor of Science degree from Loyola University in 1968, his Master of Arts in Communications Disorders from DePaul University in 1970, his Master of Science from the University of St. Francis in 1975, and his Doctorate in Education from Loyola University in 1992.

#### **Maggie Brents**

Ms. Brents is a distinguished member of the City-County Council from the 16<sup>th</sup> District, which is one of the areas we are exploring as a possible school location. She brings a detailed understanding of area politics and policies to our Board as well as her leadership abilities.

#### **Janas Durkee**

Ms. Durkee is the Community Development Director for the YMCA of Greater Indianapolis. She received her M.A. in Fine Arts and her B.A. in Fine Arts from Ball State University. Through her work with the YMCA, Ms. Durkee has developed significant skills in the areas of fundraising, grant writing, marketing, and community development. She has done work for the National Association of Elementary School Principals, and has served as an Art Reach Instructor at the Indianapolis Arts Center. She also has served on the Mayor's Action Council for Education.

#### **Deepa Gangwani**

Deepa Gangwani is a Senior Decision Scientist at Eli Lilly and Company. She brings financial and decision-making expertise to our Board. Ms. Gangwani has also had experiences building and managing schools internationally. She received her B.A. from Mount Holyoke College in 1996, and her M.S. from Stanford University in 1998.

## **Louise Goggans**

Louise Goggans is an Assistant Professor of Physical Education at IUPUI. She received her B.A. from Indiana University in 1956, her M.S. Ed. from Indiana University in 1969, and her D.M.Sc. from the Indiana University Medical Center in 1982. She possesses a wide range of experiences as an accomplished educator and community leader.

## **Kathryn Janeway**

Ms. Janeway is General Counsel for the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute. She received her J.D. from, and conducted coursework towards a M.A. in Public Affairs at, Indiana University. She received her B.A. in Philosophy from Purdue University. She is on the Board of Directors of the Rotary Club of Greater Indianapolis and the Indianapolis Museum of Art's Asian Art Society.

## **Maria Quintana**

As First Vice President of Bank One, Maria Quintana brings financial management expertise to our Board. Being raised in Indianapolis, Ms. Quintana and her family have been active in the community for many years and Ms. Quintana sits on many boards throughout the community,. Because of her knowledge and involvement with the Hispanic neighborhoods, she has been an active member of a forum sponsored by Marian College to dialogue with and study the challenges raised by this rapidly growing population. Ms. Quintana brings significant community knowledge and experiences to her position.

### **B. ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The Advisory Committee, which is expressly mentioned in the By-Laws of Indianapolis Academy of Excellence, Inc. is designed to assist the Board in accomplishing the goals and mission of the School. Pursuant to the provisions of the By-Laws, the Advisory Committee may be comprised of past board members, past or present government officials, public and private institutions and organizations representatives, and community leaders. In addition, the founding Board Members shall have a permanent seat on the Advisory Committee.

The current role of the Advisory Committee is to facilitate the development of strong ties to the local fine and performing arts focus community. The composition and purpose of the Advisory Committee will evolve over time to assist the Board of Directors accomplish the strategic mission and vision of the school and well as to assist in the implementation of shorter-term projects. The following is a short summary of the skills, experience, and expertise that each member brings to the Board of Advisors.

## **Boniface Harden**

Rev. Harden has been an active and involved member of the Indianapolis community for many years. As the founder and current President of Martin University, Rev. Harden has demonstrated his commitment to offering quality non-sectarian educational opportunities to low-income and minority individuals. His commitment to education was recognized by Gov. Frank O'Bannon, who recently awarded Rev. Harden with the Sagamore of the Wabash Award, which is given to individuals who have rendered distinguished service to the state.

## **Patty Harvey**

Patty Harvey has worked with Indianapolis Opera for twelve years and has served as Director of its Education Program since its inception in 1989. She is a graduate of Butler University where she majored in music history. Of the many innovations that Ms. Harvey has brought to the educational scene in Indianapolis, perhaps the most compelling is the Residency program which involves students in creating, producing, and performing their own original piece related to an opera performed in Indianapolis Opera's season. Ms. Harvey has partnered with local educators to make subjects as diverse as Shakespeare and geography come alive with opera.

## **Scott Massey**

As the President and CEO of the Indiana Humanities Council, Dr. Massey is an esteemed individual throughout the arts community of Indianapolis and the state of Indiana. Prior to beginning his current position, he had been involved in many educational and arts curriculum development projects throughout the United States. Dr. Massey is well known among those who subscribe to the Leonard Bernstein method of utilizing the arts as a medium for teaching and obtaining excellent learning outcomes. Thus, Dr. Massey brings much talent and experience to our Academy in his role as an advisor to our School Board.

## **Renee Motz**

Renee Motz is the coordinator of the CORE Program (Creative Options for Reaching Excellence). Ms. Motz has had 23 years of overall teaching experience: 17 years of which were spent teaching in public schools, 11 in Indianapolis Public Schools. Ms. Motz also has a professional background as a musician and an actress and has since worked diligently to integrate the arts in teaching. Ms. Motz is currently the Indiana trainer for the Leonard Bernstein Center's Artful Learning™ method for integrating art across the curriculum and has successfully implemented the integration of art into several curricular units at area schools.

### **III. EDUCATIONAL SERVICES PROVIDED**

#### **A. EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY**

The educational philosophy of the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence is based on three core values:

**Every student should receive an educational foundation that prepares them not just for college but also for the unpredictable demands of the future.**

**It is the role of an educational institution not only to educate but also to kindle in each child the lifelong desire to learn.**

**An educational environment must be rooted in community; the strong links with local organizations and parents provide harmonizing influences and positive role models and are essential to childhood development.**

## **1. Educational Foundation**

The following beliefs reflect these founding principles and will guide the School's design and daily activities:

### **The arts are essential for success.**

- The arts are fun for children and they help keep children interested in school and in the learning process.
- The arts require self-discipline, creativity, and confidence to succeed; these and other important habits stay with students and help them succeed in other areas of school, life, and work.
- The arts represent many ways of experiencing and understanding the world; they help develop the many types of intelligences that all people possess. The arts are a neurologically stimulating asset to learning.
- The arts remove boundaries and allow students to explore aspects of life around them in new ways. By connecting the arts with other disciplines like math, reading and writing, or science students learn about, comprehend, and value those disciplines as well.
- The arts are as much a part of a child's development and success as they are a part of a successful and enlightened society. We will foster student imagination and achievement by infusing our entire curriculum with the arts; teaching all disciplines through an innovative integration with the fine and performing arts.

