

# Evaluation of Indianapolis Mayor Sponsored Charter School

Core Question 4: Is the school providing appropriate conditions for success?



3919 Meadows Dr  
Indianapolis, IN 46205

Site evaluation conducted October 12, 2022

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## SCHOOL BACKGROUND

### Mission Statement

“We change lives every day by empowering people to increase their independence and reach their potential through education, health and employment.”

### Academic Program

The academic program is the same across Excel Center’s Indianapolis schools. It is designed to serve students who did not earn a high school diploma in a traditional setting, regardless of their age currently. The vast majority of students are adults of all ages. No students are younger than 17.

The academic program is designed to make their students, with unique life circumstances, successful in achieving a high school diploma. Students and faculty take pride in the fact that this is more rigorous than a GED. The school day goes from 9:00 to 3:30 and is Monday through Thursday. Fridays are for remediation and students may work with teachers during their office hours on Fridays. There are five 8-week school terms throughout the year. During a typical term students take 4 classes which provide 1.5 credits each towards graduation. A student is required to have earned a professional certificate or dual-credits before graduation.

### Student Demographics

Enrollment	October 1, 2021	October 12, 2022 <sup>1</sup>
Total	279	311

Race/Ethnicity	October 1, 2021 <sup>2</sup>	October 12, 2022 <sup>1</sup>
Asian	1.8%	1.3%
Black/African-American	57.8%	70.3%
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.2%	0%
Hispanic	16.7%	10.8%
Multiracial	4.3%	9.6%
Native American	0.2%	0%
White	18.9%	8.2%

<sup>1</sup> As reported by the school on the day of the review.

<sup>2</sup> <https://inview.doe.in.gov/corporations/1099100000/population> Data is for Excel Center for Adult Learners (9910) - All Indianapolis locations.

<b>Other Demographic Info</b>	October 1, 2021 <sup>2</sup>	October 12, 2022 <sup>1</sup>
Students with IEPs	4.6%	2.8%
English Learners	4.1%	2.2%
Economically Disadvantaged	64.6%	76.6%

### Academic Performance Data

	<b>11th Grade SAT</b>	<b>Biology EOC</b>	<b>Civics EOC</b>
<b>Excel Center Meadows</b>	N sizes are too small to preserve confidentiality		

<b>Attendance Data</b>	<b>2021-22<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>2022-23 Year to Date</b>
Attendance Rate	63% <sup>4</sup>	59% <sup>5</sup>

<b>Discipline Data</b>	<b>State Average</b>	<b>2020-21 School Year</b>	<b>2021-22 School Year</b>	<b>Year to Date, September 28, 2022</b>
In School Suspensions	3.9%	<1%	<2%	<1%
Out of School Suspensions	5.2%	<1%	<2%	<1%
Expulsions	0.2%	<1%	<1%	0

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.in.gov/doi/files/2020-2021-Mode-of-Instruction-and-Attendance-percentage-20210709.xlsx>

<sup>4</sup> [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1dEwjthoNTHpkealjCpjotc8YdC8cV1\\_/edit#gid=1089452380](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1dEwjthoNTHpkealjCpjotc8YdC8cV1_/edit#gid=1089452380)

<sup>5</sup>

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1A\\_w3c6-suV8w6mA8BFWL6satAAedfSSY/edit#gid=130309659](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1A_w3c6-suV8w6mA8BFWL6satAAedfSSY/edit#gid=130309659)

## OEI RATINGS SUMMARY

Indicator Ratings Summary	
<b>Does Not Meet Standard</b>	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored at 65% or less of the total overall points possible.
<b>Approaching Standard</b>	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored between 79% and 66% for the total overall points possible.
<b>Meets Standard</b>	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored between 80% and 89% of the total points possible.
<b>Exceeds Standard</b>	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored at or above 90% of the total overall points possible.

Core Question 4: Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?	Finding
4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?	<b>Meets Standard</b>
4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?	<b>Meets Standard</b>
4.3. For secondary students, does the school provide sufficient guidance on and support preparation for post-secondary options? *Only applies to schools serving grades 9-12	<b>Exceeds Standard</b>
4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?	<b>Meets Standard</b>
4.5. Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?	<b>Meets Standard</b>
4.6. Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?	<b>Exceeds Standard</b>
4.7. Is the school climate responsive to the needs of students, staff, and families?	<b>Exceeds Standard</b>
4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and families clear and helpful?	<b>Exceeds Standard</b>
4.9. Do the school's special education files demonstrate that it is in legal compliance and is implementing best practice?	<b>Exceeds Standard</b>
4.10. Is the school implementing best practice related to access and services to students with limited English proficiency?	<b>Does Not Meet Standard</b>

## INDICATOR 4.1

Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?	<b>Meets Standard</b>
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### Data/Artifacts Reviewed

Course outlines, math curriculum remodel, coaching tiers, curriculum tiers, lesson plan expectations, new curriculum roadmaps, course catalog, instructor meeting notes, academic calendar

### Summary of Findings

#### **4.1 a) The curriculum used across all areas is rigorous, evidence-based and aligned with state standards.**

Curriculum is created by the network. This is appropriate given the school's unique mission and student population, but should give greater guidance on how to teach foundational skills at a conceptual level.