### **The school will employ a strong core curriculum.**

Toward this end, we have established an alliance with Chancellor Beacon Academies to use their custom-tailored curricular program. Together with our arts-centered instruction, we believe the educational program will help our students exceed all academic expectations.

### **The Board believes that children learn best in a safe, stimulating and intimate scholastic environment.**

Therefore, our school will intentionally remain small, providing students access to our vibrant, dynamic and attentive teaching staff. In addition, we will remain open for a full day (from 7 a.m. till 6 p.m.) allowing students to engage in integrated and supervised activities that enhance learning.

### **The local community plays an integral part in a child's education.**

We foster reciprocal relationships with local organizations, professionals, and especially parents to work collectively to promote a cohesive environment with positive role-models.

**The Board understands the importance of exhibiting positive, other-centered behavior.**

By teaching ethics and moral beliefs across the curriculum, our students will learn the fundamentals of such good citizenship.

**The IAE will create an environment where students are involved and responsible for learning.**

With the arts as a medium for learning, students will be involved in many individual and group performances, exhibits, and projects both within school and throughout the community.

**The Board believes the School should also be a teacher development and training facility.**

Considering the unique use of the arts as a medium for both teaching and learning, the School would invite Colleges and Universities to utilize its facility as a student teaching site. Furthermore, the School will have a strong development program for its teachers.

**2. Instructional Methods**

To support these beliefs, the Board of Directors has selected an education program incorporating a standards based curriculum based on the Core Knowledge Sequence, teacher-presented instruction, project-based learning, and integrated technology.

**Teacher Presented Instruction**

Teacher presented instruction is used to teach phonics, reading, and basic mathematics skills. Teacher presented instruction might involve the whole class, small groups, or individuals. Using the presentation method, the teacher is the sole source of instruction and information. Students are then required to apply these skills in a project-based learning environment.

**Project-Based Learning**

Project-based learning is a pedagogical approach that places the student in the role of researcher, creator, interpreter, and presenter. In project-based classrooms, the teacher presents the problems to students, which requires them to become actively involved in the learning process. The problems are often interdisciplinary in nature and direct the students to read, write, compute, research, and present. Our teaching staff will design projects with the assistance of CBA's national curriculum consultants. Project-based learning is a microcosm of the way in which students will learn and work in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Core subjects are taught through both project-based and teacher-presented instruction as may be appropriate for the learning styles of the children. Project-based learning ensures that teachers employ strategies which require students to use higher order thinking, engage in substantive conversations on a routine basis, and explore content in depth to connect through their learning to the outside world.

**Integrated Technology**

Technology will permeate the instructional program. The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will provide access to the latest technology for staff and student use. In addition, the school will provide parents with access to these same resources when school is not in session. The School's education program makes use of technology to deliver and to manage instruction. Technology is also available for

all students to use as learning tools in the classroom. Specific examples of how the School will use technology include:

- A laptop computer for every classroom teacher.
- A high computer to student ratio.
- Technology integrated into the learning process.
- Internet resources available to all students in every grade level.
- Student use of technology as part of the project-based learning process.
- Academically proven content and software.
- Integration of technology and learning using NetSchools.

One of the most common mistakes that schools make when evaluating and implementing technology in the school and the classroom is to focus on the hardware and pay little attention to the software, content, and training that it takes to transform a computer into a learning tool. The School will focus on the part of the technology equation that has the biggest impact on the education of our students and will make our investment in technology a strong, thoughtful, and committed effort to use technology in the most effective manner to increase and improve learning. For example, with CBA's assistance, the School will offer advanced placement courses online for grades 11 and 12. Students can earn school credit and prepare for Advanced Placement™ exams by utilizing the multimedia and interactive capabilities of the Internet. AP qualified teachers will provide instruction. Students will complete assignments at their own pace, while online teachers interact with each student via e-mail or phone to answer any questions, monitor progress and evaluate assignments and tests.

### **Individual Learning Plan for Each Student**

Using the framework described above, core subjects are taught through both project-based and teacher-presented instruction as may be appropriate for the learning styles of the children. Each student receives an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) that outlines the student's goals and expected minimum achievement levels for the year. A learning style inventory is used to ascertain the student's strengths and needs. The School's staff will revise the plans as needed throughout the year. Grade levels will also be organized into families so as to promote social skills, greater flexibility for instruction and a positive school climate.

At risk students who are not reaching expected benchmarks will receive support based upon their Individual Learning Plan from tutors, computer-based instruction, mentors and other support services. Additional services may be offered to students as part of our before and after care programs or on the weekends. In addition these students will have additional learning time through the extended school day/year. A free pre-opening summer program may be offered to these students if resources permit. The Board will explore other options to provide expanded services to students who need additional support.

### **3. Demonstrated Results Supported by Research**

The hypothesis that arts-integrated learning specifically enhances academic achievement and the development of critical transferable skills has been recently supported by proven results across the nation. The following research demonstrates the impact arts-centered learning can have on student progress.

- The Champions of Change (1999), which is a collection of seven major studies that examine the role of arts education on the academic, behavioral, and thinking lives of children, reveals that "learning in and through the arts can help 'level the playing field' for youngsters from disadvantaged circumstances", "students with high levels of arts participation outperform "arts-poor" students by virtually every measure," and "**student achievement is heightened**

**in an environment with high quality arts education offerings and a school climate supportive of active and productive learning.”**

- The College Entrance Examination Board announced that in 1993 students who studied the arts and music scored significantly higher than the national average on the Scholastic Aptitude Test. Students who had participated in acting/play production, music performance and appreciation, drama appreciation, and art history, scored an average of 31 to 50 points higher for the math and verbal sections. The Board also stated that students with long-term arts study (four years or more) tend to score *significantly* higher on the SAT than those with less coursework in the arts.
- In 1995, The United States Department of Education reported in *Schools, Communities, and the Arts: A Research Compendium*, that "using arts processes to teach academic subjects results not only in improved understanding of content but it greatly improved self-regulatory behavior." Barry Oreck of Arts Connection and Susan Baum from the College of New Rochelle observed integrated arts lessons in all major subject areas in fourteen New York City elementary and secondary public school classrooms. They found that "student behavior improved strikingly in such areas as taking risks, cooperating, solving problems, taking initiative for learning, and being prepared. Content-related achievement also rose."
- Several reports reveal that the schools who produced the highest academic achievement in the United States today are spending 20 to 30% of the day on the arts, with special emphasis on music. Included are St. Augustine Bronx elementary school, which, as it was about to fail in 1984, implemented an intensive music program. Today 90% of the students are reading at or above grade level.
- Davidson School in Augusta, Georgia (grades 5-12), which began its music and arts-integrated program in 1981, is #1 academically in the country. Ashley River Elementary in Charleston, North Carolina is #2 academically, second only to a school for the academically gifted.

The School's core educational program are well regarded in research circles and have a proven track record of success in urban environments that are similar to Indianapolis. Research studies of the effects of implementation of a Core Knowledge Sequence based curriculum, like the Lightpoints™ Curriculum, have been very favorable. According to the Core Knowledge website:

**The evidence suggests that the Core Knowledge Sequence fosters both excellence and equity. The curriculum fosters excellence by improving academic performance and laying the groundwork for future learning. It fosters equity by helping to narrow the achievement gap between academic "haves" and "have nots" and lifting low-achieving students up toward the mean.**

In May 2000, the first phase of an independent study of the effects of Core Knowledge Sequence based curricula in public schools was conducted by administrators in the Oklahoma City public school system. The study examines the effects of implementing a Core Knowledge Sequence based curriculum in grades 3, 4, and 5 using the Iowa Test of Basic Skills as the performance measurement tool. The Core Knowledge students made significantly greater one-year gains in all subject areas than students using a non-Core Knowledge based curriculum.

In 1999, a three-year study of Core Knowledge schools concluded that, when a Core Knowledge Sequence based curriculum is fully implemented, students achieve higher scores on norm-referenced tests

and on criterion-referenced tests of Core Knowledge topics than students at comparison schools. The report calls these academic gains "educationally meaningful." The study also concluded that a Core Knowledge Sequence based curriculum provides students with "a broad base of knowledge and a rich vocabulary, gives students the knowledge necessary for higher learning, and creates in many students a strong desire to learn more."

A separate study, looking at student performances in Maryland Core Knowledge schools, determined that third graders in Core Knowledge schools made significantly greater three-year gains than students in control schools and students throughout the State of Maryland. The study reports that Core Knowledge students outperformed statewide averages in all six areas of the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program. The largest gains against the state average on the MSPAP were in writing (+10.5%), reading (+8.6%), and language (+7.4%). Significant gains were also reported in math (+5.9%), social studies (+5.2%), and science (+5.1%).

A research team from the Center for Social Organization of Schools, Johns Hopkins University, has established the positive effects of the Core Knowledge Sequence. Sam Stringfield, Amanda Datnow, Geoffrey Borman, and Laura Rachuba documented their findings in the report, *National Evaluation of Core Knowledge Sequence Implementation: Final Report*.<sup>2</sup>

The groups found that some of the key factors in implementation were:

- Decision making autonomy was helpful;
- Common planning time for teachers greatly aided implementation;
- State and district demands related to standards and accountability, and more specifically, to standardized tests, constrained implementation at most sites.

The researchers also found that the following were "associated with Core Knowledge implementation":

**For students, Core Knowledge:**

- Provides a broad base of knowledge and a rich vocabulary;
- Motivates students to learn and create a strong desire to learn more;
- Promotes the acquisition of knowledge necessary for higher learning.

**For the school, Core Knowledge:**

- Provides an academic focus and encourages consistency in instruction;
- Provides a plan for coherent, sequenced learning from grade to grade;
- Promotes a community of learners--adults and children;
- Becomes an effective tool for lesson planning and communication among teachers and with parents;
- Guides thoughtful purchases of school resources.

Beyond these, the study found unexpected benefits:

- Core Knowledge creates coordination in the curriculum.
- Implementing Core Knowledge improves the professional lives of teachers. "Core Knowledge was viewed very favorably by teachers and seen as an enhancement to their lives. Overwhelmingly, teachers enthusiastically

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<sup>2</sup> This report can be found at <http://www.coreknowledge.org>.

encouraged their teacher friends to implement Core Knowledge. This is a very important finding."

Implementing Core Knowledge led to increased teacher collaboration. Such "genuine collaborative work among teachers that has a focus on the curriculum and instruction is all too rare in education."

Core Knowledge enriched students' classroom experience. Teachers "reported that it was not just certain students who were excited by Core, but all students . . . The benefits are great for teaching those children who would normally not be exposed to such subjects at home."

Students built on what they learned previously in Core Knowledge. "Teachers find that in fact students make connections to Core topics they learned in previous grades. Students make lasting academic connections because of the integration of the curriculum and (its) spiraling structure."

Core Knowledge increases students' interest in reading. Teachers report "students are learning to read bigger words sooner. There's an interest to read and to learn." At a number of schools, "educators cited the fact that students are more interested in reading non-fiction as one of the main benefits of Core Knowledge."

Core Knowledge increases parent satisfaction. "Parents are thrilled, thrilled, thrilled," according to one teacher, and another of whom said, "Our parents are elated with the results of Core." Researchers found "no obvious negative outcomes for students, though teacher planning effort was reported to be 'intensive' and 'tiring'."

The Researchers concluded that Core Knowledge implementation "produced clarity of goals, less repetitiveness in the curriculum, and more content rich instruction for students."

In addition to the research supporting the use of Core Knowledge Sequence-based curricula in urban environments, data from the schools managed by Chancellor Beacon Academies demonstrates that the combination of curriculum and expert management services produces significant academic gains. For information about the performance of schools managed by Chancellor Beacon Academies, please see **Attachment III.A.3**.