The school supplements the network's curriculum with 14 foundational skills identified in math that students need to master before moving to Algebra I.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Per \_\_\_\_\_

**Math Foundations Checklist**

Skill	Assessment 1	Assessment 2	Final Assessment
GFC/LCM	Quiz ___/10	Quiz ___/10	___/68
Simplifying Fractions	Quiz ___/10	Quiz ___/10	___/68
Adding Integers	Quiz ___/10	Quiz ___/10	___/68
Subtracting Integers	Quiz ___/10	Quiz ___/10	___/68
Dividing/Multiplying Integers	Quiz ___/10	Quiz ___/10	___/68
Order of Operations	Quiz ___/10	Quiz ___/10	___/68
Combining Like Terms	Quiz ___/10	Quiz ___/10	___/68
Distribution	Quiz ___/10	Quiz ___/10	___/68
Evaluating Expressions	Quiz ___/10	Quiz ___/10	___/68
One Step Equations	Quiz ___/10	Quiz ___/10	___/68
Two Step Equations	Quiz ___/10	Quiz ___/10	___/68
Multi-Step Equations	Quiz ___/10	Quiz ___/10	___/68
Plotting Points on a Coordinate Plane	Quiz ___/10	Quiz ___/10	___/68

#### **4.1 b) Systematic reviews of curricula are conducted by administrators and school staff to identify gaps based on student performance across and within subgroups.**

The Excel Center network just completed a revision of all of their curricula, which are created by the network. It was acknowledged that they are growing the foundational literacy skills within this curriculum because they identified this as a need. A committee of teachers across the network helped create the curriculum. Teachers are supported with examples of unit assessments and other resources.

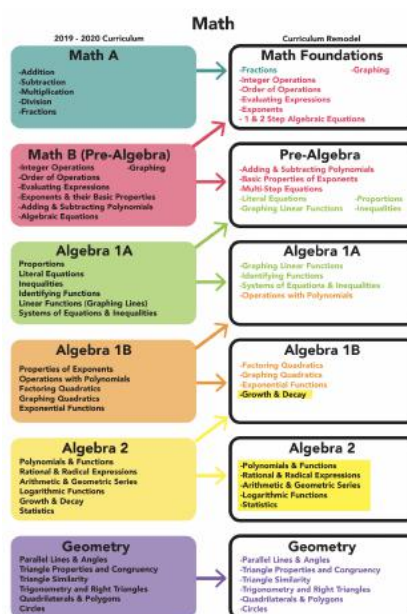
The network is working to create common unit assessments. At this time there are only common final exams.

#### **4.1 c) The school regularly reviews instructional curriculum maps to ensure presentation of content is aligned with learning objectives.**

Curriculum maps are provided by the central office, with input from teachers across their network. Teachers are using the provided materials including lesson plans, pacing guide, and objectives.

**4.1 d) The school has a well-defined horizontal and vertical alignment within and across grade levels and content areas that is prioritized and focuses on core learning objectives.**

Curriculum maps clearly create clear alignment vertically and horizontally. Teachers explain how they were part of the process that created the alignment. Here is an example of the recent adjustments in math courses:



**4.1 e) Instructional staff have access to provided materials to deliver the curriculum effectively.**

Teachers confirm they have the materials they need. They state the supplement with their own materials.

More manipulatives should be accessible in foundational math classes to refer to the underlying concepts rather than memorizing rules.

**4.1 f) Instructional staff understand and uniformly use curriculum documents and related program materials to effectively deliver instruction.**

Teachers were observed using the provided materials or rigorous and aligned materials. Program materials will be stronger when there are common unit assessments.

Rubric Rating	
a. The curriculum used across all academic areas is rigorous,	3 - Implementing

evidenced-based and aligned with state standards.	
b. Systematic reviews of curricula are conducted by administrators and school staff to identify gaps based on student performance across and within subgroups.	3 - Implementing
c. The school regularly reviews instructional curriculum maps to ensure presentation of content is aligned with learning objectives.	4 - Sustaining
d. The school has a well-defined horizontal and vertical alignment within and across grade levels and content areas that is prioritized and focuses on core learning objectives.	4 - Sustaining
e. Instructional staff have access to provided materials to deliver the curriculum effectively.	4 - Sustaining
f. Instructional staff understand and uniformly use curriculum documents and related program materials to effectively deliver instruction.	3 - Implementing

**Strengths**

The curriculum provided by the network makes it easy for teachers to know what to teach and they feel that it supports them well. The progression of classes is effective and is easy for students to navigate. When teachers choose texts, they make rigorous choices, such as *The Bluest Eye* and The Declaration of Independence.

**Opportunities for Improvement**

The curriculum would be stronger with greater support for foundational skills in math and reading. It should set clear standards for when basic fluency is established such as single digit addition, multiplication facts, basic measurement, etc. In reading, guidance should be given on how to teach and assessments provided on foundational literacy—letter recognition, phonemic awareness, etc.

#### Recommended Next Steps

1. Continue clarifying the specific skills students need in foundational classes. Consider skills even more foundational than GCF/LCM such as addition/subtraction/multiplication facts and basic measurement skills.
2. Continue the work of defining the unit assessments so that a standard of rigor is assured and that data can be compared across teachers.

## INDICATOR 4.2

Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?	Meets Standard
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Data/Artifacts Reviewed
Evaluation rubrics, central office data team meeting agenda, lesson plans, completed walk-through forms, gap plans, long observation forms, professional development plan
Summary of Findings
<p><b>4.2 a) The curriculum is implemented in all classrooms with fidelity.</b></p> <p>Lesson plans were aligned with classroom observations. There were no classes observed where the intended curriculum was not being used.</p>
<p><b>4.2 b) A clearly documented lesson internalization process is used to explicitly target core learning objectives across all academic areas.</b></p> <p>There is not a document lesson internalization process. Internalizing of content, that is, working to deeply understand the knowledge and skills to be taught before teaching it, is new to the school. It is largely assumed and taken for granted that teachers understand the content at a high level.</p>
<p><b>4.2 c) A clearly documented lesson internalization process is used to explicitly identify a wide range of instructional strategies that target core learning objectives across all academic areas.</b></p> <p>There is not a documented lesson internalization process. Teachers attend curriculum meetings and discuss content at those curriculum meetings. They meet with other content teachers across the network at least once per term. Pre-instruction planning is focused almost exclusively on lesson planning and delivery methods and the school is new to the notion of first internalizing the content and skills to be taught.</p>
<p><b>4.2 d) Instruction is differentiated based on ongoing formative assessment of student learning needs, identified student interests, and preferred learning styles.</b></p> <p>In addition to the formative assessment at enrollment (iReady), teachers give a formative assessment every other week. This is used to adjust their teaching. Students are allowed to retake assessments until they demonstrate mastery.</p>
<p><b>4.2 e) Instructional strategies used are designed to promote authentic learning to impact levels of student engagement.</b></p> <p>Student engagement is high in the majority of classes. Frequently, but not always, students are doing the majority work. Teachers who are explaining math problems should allow students to solve the problems and only intervene when needed.</p>

**4.2 f) Instructional practices are intentionally designed to validate and affirm the cultures of students.**

Culturally relevant content was observed. Teacher cited being deliberate about their content choices, “Every story I choose is culturally relevant. Right now, we’re reading about being a Black soldier in WWII.” A math teacher stated, “in data and statistics, we look at infant mortality rates of racial groups in the United States.”

**4.2 g) Staff receive explicit feedback on instructional practices on an ongoing basis.**

Teachers receive feedback through their scheduled observations and meetings with the lead teacher. One teacher said, “My supervisor can be very direct, but with examples. It’s very intentional. There is follow up on how you can get it to this level. There is follow up if you start to meet the expectation or if you’re not and we still need you to improve.”

Teachers were not able to give concrete examples of informal feedback they have received outside of the scheduled observations.

Some teachers and life coaches cited the students surveys they provide at the end of their courses as a good source of feedback.

Rubric Rating	
a. The curriculum is implemented in all classrooms with fidelity.	4 - Sustaining
b. A clearly documented lesson internalization process is used to explicitly target core learning objectives across all academic areas.	2 - Emerging
c. A clearly documented lesson internalization process is used to explicitly identify a wide range of instructional strategies that target core learning objectives across all academic areas.	2 - Emerging
d. Instruction is differentiated based on ongoing formative assessment of student learning needs, identified student interests, and preferred learning styles.	4 - Sustaining

e. Instructional strategies used are designed to promote authentic learning to impact levels of student engagement.	4 - Sustaining
f. Instructional practices are intentionally designed to validate and affirm the culture of students.	4 - Sustaining
g. Staff receive explicit feedback on instructional practices on an ongoing basis.	3 - Implementing
<b>Strengths</b>	
Teachers feel supported by their curricular materials and the coaching and development processes. The school recognized the need for bilingual staff and translated documents for students. Staff said there has been significant professional development about making their instruction culturally relevant.	
<b>Opportunities for Improvement</b>	
Internalization of content and skills has not been taught or prioritized with the staff.	
Managers should provide feedback in the moment, in a simple and effective manner, so that staff can grow faster and outside of more formal and scheduled meetings.	
<b>Recommended Next Steps</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create and implement an internalization process that helps teachers deeply know the content of what they are teaching, particularly the foundational skills. This will help teachers to recognize the foundational skills a student is missing, so they can be remediated, so that a student can achieve mastery.</li> <li>2. Implement a simple, in-the-moment, feedback model. <a href="#">The Manager Tools Feedback Model</a> has been used effectively by many schools. Practice the model with leadership, only using it for positive feedback to begin. Teach staff about the feedback model being implemented and provide professional development practicing receiving feedback. Then begin implementing in-the-moment feedback for positive praise, and then move to feedback that helps teachers improve their performance.</li> </ol>	

## INDICATOR 4.3

For secondary students, does the school provide sufficient guidance on and support preparation for post-secondary options?	<b>Exceeds Standard</b>
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Data/Artifacts Reviewed
End of year data from the last three years, course catalog, ENL study group flier, student handbook, Spanish club flier, student council application, certification and dual enrollment course offerings
Summary of Findings
<p><b>4.3 a) The school provides access to rigorous coursework and career planning experiences (e.g., Advanced Placement courses, internships, independent study) to prepare students for post-secondary opportunities that align to their interests.</b></p> <p>Each individual student has a Life Coach that they meet with to discuss their plans, goals, and the steps and timeline to achieving those goals. Life Coaches help the student determine whether they will achieve a certification or at least three dual credit courses. In the senior seminar, students create a presentation of what they are doing after graduation and how they will achieve their career aspirations.</p> <p><b>4.3 b) A system is in place to ensure school staff provide students with the support they need to be effectively prepared for post-secondary opportunities.</b></p> <p>Life Coaches work to remove obstacles with students. These include transportation, homelessness, food security, child care and mental health.</p> <p><b>4.3 c) The school provides opportunities for extracurricular engagement and activities, connected to student interests, (e.g., athletics, academic clubs, vocational) to increase post-secondary options.</b></p> <p>Because students are mostly adults, the school does not offer athletics or extracurriculars. There are a plethora of vocational opportunities and a vocational certificate or dual-credits are a requirement for graduation. There is an active student council.</p> <p><b>4.3 d) The school offers a range of pathways that allow all students to meet or exceed Indiana Core 40 graduation requirements.</b></p> <p>Last year the school had 46 Core 40, and 2 General diplomas for a total of 48 diplomas<sup>6</sup>. Students are allowed to move towards graduation at their pace, and take class only in the morning or afternoon if that is what their circumstances require.</p>
Rubric Rating