## **B. CURRICULUM**

### **1. General Description**

The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will use a curriculum developed for the school by Chancellor Beacon Academies. The Lightpoints Curriculum™ is based on the following principles:

- Rigorous academic core studies with measured benchmarks of progress
- A structure that allows each student to master competencies prescribed in the standards
- The integration of academic areas through project-based learning activities
- Teaching students career competencies and lifelong learning skills that are age-appropriate and connected to working and learning with adults
- Providing extra time, assistance and support to accommodate multiple learning styles and other needs of students
- The engagement of students as active learners

The Lightpoints™ Curriculum consists of the following elements:

- Standards
- Content
- Instructional Strategies
- Assessment
- Continuous constructive feedback

The instructional management system allows staff to collaborate on the development of standards based lesson plans, track student progress towards meeting standards, make adjustments as needed on an individual basis and report the results in a variety of formats.

## 2. Standards

Standards define the minimum level of performance that students are expected to achieve by a point in time. Standards make clear to everyone what students are expected to know and be able to do. Beacon uses New Standards developed by the National Center for Education and the Economy and Learning Research and Development Center at the University of Pittsburgh for Science, Mathematics and English Language Arts/Language Arts. Standards from the National History Standards and the Geography Education National Implementation Project are used for History and Geography. The Standards for the Career Pathways are drawn from Learning a Living. Standards for Technology, World Language, Health and the Arts are drawn from the national database to complete the framework for the Lightpoints™ Curriculum.

The Lightpoints™ Learning Standards are used to define what students need to know and be able to do in each subject. Benchmarks Learning Standards are then used as checkpoints along the way. These learning standards act much like "merit badges" on the way to mastering a topic or skill. The accumulation of benchmark knowledge and skills enables students to demonstrate performance mastery. In order to meet the Lightpoints™ Learning Standards, students need to apply the knowledge and skills learned in one grade in all future grades. In each core subject, benchmarks are specified for each level as well as the initial grade level(s) where mastery is expected. Content standards are listed for each subject at each grade level for each core subject. The Lightpoints™ Curriculum is cumulative, as are all assessments.

## 3. Content

The content used to teach children is based upon the **Core Knowledge Sequence** developed by the Core Knowledge Foundation in Charlottesville, Virginia. The Core Knowledge Sequence is a detailed outline of specific content to be taught in language arts, history, geography, mathematics, science, and the arts. This content is matched to the curriculum standards at each grade level.

The core Lightpoints™ Curriculum represents what is taught in each school day. The community and the teachers in the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will add content that reflects our school's focus on fine and performing arts, as well as our emphasis on character education and reading. Local interests and needs may be determined by a survey of parents during the enrollment process. Beacon Curriculum Consultants and our school's local staff will then develop appropriate units of study. Core studies may also be expanded to reflect the needs of children enrolled in the school.

## 4. Subject Area Specifics

The following are the highlights of our core curriculum. A more detailed summary of the curriculum can be found at **Attachment III.B.4**.

### The Arts

The School will infuse its entire instructional approach with imagination and inspiration through the creative arts. Formal instruction in the Arts will include music, visual arts, drama and dance. On-site specialists and artists in residence and community arts organizations will work with classroom teachers to develop and provide these programs. The School is working with local fine and performing arts institutions to develop creative ways to infuse arts into the classroom and the School. Students will have the opportunity to become artists and performers through participation in a school choir, theatre production, or art exhibition. Students will actively engage with artistic content, materials, and methods. Materials to be used include **Learning to Look and Create**, **The Spectra Program**, and **The Music Connection** from Silver Burdett.

### Language Arts

The Open Court reading program, **Collections for Young Scholars™**, will be used for reading and writing in grades one through six. The program utilizes whole class activities and small group and individual instruction. The program can be used with special needs, bilingual and English language learners (ELL) students as well as students who read below grade level. This is a direct instruction program that focuses on alphabetical and phonological awareness, phonics, and reading books that contain a high proportion of phonics elements taught throughout the program. **The Accelerated Reader** program will supplement the Open Court program. The Accelerated Reader Program is a computer-based reading program designed to supplement the basic reading program. The **Junior Great Books** program will also be implemented in grades two and above. The Junior Great Books program will serve as a means for all students to apply basic skills as well as inquiry strategies. Reading JGB at home is one method the school will use to develop a literate home environment. Rebecca Sitton's **Spelling Sourcebook Series™** will be used for a K-6 spelling program. The Spelling Sourcebook Series is an alternative approach to spelling which integrates spelling skills into writing and language arts.

### Mathematics

**SRA Math: Explorations and Applications** provides unique concept development, extensive practice in basic skills, applications through problem solving, and assessment ranging from daily mental math activities to formal standardized test taking. The program utilizes a sequence which builds upon topics in a logical manner. Key concepts are thoroughly integrated to show students the natural connections. Early introduction of concepts, including algebra, geometry, multiplication, division, and problem solving, helps students develop a deeper understanding of mathematics. The **Everyday Mathematics™** program integrates mathematics instruction into other curriculum areas. Special emphasis is placed on applications in science and social studies, on the origins and uses of the language of mathematics, and on the close relationship between mathematics and the visual arts. Mathematics becomes a part of the ongoing daily routines of the classroom, of outdoor play, and of those transitional moments that occur during every school day.

**Connected Mathematics** is recommended for grades 7-8. This modular program continues the interdisciplinary focus of **Everyday Mathematics** in the elementary grades. The instructional sequence taps into adolescent's natural curiosity by engaging them in activities that require authentic use of mathematics to solve problems. Homework reinforces concepts addressed in class, and written

reflections build in opportunities for students to use their imaginations to consider mathematics as a part of everyday life.

**Contemporary Mathematics in Context**, developed by the Core-Plus Mathematics Project, is the recommended high school mathematics program. Published by the Everyday Learning Corporation, the program is designed for all students, from tech prep to college prep, and addresses each area of mathematics every year for three years. The fourth year of the program is designed for more advanced preparation for interested students. If a traditional sequence is necessary, Prentice Hall's **Algebra, Geometry and Advanced Algebra: Tools for a Changing World** and **Advanced Mathematics: A Precalculus Approach** can be used in Grades 9-12. These four courses provide students with a comprehensive high school mathematics program that prepares them for college mathematics and beyond. Students participate in projects which encourage them to talk about mathematics, reason about mathematics, and work together to solve real-world problems.