<sup>6</sup> SY2122 Grad + CCR Data.pdf

<p>a. The school provides access to rigorous coursework and career planning experiences (e.g., Advanced Placement courses, internships, independent study) to prepare students for post-secondary opportunities aligned to their interests.</p>	<p>4 - Sustaining</p>
<p>b. A system is in place to ensure school staff provide students with the supports they need to be effectively prepared for post-secondary opportunities.</p>	<p>4 - Sustaining</p>
<p>c. The school provides opportunities for extracurricular engagement and activities, connected to student interests, (e.g., athletics, academic clubs, vocational) to increase post-secondary options.</p>	<p>3 - Implementing</p>
<p>d. The school offers a range of pathways that allow all students to meet or exceed Indiana Core 40 graduation requirements.</p>	<p>4 - Sustaining</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Strengths</b></p>	
<p>The 5 term schedule, dual credit, and various trade classes available for students to reach their college and career readiness potential quickly because the terms are accelerated. Because this structure is embedded in classes, enrollment, and the life coaching model. students have a plan and know what their next steps are after they graduate from Excel.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Opportunities for Improvement</b></p>	

In the student panel, students requested more outside activities and events. They would like to take trips with their classmates and have more organized events that bring them together outside of the normal school day.

**Recommended Next Steps**

The school has done very well here and there are no significant next steps.

## INDICATOR 4.4

Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?	Meets Standard
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### Data/Artifacts Reviewed

End of term data reports, academic calendar, admin dashboard, disaggregated year end data

### Summary of Findings

#### 4.4 a) Assessments are well-aligned to learning standards.

Curriculum documents all reference Indiana learning standards. In classroom observations, objectives and standards were frequently posted. Greater use of short assessments for fluency skills in foundational classes is needed.

#### 4.4 b) Assessments utilized are varied in order to support a wide range of student learning styles and abilities.

Students were observed engaged in working groups, independently, and in a lecture setting. Students have four different options for how they will complete the final exam. An example from ELA:

#### Final Project Option #2: Essay

Choose one name from the following list:

Dorothy Parker	F. Scott Fitzgerald
Gertrude Stein	Willa Cather
Langston Hughes	Claude McKay
Elizabeth Bishop	George Orwell
Sherwood Anderson	John Steinbeck
Franz Kafka	Hart Crane
Agatha Christie	James Joyce
Shirley Jackson	E.B. White
Antoine de Saint Exupery	Thornton Wilder
Virginia Woolf	T.S. Elliot
Gwendolyn Brooks	Tennessee Williams
Ernest Hemingway	Richard Wright

For this project, you will be teaching the class about an author who wrote during the time period of 1900-1950.

You will be writing an essay (3 double spaced pages) in which you should answer the following questions.

- 1) What were these author's significant works?
- 2) What was the inspiration or the author's motivation for writing their significant work(s)?
- 3) What was the author's life like? What was their upbringing like? How did they become a writer? What did they do in their lives other than writing?
- 4) What was this writer's method or routine for writing?
- 5) Who were this writer's writing influences?
- 6) Was the author's work or works well thought of during the time they were writing?
- 7) Is there something unique, noticeable, or notable about this writer's style of writing?
- 8) Why are we still reading this writer's works today?

For this essay, you will use MLA formatting and you should use at least three sources for this essay.

You will also include a Works cited page at the end of the essay and have MLA formatted in-text citations.

#### 4.4 c) Assessments utilized provide student-level data focused on growth and proficiency.

Students take a formative assessment upon enrolling. Along with the student's current credit status, this is used to determine which courses a student should be enrolled in. If a student and a teacher feel that

the student can be placed in a more advanced class, they will move the student to the more rigorous class.

**4.4 d) Assessments are administered with sufficient frequency and results are provided in a timely manner.**

There is an assessment in most classes each Thursday. A teacher stated, “Every week there is an assessment. If I teach it this week, it’s assessed this week so I can feel solid moving forward.”

**4.4 e) A system is in place to ensure that assessment data is analyzed across and within subgroups and used to guide decision-making related to instruction and curriculum.**

Most tracking of assessment data is through monitoring grades. The lead teacher stated, “Grades are a huge way for us. 80% of the grade is made up of assessments. Teachers compare their assessments with other teachers and how their students did.”

A number of metrics are tracked and disaggregated by subgroup<sup>7</sup>. These metrics include number of active students, number of students passing a course, number of students enrolled in a course, and attendance within a course. Subgroup disaggregation includes students with IEPs, 504s, and ELL. Disaggregation is also done by racial group<sup>8</sup>

Rubric Rating	
a. Assessments utilized are well aligned to learning standards.	3 - Implementing
b. Assessments utilized are varied in order to support a wide range of student learning styles and abilities.	4 - Sustaining
c. Assessments utilized provide student level data focused on growth and proficiency.	3 - Implementing
d. Assessments are administered with sufficient frequency and results are provided in a timely manner.	3 - Implementing

<sup>7</sup> [Weekly data: 22-23 T1 Weeks 1-7 Academic Engagement \(shared\)](#)

<sup>8</sup> [Disaggregated Year-end Data: SY1920, SY2021, SY2122 EOY Equity \(shared\)](#)

<p>e. A system is in place to ensure that assessment data is analyzed across and within subgroups and used to guide decision-making related to instruction and curriculum.</p>	<p>3 - Implementing</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Strengths</b></p>	
<p>iReady is used as the formative assessment upon enrollment. Each course has a final exam, and multiple options for how they wish to complete the final exam. Staff clearly collaborate within the school and across the network to improve curricula. There is ample tracking of certain academic data—grades, passing rates, credit attainment.</p> <p>There is tracking on 14 specific skills in math that are foundational to the rest of their math courses. Students have a sheet where they track their own progress on these skills.</p> <p>Similarly, in ELA, there are three skills: write a sentence, identify parts of speech, and read at a 1000 Lexile level.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Opportunities for Improvement</b></p>	
<p>The foundational skills in math and ELA are essential to student success and these skills should be assessed more finely. They were not in any of the shared documents or mentioned by teachers in any interviews or observations. There was no evidence on classroom walls of these skills being named and prioritized. Only after specifically asking for what is the approach for tracking essential foundational skills was this information shared by the lead teacher.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Recommended Next Steps</b></p>	
<p>The work done to identify essential skills is a good start. Continue to prioritize this work by bringing it greater attention and focus within the foundational classes. Put charts on the walls showcasing student progress. Consider making the skill assessments the do-nows. Track the completion of the skill assessments at the school level so students not making progress can receive extra attention.</p>	

**INDICATOR 4.5**

Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?	<b>Exceeds Standard</b>
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**Data/Artifacts Reviewed**

List of licensed teachers, classroom observation forms, instructor orientation day schedule, hiring and onboarding guidelines, instructor pd list, professional development plan

**Summary of Findings**

**4.5 a) A standard recruitment/ hiring policy and procedure process is in place and is designed to ensure human resources are leveraged to reflect the needs of the school population.**

Teachers have an in-person interview with a panel, a lead teacher, lead coach, and CCR, and then must do a mock lesson. They are given a specific standard which they must create a lesson for and then have additional interviews.

Teachers stated the process was effective, “Onboarding process for me was very informative. The network shares their processes; we’re becoming one Goodwill. There is more collaboration.”

**4.5 b) Hiring processes are well organized and used to support the success of new staff members.**

Staff felt the hiring process was effective and prepared them well. “It is well organized. I was provided all the curricular materials I needed.”

“Onboarding was great. We were given time to observe other teachers, meet the coaches. We were able to have quite a few each week.”

**4.5 c) Staffing levels adequately allow staff to maximize instructional time and capacity.**

Class sizes are very small. There are ample coaches and teachers to support the students.

**4.5 d) Faculty and staff are appropriately certified/sufficiently trained in areas to which they are assigned and possess the instructional proficiencies needed for the school population served.**

Licenses were appropriate for 7 of 9 teachers.

**4.5 e) Professional learning opportunities are offered regularly in order to support the staff in delivering culturally relevant and differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all learners.**

Teachers feel the PD opportunities are strong. Teachers have had a number of recent professional developments on making their classes culturally relevant.

**4.5 f) Professional learning opportunities are determined through analyses of student outcome data and are clearly linked to strategic objectives and school improvement goals.**

Teachers state that they have had some sessions on the new curriculum. Subject area teachers across the network get together to “go through” the curriculum. They are able to provide feedback during this process.

Other professional development has been on how the adult brain works, in response to the number of older students they have that were struggling at learning new content at times.

**4.5 g) The teacher evaluation process is explicit and regularly implemented with a clear process and criteria.**

Teachers are aware of the evaluation rubric and stated it is used in the observation debrief meetings. Before the meeting, they are asked to self assess on the rubric and then discuss the results with their manager.

In addition to classroom observation, teachers are evaluated on whether they are retaining students. For students they fail to retain, they troubleshoot what could have been done better with individual students.

Rubric Rating	
a. A standard recruitment/ hiring policy and procedure process is in place and is designed to ensure human resources are leveraged to reflect the needs of the school population.	4 - Sustaining
b. Hiring processes are well organized and used to support the success of new staff members.	4 - Sustaining
c. Staffing levels adequately allow staff to maximize instructional time and capacity.	4 - Sustaining
d. Faculty and staff are appropriately certified/sufficiently trained in areas to which they are assigned and possess the instructional proficiencies needed for the school population served.	3 - Implementing
e. Professional learning opportunities are offered regularly in order to support the staff in delivering culturally relevant and differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all learners.	4 - Sustaining