## Science

The Beacon curriculum in Science is divided into three grade spans (K-5, 6-8, 9-12), in alignment with recent science standard documents, **Benchmarks in Science Literacy** and the **National Science Education Standards**. CBA's Science program integrates standards based curricula, such as TRACS, GEMS, and AIMS. The focus throughout is on developing students' appreciation of and abilities in scientific inquiry while they acquire scientific knowledge and identify its relevance to their everyday lives. By fostering students' natural curiosity and expanding their skills in asking and answering questions about the natural world, teachers provide the foundation for scientific literacy essential for modern citizens.

## History and Geography

Teachers will use a variety of materials and resources including Telling America's Story, How We Learned that the Earth Was Round, and Let's Explore Space. Information from the National Geographic Kid's Network Smithsonian and other web sites will also be used.

## Study Skills and Test Preparation

Scholastic Research Associates' **Scoring High** series will be used to help students prepare to take standardized tests. In addition students in grades one and above will participate in Houghton Mifflin's **Learning and Study Skills Program**. The series will be used to teach students skills such as listening, observing, main ideas, creative problem solving, visualizing, note taking, and organizing ideas. The core subject areas will then supply the area of skill application.

## World Language

Students will use *Amigos - Spanish as a Second Language* from Rei America Inc. The program supports the interdisciplinary nature of the Beacon curriculum.

## Character Education

CBA's diverse curriculum incorporates character education and diversity in order to better prepare students to be responsible citizens in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Schools managed by Beacon stress character education by implementing core values such as integrity, diligence, perseverance, fairness, kindness, self-respect and friendship into the curriculum. These values are taught through core subjects,

homeroom discussions, school meetings, parent education sessions and school wide assemblies. The character education program will be based upon the work of Mary Beth Klee (Core Virtues Curriculum).

Diversity is an intrinsic value within any effective educational program. The racial and cultural background of all students and other members of the Beacon school community will be valued as essential assets in the ongoing development of life-long learners. All members of the Beacon school community will be exposed to a racially and culturally diverse school and work environment and be expected to further their understanding of the others with whom they learn, work and live. Diversity will be reflected in the student population, curriculum development, staff development, board development, school programs, co-curricular activities and parent activities. Indianapolis Academy of Excellence celebrates the diversity of their students, parents and community through the education program and community partnerships.

### **Health and Physical Education**

Indianapolis Academy of Excellence stresses the integration of health concepts in the core curriculum. Material developed by Annabel Jensen from the **Six Second Organization** will be used to instruct students on conflict resolution. The School Safety Program developed by the United States Department of Education will also be used as part of the school wide program. Additional material will be drawn from the National Dairy Council, American Cancer Society and Scholastic's Weekly Reader Series. Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will implement the **SPARK** program for physical education in grades K-6. **SPARK** is a curriculum and staff development program designed to help elementary teachers provide quality physical education. The primary goal of the comprehensive program is to help teachers improve the physical activity, fitness, and movement skills of elementary students.

### **Parent Education**

Parent education programs will be provided on a regular schedule. Modeling the student program, parents will be invited to participate in a series of workshops based upon the United States Department of Education's **Helping Your Child to Learn** series. Modules include reading, mathematics, homework, using the library, and test taking.

Parents will engage in hands on activities designed to help them understand the curriculum, the content, and the process that forms the framework of their child's education. The school will collaborate with other agencies in providing basic literacy programs when needed.

## **5. Alignment with Indiana Standards**

The School's education program is designed so that each component supports the attainment of clear and measurable standards of performance for each student. The education program is built on high academic standards. These standards define the minimum level of performance that students are expected to achieve by a point in time. Standards make clear to everyone what students are expected to know and be able to do. Beacon will provide the School with a core educational program using New Standards developed by the National Center for Education and the Economy and Learning Research and Development Center at the University of Pittsburgh for Science, Mathematics and English Language Arts/Language Arts. Standards from the National History Standards and the Geography Education National Implementation Project will be used by the School for History and Geography. The Standards for the Career Pathways are drawn from Learning a Living. Standards for Technology, World Language, Health and the Arts are drawn from the national database to complete the framework for the School's core curriculum. With the assistance of CBA, the School will align its standards with the Indiana standards to ensure that each of the standards we have selected either meet or exceed the Indiana requirements.

In addition, the School will benefit from Chancellor Beacon Academies's use of a sophisticated internet based tool - called *NetSchools Orion* - to provide comprehensive services in the area of Curriculum Alignment. *NetSchools Orion* delivers a powerful, proprietary web-based application that allows teachers to match a specific objective within their state standards to over 47,000 pre-screened, correlated educational web pages, as well as to the School's existing software programs and textbooks. In addition, these searches can be immediately applied to a Lesson Plan template, with assignments delivered directly to students and their parents via an integrated Calendar tool. In addition, *NetSchools* will provide extensive professional development services to ensure that teachers understand and are comfortable with the full capabilities *NetSchools Orion* has to offer.

As part of an exploration of Impressionism, students will learn about the historical context of the movement and the key elements that define the movement. Students will evaluate several important pieces from the movement and then apply their understanding of the movement in a visual arts project. As part of the project students will (i) research on the importance and elements of the Impressionist movement, (ii) view reproductions of significant Impressionist paintings, (iii) develop an understanding of the similarities and differences among artworks from various cultures and different historical eras (e.g. materials, visual, spatial, and temporal structures) and how factors of time and place (e.g. climate, resources, ideas, technology) influence the visual characteristics that give meaning or function to a work of art. The students will demonstrate mastery by preparing a watercolor painting done in Impressionist style and by writing a short essay explaining how the student's work uses elements of Impressionism that incorporates comparisons among the student's painting, the student's research, and the in-class examples and discussions. The following is a 100 word description of how this arts project might align with Indiana State Standards.

This project would align with Indiana Visual Arts Standards 5.1, 5.2, 5.7.1, 5.7.3, and 5.9.2. As a specific example, the project would align with Indiana Visual Arts Standard 5.2.2 by exposing students to research on the Impressionist movement, samples of Impressionist art, and information about the artists that created the sample works of art. The students would demonstrate mastery of Standard 5.2.2 by creating their own work of art and composing a short essay describing the student's use of the elements of Impressionism with comparisons to and among the student's painting, the student's research, and the in-class examples and discussions.