<p>f. Professional learning opportunities are determined through analyses of student outcome data and clearly linked to strategic objectives and school improvement goals.</p>	<p>3 - Implementing</p>
<p>g. The teacher evaluation process is explicit and regularly implemented with a clear process and criteria.</p>	<p>4 - Sustaining</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Strengths</b></p>	
<p>The process for hiring and what each role entails is clear and the interview process was transparent. During teacher interviews and classroom observations, teachers showed evidence of being well equipped to meet the unique needs of their students. Teachers/Staff were clear on how they are evaluated and how they would receive feedback.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Opportunities for Improvement</b></p>	
<p>Professional development will have a greater impact on student outcomes if it is more driven by data on student knowledge and skill mastery. Teachers cited numerous examples of professional development, but few examples were shared of professional development that helped them to be better teachers of their core content during the school year.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Recommended Next Steps</b></p>	
<p>Support the priorities mentioned early through professional development. After developing an approach to lesson internalization, teach it and have teachers practice it within professional development.</p>	

## INDICATOR 4.6

Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?	Exceeds Standard
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Data/Artifacts Reviewed	
Employee handbook, student handbook	
Summary of Findings	
<p><b>4.6 a) Procedures are in place for assessing all stakeholder's perceptions, knowledge, and commitment to the intentions of the school's mission.</b></p> <p>Students understand the mission and are committed. One student said, "I'm 23. I was supposed to graduate in 2017. I was so embarrassed and ashamed. It helped me have humility. And math too. I'm not good at math but I love it because they will sit you down. I don't care if it's 1 plus 1, they will help you with it. You're not afraid to learn. Even if I don't have homework, I like to go home and practice on things."</p>	
<p><b>4.6 b) Procedures are in place for establishing meaningful partnerships with all families and community stakeholders to support the school's mission.</b></p> <p>Unanimously, students feel supported and have strong relationships. One student said, "They are very personal. Sometimes they see us cry. They are like a tight knit family. We can tell them anything without being judged. They are here for us."</p> <p>One student who arrived from Afghanistan a year ago and enrolled at the school in June said, "I can speak very well now. I can speak English now because of the Excel Center."</p>	
Rubric Rating	
a. Procedures are in place for assessing all stakeholder's perceptions, knowledge, and commitment to the intentions of the school's mission.	4 - Sustaining
b. Procedures are in place for establishing meaningful partnerships with all families and community stakeholders to support the school's mission.	4 - Sustaining
Strengths	
<p>Students are aware of how to be successful in this setting. Students have life coaches to guide them through the processes. Each group of stakeholders (teachers, staff, coaches, admin, and students) all shared the same mission. Partnerships with the community (i.e. mental health professionals) are apparent for all stakeholders and are easy to access.</p>	

<b>Opportunities for Improvement</b>
None
<b>Recommended Next Steps</b>
None

## INDICATOR 4.7

Is the school climate responsive to the needs of students, staff, and families?	<b>Exceeds Standard</b>
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<b>Data/Artifacts Reviewed</b>
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Attendance and discipline reports, discipline guide, safety plan, behavior support plan, crisis response plan

<b>Summary of Findings</b>
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**4.7 a) A multi-tiered framework designed to support the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of students is implemented with fidelity.**

Students feel supported. One student said, “They give out their personal number. They have messenger and school email and they all respond. They also do a pantry if you need food. You can pick up a bag that has necessities—food, toothpaste, toiletries. If you feel too embarrassed to ask, you can just pick it up.”

**4.7 b) Culturally responsive and evidenced based interventions are explicitly identified and implemented throughout the school to support the needs of students.**

The school approaches all that it does with an attitude of what will serve the students best. The time of the school day, the length of the school day, the number of terms in a year, when a student can graduate, and the services and amenities available to students are all driven by how to best serve them.

**4.7 c) Explicit procedures for facilitating the development of strong, positive relationships between adults and students are clearly communicated to and implemented by all staff.**

Teachers have significant unstructured time with students that allows them to foster relationships. They go out of their way to meet students' needs. For example, there are multiple classrooms with coffee ready for students in the morning. One teacher has a cart with various cereals and milk for the students to eat when they arrive.

**4.7 d) Procedures are in place for assessing staff, student, and family perspectives to ensure a sense of connectedness and engagement with the school.**

Students cited that they meet with the coach each term and discuss progress towards their graduation plan. Student counsel has a suggestion box and ideas are shared with staff.

<b>Rubric Rating</b>
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<p>a. A multi-tiered framework designed to support the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional</p>	<p>4 - Sustaining</p>
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needs of students is implemented with fidelity.	
b. Culturally responsive and evidenced based interventions are explicitly identified and implemented throughout the school to support the needs of students.	4 - Sustaining
c. Explicit procedures for facilitating the development of strong, positive relationships between adults and students are clearly communicated to and implemented by all staff.	4 - Sustaining
d. Procedures are in place for assessing staff, student, and family perspectives to ensure a sense of connectedness and engagement with the school.	4 - Sustaining
<b>Strengths</b>	
Students feel supported across the board. In classes, they advocate for themselves when they need more time or need further explanation.	
<b>Opportunities for Improvement</b>	
A number of teachers state that they use surveys at the end of the course. Consider making this practice true for all classes.  Students request more events outside of the normal school day and more learning opportunities in the evening (off campus events, prom, etc.).	
<b>Recommended Next Steps</b>	
None	

## INDICATOR 4.8

Is ongoing communication with students and families clear and helpful?	<b>Exceeds Standard</b>
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### Data/Artifacts Reviewed

Public meeting notices, year end data, weekly data, student handbook, first day packet, newsletter

### Summary of Findings

**4.8 a) An active and ongoing system of communication between the school and family members in place.**

Students cite that they can speak with any of their teachers and monitor their work in Google Classroom. They have a CTF—credit tracking form—they use with their Life Coach. They receive progress reports in some classes and can ask their Life Coach to see their grades.

**4.8 b) Procedures for responding to concerns of families are clearly defined and implemented by all school staff and validated by families.**

Students meet with the Life Coach and share any concerns they have. The school clearly addresses individual student concerns.

**4.8 c) Families are regularly informed in their native or home language of their students’ academic and behavioral strengths and areas of need.**

There are 7 ILP students, only one of which is under 18. The online registration and enrollment is in Spanish. The ENL class is designed to support ILP students. Literature in classes can be translated and Luna and Google Translate are used.

**4.8 d) The school’s communication methods are designed to promote family- school partnerships in ways that meet the needs of a diverse set of families.**

There are numerous examples of varied communication. Many teachers post their email address and phone number. Life Coaches meet with students regularly. Friday office-hours are encouraged by having food and a raffle for students who attend.

### Rubric Rating

a. An active and ongoing system of communication between the school and family members in place.	4 - Sustaining
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<p>b. Procedures for responding to concerns of families are clearly defined and implemented by all school staff and validated by families.</p>	<p>4 - Sustaining</p>
<p>c. Families are regularly informed in their native or home language of their students' academic and behavioral strengths and areas of need.</p>	<p>3 - Implementing</p>
<p>d. The school's communication methods are designed to promote family- school partnerships in ways that meet the needs of a diverse set of families.</p>	<p>4 - Sustaining</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Strengths</b></p>	
<p>There is a strong emphasis on coaches being point of contact for concerns from parents and/or students. The coaches support every aspect of the student and the coaches are also specialists at removing barriers and helping students access what they need in order to be successful.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Opportunities for Improvement</b></p>	
<p>Develop more support for multiple languages within the school. This area of the city has a large amount of Spanish speakers and Haitian Creole speakers. If there were more bilingual resources and/or staff on site, then even more of the community would be served by the school.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Recommended Next Steps</b></p>	
<p>Identify ways to support speakers of other languages in more ways than google translate and Luna. Both of these are strong, but giving more access to those acquiring English will allow for more community members to be your students.</p>	

## INDICATOR 4.9

Do the school's special education files demonstrate that it is in legal compliance and is implementing best practice?	<b>Exceeds Standard</b>
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Data/Artifacts Reviewed	
IEP folders, interview with Mr. Murakami, TOR, teacher interviews, observations	
Summary of Findings	
<p><b>4.9 a) Services outlined in Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) adequately match the exceptional needs of the student.</b></p> <p>During the file audit, IEPs were all in compliance with specified needs with appropriate progress monitoring.</p> <p><b>4.9 b) IEP plans include student specific goals and plans for ongoing assessment of student progress.</b></p> <p>Each IEP had specific goals and plans for obtaining the goals.</p> <p><b>4.9 c) IEP goals are rigorous and based on state and national learning standards.</b></p> <p>Each IEP had goals, but could be improved on rigor and specificity of timeline for completing the goals.</p> <p><b>4.9 d) IEP goals are reviewed and revised annually as determined by present levels of student level of performance.</b></p> <p>All folders were in compliance with the timeline for move-ins, and even one example of an initial case conference. This is a stellar example of the wraparound support that this school offers students.</p> <p><b>4.9 e) IEP plans explicitly identify requirements for specifically designed curriculum and instruction to align with student needs.</b></p> <p>While the curriculum is not adjusted for students, all IEPs do specify when they need instructional accommodations (i.e. guided notes, small group instruction) Teachers have access to support with accommodations and when necessary, modifications. Classroom teachers said during teacher interviews that they have access to implement what is needed for students.</p>	
Rubric Rating	
a. Services outlined in Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) adequately match the exceptional needs of the student.	4 - Sustaining

b. IEP plans include student specific goals and plans for ongoing assessment of student progress.	4 - Sustaining
c. IEP goals are rigorous and based on state and national learning standards.	3 - Implementing
d. IEP goals are reviewed and revised annually as determined by present levels of student level of performance.	4 - Sustaining
e. IEP plans explicitly identify requirements for specifically designed curriculum and instruction to align with student needs.	4 - Sustaining
<b>Strengths</b>	
<p>The EL TOR works closely with teachers, leaders, and students to ensure that all have what they need. There was evidence of guided notes for students, small groups, brain breaks, and weekly check-ins for students to receive support from their coach and SpED TOR.</p> <p>The IEPs all included data from teachers, the students themselves, and an intake interview from the TOR. These points were all compiled in the IEPs in order to best meet student goals during school and in preparation for postsecondary careers and college.</p> <p>Progress monitoring was present for all students.</p>	
<b>Opportunities for Improvement</b>	
<p>Adjust WIDA scores for students that are dual-labeled from scale scores to proficiency scores. Clarify outdated wording.</p> <p>IEPs can be more rigorous. For example, one IEP seeks to move a student up a grade level to 9th grade.</p> <p>Staff and students showed examples of accommodations throughout the classes, but there could be more explicit accommodations in the IEPs.</p>	
<b>Recommended Next Steps</b>	
Identify steps for students to progress to 12th grade standards.	