## **6. Special Student Populations**

All core curriculum classes are taught with in-class support for ELL. During the World Language Program, ELL students often study their first languages in order to build important language skills that transfer to their use of English. Native English speakers will learn a second language - Spanish. This approach recognizes:

- The importance of preparing ELL students for content instruction in English
- The importance of developing literacy and fluency in one's first language so that it may be transferred to one's second language
- The importance of all students learning a second language
- The importance of integrating students of all cultures in a common academic program

At the school, both the first and second language needs of all children will be met with a clear recognition that the ability to perform academically in English is necessary for every child's long-term success. The school will meet these complex sets of needs not by dividing children into fluency or language groups, but by placing all children together in mixed groups and then providing the necessary resources in the classroom to allow all children to excel. Whenever possible, by teaching their first language to ELL students during part of the day, the school will allow them to continue building basic

literacy skills that ultimately transfer to their use of English. By including native English speakers in these classes, the School will not only provide them with second language instruction but also create a sense of balance in the school community that recognizes the importance of all the languages and cultures.

### C. ASSESSMENT

Assessment is an essential component of the school's educational plan. The school's educational format establishes standards at each grade level that provide a framework for assessment. The Lightpoints™ Learning Standards that we will implement are used to define what students need to know and be able to do in each subject. Benchmarks Learning Standards are then used as checkpoints along the way. These learning standards act much like "merit badges" on the way to mastering a topic or skill. The accumulation of benchmark knowledge and skills enables students to demonstrate performance mastery. Our assessment approach is derived from our standards and is built upon a multiple-measures approach.

Assessments will be constructed and integrated in accordance with the curriculum and will indicate overall achievement levels. The staff will utilize a curriculum and instructional management system such as the IIMS (Instructional Information Management System) for this purpose. This software program allows teachers to align lessons to national and state standards, to develop lessons and Individual Learning Plans, and to track student progress. The most recent version of the IIMS is web-based and will allow parents to view samples of their child's schoolwork online.

The teacher will evaluate and provide feedback on student progress using a variety of assessment methods that value both the content and the process of academic achievement as described above. The emphasis in assessment is to ensure that students have ample opportunity to demonstrate what they know and are able to do. Teachers will provide written report cards four times a year and schedule parent conferences semi-annually. A portfolio night will be held twice a year. Portfolio night will be a time when students display their work samples for their parents and others. At the end of the year, parent conferences will be used to develop next year's Individual Learning Plan.

As required by statute, the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will participate in the statewide system of assessment, will collect baseline data on its student population every year and will provide data required for the study of charter schools. The school wide assessment program, furthermore, will be multi-dimensional, aligned with State of Indiana standards, and will consist of the following components:

- Anecdotal records and interviews
- Checklists to reflect mastery of skills
- Student portfolios
- State assessments
- Standardized tests

The School will use a Standards approach to assessment. Standards list a clear set of guidelines for particular pieces of work. They allow for recognition of high achievement by describing what work will look like at varying levels of success. Standards break down large assignments into smaller parts so a student could see if he or she, for example, demonstrated high-level research skills, but significantly less successful writing and organizational skills. In addition, Standards will be developed for use with student portfolios. Students will receive standards with each project assignment so they may constantly edit their work to strive for higher achievement. After projects are assessed, students will use the standards to revise work that falls below minimum standards. Student projects will not be "complete" upon submission; a project will be complete when the student's work meets or exceeds the standards for the project.

Because of the artistic focus of the School, the Board will endeavor to implement a robust portfolio, performance, and jury assessment process to help students realize their strength and grow to overcome areas that need improvement. All such assessments will be done using Standards and rubrics that are developed for the School.

In classes where discrete skills or content knowledge is necessary for certain units, students will learn to study for, and to take tests and quizzes, in diverse formats. Test taking strategies and decoding skills form benchmarks that allow students to get beyond the examination and actually demonstrate the knowledge being tested. Rather than serving as an end to learning, these benchmarks free students to illustrate subject mastery.

The School will conduct ongoing reviews of student performance to ensure that each child is making measurable progress towards meeting the expectations outlined in the students' Individual Learning Plan and both the Lightpoints™ Learning Standards and the Benchmarks Learning Standards. While the Board does not anticipate the need to make any significant adjustments to our education model, due in large part to CBA's expertise and the research supporting our education program model, the Board will evaluate the data from the classrooms to make sure that the Board is meeting the high goals and expectations that the Board is setting for ourselves.

At the end of the academic year, the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will prepare and publish an annual report describing and delineating its financial and academic programs and results. The report shall also contain a description of the school's teaching methods, as well as instructional or administrative innovations. Copies of this annual report shall be distributed to the sponsor, the Indianapolis Public School Board of Education and the Indiana State Board of Education. Copies will also be available at the school for public review.

#### **D. SPECIAL STUDENT POPULATIONS**

Students who need services under the IDEA or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 will receive those services in accordance with the IEP (IDEA) or program plan (504). Students with special needs will be included in the regular classroom and participate fully in the school's academic and assessment program in accordance with their IEP or 504 Plan. The school staff will include a resource room teacher and aides. When necessary, the school will contract with other specialists to provide services needed. In the event that the school is not able to meet the needs of a student, it would seek to contract with another provider in a manner consistent with Federal and State statute to provide these services. In addition, any provisions contained herein are subject to state and federal requirements for students with disabilities.

### **IV. ORGANIZATIONAL VIABILITY AND EFFECTIVENESS**

#### **A. BUDGET AND FINANCIAL MATTERS**

##### **1. Eight Year Operating Budget**

The Board recognizes that the long-term viability of the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence is tied to the strength of its financial plan. The Board has attached an eight-year budget forecast at **Attachment IV.A.1**. Included as part of the budget are the operating assumptions upon which the budget is based. The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will attempt to secure start-up funding from traditional lenders and from other third parties. The School also may consider obtaining funds through a loan from Chancellor Beacon Academies, Inc. to cover all operating, property maintenance, leasing, and purchasing costs during the development and start-up period; provided that the terms of such a loan are

acceptable to the Board of Directors. In general, start-up loan proceeds provided by Chancellor Beacon Academies are amortized over the first year of the School's operation. The budget has been prepared by CBA's team of start-up specialists and is based on operating experiences in CBA's 81 charter schools across the country.