## INDICATOR 4.10

Is the school implementing best practice related to access and services to students with limited English proficiency?	<b>Does Not Meet Standard</b>
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Data/Artifacts Reviewed
EL folder, staff interviews, documents, Home Language Survey Process, MLL Weekly Data charts
Summary of Findings
<p><b>4.10 a) Staff have a clear understanding of legal obligations, current legislation, research, and effective practices relating to the provision of services for ELL students. *</b></p> <p>During the interview, staff explained that they have the Home Language Survey in their enrollment packet. This is not in compliance with IDOE regulations. There should be one Indiana HLS during a student's entire Indiana career. The reason for this is to avoid bias, not to re-identify students that have previously exited the EL program. (There is a current student in EL file that was previously labeled as Fluent Not Assessed that has now been rescreened due to the HLS process being out of compliance.)</p> <p>The ILP is not the most recent format required by IDOE.</p> <p>EL students are required to have English Language Services provided by a licensed EL teacher per IDOE. There is not a licensed EL TOR on staff at this location.</p> <p>Many staff members shared how they differentiate instruction for English Language Learners. One student shared how quickly she has been able to acquire English is due to her teachers here at the Meadows Excel Center and also the support that she has received.</p> <p><b>4.10 b) Staff have a knowledge of the process of language acquisition and the skill sets needed to differentiate instructional strategies to meet the needs of ELL students.</b></p> <p>There is network training on how to support English Language Learners. However, the ILPs indicate there is a need for staff member(s) to be EL certified. The ILPs have the same accommodations marked for level 4 students and level 1 students. There should be one EL folder per student.</p> <p><b>4.10 c) Procedures are in place to ensure relationships with ELL students, parents, and external providers are well-managed and in compliance with Indiana law and regulations.</b></p> <p>This school has clear structures and supports for connecting students with health and wellness needs, life coaching needs, as well as daycare. These all support multilingual needs. In addition to those supports, the school also offers ENL foundational classes.</p> <p><b>4.10 d) ILP plans include student specific goals and plan for ongoing assessment of student progress.</b></p> <p>There are no goals in ILPs.</p>

**4.10 e) ILP plans explicitly identify needs for targeted instruction to align with student needs.**

ILPs are in one folder. ILPs are completed but there are not any different instructional modifications for students that are at various levels.

**Rubric Rating**

a. Staff have a clear understanding of legal obligations, current legislation, research, and effective practices relating to the provision of services for ELL students.	2 - Emerging
b. Staff have a knowledge of the process of language acquisition and the skill sets needed to differentiate instructional strategies to meet the needs of ELL students.	3 - Implementing
c. Procedures are in place to ensure relationships with ELL students, parents, and external providers are well-managed and in compliance with Indiana law and regulations.	4 - Sustaining
d. ILP plans include student specific goals and a plan for ongoing assessment of student progress.	2 - Emerging
e. ILP plans explicitly identify needs for targeted instruction to align with student needs.	2 - Emerging

**Strengths**

The teaching staff indicates a willingness to meet students wherever they are and build upon. Students gain confidence and motivation through the patience and consistent techniques used throughout the classes in the building.

Teachers have shared a basic knowledge of how to support ENL students and should receive greater training in this area.

**Opportunities for Improvement**

Having a licensed EL TOR for compliance and foundational English instruction would benefit the students greatly. One teacher would be able to enhance instruction, update compliance to current standards, and also collaborate with staff more intentionally.

Update ILP to the current IDOE ILP.

Update network Home Language Survey enrollment process to the IDOE compliance process.

See this [IDOE EL Guidebook](#).

### Recommended Next Steps

Hire a certified EL TOR and/or ELL Coordinator to instruct English Learners/develop plans specifically for the unique needs of English Learners (see [IDOE EL TOR memo](#)). This person should also oversee the identification process for English Learners so that the building will be in compliance and also more readily serve the diverse population surrounding the building.

## CLOSING AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Strengths:

1. **There is a clear track to achieving a certification or dual credit enrollment, and that track works.**

The structure of how the school works is fully oriented around getting the students to graduation, including the certification or dual enrollment credits. There is not a time limit students must meet. If students enroll with no credits, they can be done in one and half years. The school day doesn't start until 9:00, supporting families who have children at home. Students are allowed to do a full day or half day. Students can start and stop as necessary given their life circumstances. When they enroll, they meet with their coach to determine a plan for achieving graduation.

2. **Students love the school.**

They are proud of the effort they are putting into achieving their degree and are made to feel welcomed and valued. The student body is diverse, and they take pride in that diversity. Not only students gaining knowledge and skills, but also confidence and building relationships that will help them to achieve their goals in life.

### Recommended Next Steps:

1. **Develop a clear process for lesson internalization, particularly in math.**

Anytime steps are being taught in math, students are memorizing for short term retention. Instead, refrain from teaching steps. Refer to the underlying concept so students experience the joy of understanding math. If students don't know when to circle two negatives to make a positive, refer to the conceptual reason. Keep doing this until the students understand, not just memorize the rule. This will serve them better in their daily lives. This will also require greater internalization and content knowledge on the part of teachers.

2. **Enhance the English Learner Program.**

There is no staff member who is the licensed EL TOR. All LEAs must have an EL TOR ([see EL Teacher of Record FAQ](#) and [EL Program Staffing Memo](#)). Additionally, there are systems for identification and services that are not correct. There should be one Home Language Survey for Indiana students' entire educational career ([link](#)). Additionally, if the school used the Indiana Link online system, all ILPs would be in compliance and have goals. Strongly consider hiring one ENL licensed person to oversee the EL identification, programming, ILP, and HLS process.