As part of our budgeting process, the Board has built in a 5 percent reserve to ensure that our school has the flexibility necessary to adjust to events that are not reflected in the budget assumptions. The Board will constantly monitor the realities of our school's development and operations, and the Board will make the necessary adjustment to our budgetary assumptions based on those realities. Furthermore, the Board will create a working budget for our school in the spring of 2003 once many of the assumptions underlying the budget, such as our actual facilities costs, are solidified. The Board recognizes that there are a number of needs that the School will have and that it will be important for the Board to develop a sound fundraising approach to help the School meet these needs. The Board is in the process of identifying our anticipated needs and selecting an appropriate fundraising approach for each need. For example, the Board is planning to solicit contributions of about \$15,000 for physical education equipment and about \$150,000 for computers and technology. The Board will work to obtain donations to provide for some of these types of "one-time" expenses to free up operating revenues for other purposes. The Board is contemplating a parent and community focused fundraising approach for the physical education equipment and a charitable foundation approach to raising the technology funds. On an ongoing basis, the Board will revise the School's fundraising program to reflect both the School's needs and the likely sources for the types of funds the Board is seeking.

Chancellor Beacon Academies will help the Board secure start-up funds from third parties. For example, CBA has provided the school with access to a prominent local real estate developer who, in connection with redeveloping a facility for the School, has expressed interest in loaning the School a substantial amount of working capital at competitive rates to help the School address the School's cash-flow needs between the opening of the School and the flow of the per pupil revenues from the state and local tax revenues.

## **2. Enrollment and Growth**

The Board of Directors proposes to create a school serving Kindergarten through Grade 5. From that starting point, the Board anticipates a gradual expansion of the school based on demand. The Board of Directors is sensitive to the financial implications on the state and the local public school districts that charter schools may pose under the recently issued Attorney General's opinion. As a result of this new information, the Board of Directors has decreased the planned initial enrollment from 333 FTE students in the proposal that was submitted on October 8, 2001 to 252 FTE students. In addition the school has increased the size of its Year 1 forecasted enrollment in Kindergarten (up from 54 students to 72 students) and decreased the size of Year 1 enrollment in grades 1-5 from 279 to 216. This adjustment will allow the School to reach out to more students who are just entering the public education system and will reduce the financial impact of dual funding obligations pronounced in the Attorney General's opinion on the state by over \$210,000 (63 FTE students x \$6,700 FTE x 50%) from the October 2001 proposal. The following chart highlights the school's forecasted growth through the 2006 academic year.

Grade	Students Per Section	2003		2004		2005		2006	
		# Sections	# Students	# Sections	# Students	# Sections	# Students	# Sections	# Students
K	18	4	72	4	72	4	72	4	72
1	18	4	72	4	72	4	72	4	72
2	24	2	48	3	72	3	72	3	72
3	24	2	48	2	48	3	72	3	72
4	24	1	24	2	48	2	48	3	72
5	24	1	24	1	24	2	48	2	48
6	24			1	24	1	24	2	48
7	24					1	24	1	24
8	24							1	24
TOTAL*		14	FTE:252	17	FTE:324	20	FTE:396	23	FTE:468

\* Each kindergarten student only counts as a .5 FTE student under the Indiana Funding Formula

### 3. Parental Demand

The demand for an arts focused public elementary school serving the Indianapolis metropolitan area has helped focus and refine the mission and vision for the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence. The Board of Directors is in the process of collecting signatures from individuals who desire to have a new arts focused public elementary school in Indianapolis. At the present time we have collected almost 50 signatures. We plan to submit a complete list of signatures at a later date.

### 4. Publicity and Enrollment

In January 2003, the School will initiate a systematic, methodical, documented recruitment process to help ensure the school is not racially or socio-economically isolated. Although the Board is planning to serve primarily students that reside in the Indianapolis metropolitan area, the school will accept applications from across the state, as required by the Indiana Charter School Law. The Board will concentrate the School's marketing efforts on the Indianapolis metropolitan area. The Board is working with the development team at Chancellor Beacon Academies to create a customized marketing plan for our school to ensure that the Board is able to attract students and to reach those families that are traditionally less informed about educational options. The School anticipates using a combination of local print and broadcast media as well as grassroots publicity to promote the School. The Board will ensure that our admissions policies and procedures comply with the Indiana Charter School Law and with any applicable court ordered desegregation plan.

The Board will begin marketing the school and accepting applications in January 2003. The Board anticipates conducting the first admissions lottery On March 1, 2003. The School will enroll all students who submit timely, completed applications prior to the deadline for the enrollment lottery. If the number of applications exceeds the capacity of the School at any enrollment date, a lottery will be used to determine admission. Any applicants that were not selected by the initial lottery will be placed in an applicant pool that will include all applicants that have not yet received a spot in the school. The Board

will conduct periodic lotteries of all students that have submitted a completed application and that have not yet been admitted to the School. The Board believes this multiple lottery system is the best suited enrollment process to effectuate the public policy goal of ensuring that every child has a equal opportunity to gain admission to the School. Lotteries will be conducted in accordance to a lottery policy adopted by the Board. Admission will be limited to the grades and ages of pupils served by the School. The Board may elect to give enrollment preference to siblings of students already attending or accepted to the School. The School will not restrict admissions based upon race, ethnicity, national origin, disability, gender, income level, proficiency in English, or athletic ability.

## **B. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

### **1. Governance Structure**

The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence, Inc., an Indiana not-for-profit corporation, is the legal entity applying for a charter. The Board of Directors has the governing and policy making authority for the School and has the fiduciary responsibility for all decisions concerning the School.

### **2. Organizational Documents**

The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence’s Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws are included at **Attachment IV.A** and **Attachment IV.B**, respectively. The Board acknowledges that the definition of “Organizer” in the Indiana Charter School Law requires that the School file for tax-exempt status with the Internal Revenue Service. The Board has prepared a draft Form 1023 and will file it with the Internal Revenue Service prior to the issuance of the School’s charter.

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **The Board**

The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence, Inc., an Indiana not-for-profit corporation, is the legal entity applying to the sponsor for the charter. The Board of Directors has the responsibility for all decisions concerning the school. As with the board of any non-profit corporation, the Board of Directors has a number of fiduciary duties and obligations to the organization. These include the Duty of Care, the Duty of Loyalty, and the Duty of Obedience. Our By-Laws contain a provision requiring our Directors to abide by the fiduciary duties imposed on them by virtue of their membership on the Board of Directors of the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence, Inc. In addition, the other roles and responsibilities of the Board of Directors are described more thoroughly in the By-Laws.

#### **The Principal**

The school principal shall be responsible for the daily operations of the school and, in consultation with the staff, for the development of school programs and policies for Board review and approval. The school principal shall be responsible for administering the budget approved by the Board of Directors, recruiting new students, supervising all staff members regarding school policy and curriculum, assessing and evaluating all staff, and for overseeing student progress. The principal will report directly to the Regional Vice President of Operation of Chancellor Beacon Academies on an operational basis and to the Board of Directors on a monthly basis. The principal shall be responsible for interviewing candidates for all other staff positions and for making employment recommendations. All employees are directly responsible to the principal.

## **The Teachers**

Teachers are an integral part of the school and shall be primarily responsible for the students' classroom education. Teachers at the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will have a unique opportunity to help develop a school modeled on national best practices and local vision. Teachers will be given a significant role in the development of school policies and programs.

## **4. Decision Making Process**

The Board has structured itself to become a board of nine voting members, comprised of three classes that hold staggered three-year terms. The Board has also limited service on the board to no more than two consecutive terms to allow new members to join the board, while permitting former board members to rejoin the board following a one-year hiatus. In addition, the Board plans to have our Principal serve as an ex officio member of the board of directors. This will help provide a direct link between the Board of Directors and the individual who is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school. The Board also plans to invite the President of our Parent Advisory Team to serve as an ex officio member of the Board of Directors.

Each Board member will have one vote, and adoption of any issue shall be by simple majority. The Board of Directors shall meet approximately ten times per year, with special or additional meetings being called by the Board Chair or by any three Board members. Board of Directors' meetings will be open to parents and the public. At least one meeting per year shall be held especially for all parents and the public to attend and receive an annual report about the charter school's performance. Closed meetings may be held to discuss matters covered by the applicable statute(s).

The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence Board of Directors shall participate in the operations of the School as follows:

- Define and maintain the School's mission;
  - Set strategic policy;
  - Approve the annual budget;
  - Monitor School performance and operations;
  - Oversee the School's management contract with Chancellor Beacon Academies;
  - Report student achievement results to the sponsor, city, parents and the community;
  - Ensure the School's compliance with the Charter and applicable law;
  - Develop an accountability plan.
- Board Recruitment and Board Development

It is the Board's goal to continue recruiting individuals with relevant experience to join our board. Further, the Board will strive to create a board that reflects the demographic composition of Indianapolis. As part of this effort, the Board intends to involve the president of our parent advisory team as an ex-officio member of our board of directors and to seek active parent involvement on the various committees that we may create, such as the fundraising, admissions, and hiring committees. The Board will continue recruiting additional board members to provide us with candidates that possess the diversity of skills and backgrounds that will make our board a constantly improving manager and leader for the School. The Board is working to create a board development package that will include the qualifications and backgrounds of the existing board members, the qualifications and backgrounds the School would like to add to the Board, along with a detailed description of the expectations and responsibilities of our Board members.

## 5. Partnership with Chancellor Beacon Academies

The Board has contracted out the management of the academic program and business operations of the school to Chancellor Beacon Academies, a national education management organization experienced in the operation of charter schools. A copy of the Management Agreement is attached at **Attachment IV.B.6.a**. Both the Board of Directors and Chancellor Beacon Academies is aware that the management agreement is subject to review and potential modification through negotiations conducted as part of the chartering process. Information about Chancellor Beacon Academies, including a summary of the company's history, educational philosophy, and operating results is located at **Attachment III.A.3**.

The Board of Directors is responsible for overseeing the performance of Chancellor Beacon Academies. As part of the arrangement between the School and Chancellor Beacon Academies, the Board has delegated to CBA the responsibility for implementing the education program developed by the Board and CBA. The Board will be directly involved in the selection of the Principal, who will then be responsible for hiring the balance of the school's staff. Pursuant to the terms of the Management Agreement, CBA is responsible for preparing both tentative and operational budgets for the School based on the guidance of the Board of Directors. These budgets are then presented to the Board for review and Approval. The Management Agreement also places the responsibility for selection of vendors on CBA.

The Board selected Chancellor Beacon Academies as the School's service provider for a number of reasons. These include:

- A proven track record of success.
- An education program that utilizes the Core Knowledge Sequence.
- The programmatic flexibility to tailor the education program.
- The ability to truly align the educational program with our mission and vision.
- The dynamic and dedicated professionals that service the School.
- An experienced and efficient management structure.

The Board is committed to ensuring that it provides the proper oversight of the schools contractual relationship with Chancellor Beacon Academies. Prior to engaging CBA, the Board of directors researched a number of other education management organizations and contacted the principals and members of the boards of several schools operated by CBA. In addition, the Board negotiated the terms of the management agreement with the assistance of legal counsel. The Board will conduct periodic performance reviews and will receive periodic reports from CBA regarding the day-to-day operation of the School, as provided for in Sections 3 and 4.3 of the Management Agreement.

### C. TRANSPORTATION

Ensuring that the School provides a real educational option to all eligible students is one of our highest priorities. The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will see that the transportation needs of enrolled students are met. Once the random selection of the student body is made, the school will create a transportation plan to meet the needs of those students. The Board anticipates using a combination of parent provided and school provided transportation. The Board is exploring the possibility of providing traditional bus style transportation to students living within Marion County but outside of a small radius from our school. To this end, the School has made preliminary contact with transportation providers to gather information on the types of transportation services they offer and the economic feasibility of each company's services. Once our student population is determined, we will work with a transportation service provider and with consultants from Chancellor Beacon Academies to develop a transportation plan that meets the needs of our students and to ensure that every child has a real opportunity to attend the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence.