

# Illinois Prep TIER I APPLICATION

Submitted by Zia Learning

## Executive Summary

**Applicants are required to submit an Executive Summary with their Tier I Application. The Executive Summary should be a stand-alone document that provides a succinct narrative overview of the application. It should be no longer than two pages and include the following components:**

- **Name of the proposed school(s)<sup>2</sup>;**
- **Number and type of proposed school(s);**
- **Mission, vision, educational philosophy and model, and culture;**
- **Demonstrated capacity to open and manage a high-quality school, including a brief explanation of how the proposed school type and model will drive success for the targeted student population; and**
- **A list of the targeted communit(ies) and intended student recruitment boundaries, the rationale for proposing to open a new school in the targeted communit(ies), and an overview of parent and community engagement and support.**

We are pleased to submit the following Tier 1 Application for a new charter school option for Chicago Public Schools. Our proposed school is Illinois Prep. Illinois Prep is a full-time virtual school option, with blended learning support services.

The mission of Illinois Prep is to prepare all students for 21st century post-secondary success through an innovative model that leverages virtual learning options to allow for a global learning community enabled, empowered and connected through digital technologies. Illinois Prep would serve k-12 students. To achieve this, we will create a new model that leverages technology to personalize learning while stressing project based and applied learning. The Illinois Prep Academy seeks to serve underserved students seeking a full-time virtual option. In a district of over 350,000 students located in the third largest city in the US, there is currently only one virtual option that is located in the West Loop with a once a week attendance requirement. This option leaves hundreds of students in need of a full time virtual school without an attendance option. Illinois Prep would co-locate its site-based blended support services center at the Daley College campus on 75th and Pulaski and it's satellite campus, The Arturo Velasquez Institute, located in the Little Village Neighborhood.

Unlike schools that target a specific geographic area, Illinois Prep offers a city-wide, virtual option that meets the needs of a targeted population/needs. The population of students will include:

- Students for whom attending a traditional school is not possible due to health issues
- Students who have school refusal issues resulting from social emotional, mental health and/or bullying issues
- Students who have life circumstances that make attending a traditional school difficult/impossible (i.e. students who travel extensively for competitive sports, students who are parenting full time, students who are working actors/performers)
- Students who are historically underserved by virtual and 21st Century options

The Illinois Prep school model is based on active and applied personalized learning in a virtual school setting. Our design team are leaders in the development, design and implementation of personalized, blended and online learning models. We have taken our years of experience to craft a new model for virtual learning that fully employs new technologies to provide a more robust and engaging learning experience for virtual students. Key features include:

- An authentically engaging curriculum that combines online learning courses with **project based and applied learning options**
- High-touch and **daily live learning** to foster relationships between teachers and students and peer to peer collaboration
- An emphasis on the whole-child through an embedded school-wide **Social Emotional Learning Model**
- A **personalized learning framework** that guides all facets of teaching and learning

What is new and innovative about our model is that we are proposing a new approach to virtual school that combines the best of solid pedagogical approaches (applied learning, project based learning, MTSS) with a clear emphasis on REAL-TIME instructional supports coupled with new capabilities in providing authentically personalized learning paths and plans.

The Illinois Prep design team is committed to partnering and engaging with community in the design, launch and operations of our school. Our approach to community engagement is to meet with local alderman, leaders, community members and stakeholders as a first step in each local community. We have found that this is critical to building a broad base of support from multiple neighborhood stakeholder groups including parents, faith based organizations, cultural institutions, businesses and other members of the community.

We understand the critical importance of not only garnering community support for this unique option, but also measuring the authentic need for a virtual school program in CPS.

To date we have conducted the following activities:

- Meetings with City Colleges of Chicago
- Meetings with the President of Daley College (Eduardo Garza)

- Meetings with Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council
- Meetings with program directors at hospital-based school refusal treatment centers

In addition, in order to yield critical data regarding actual student/parent need for this option we coordinated with the existing sole provider of full time virtual learning in Illinois (Chicago Virtual Charter Academy which is a K12 Inc School).

Through k12 Inc. we were able to obtain the following information:

- Current total of full time virtual learners at CVCA - 652
- Current wait-list at CVCA - 204
- Current family inquiries about a full time virtual option for their child over the past three year period - 3,874

Our application design team is comprised of education experts from Zia Learning, a Chicago-based education consulting company whose founder served as the Director of Blended and Online Learning for CPS. Our team is comprised of leaders, innovators and pioneers in the space of personalized, blended and online learning. . As a nationally recognized pioneer as well as innovator in the field of 21<sup>st</sup> century education, Zia is proud to have developed models that are in use across the nation to deliver highest quality, successful distance learning options.

Our selected management organization is A3 Education. A3 has demonstrated excellence in managing virtual school models that meet the specific needs of the districts they serve. This innovative team has worked together to craft a new vision for virtual school to better serve students who require a full-time virtual option.

It is evident from our community engagement and research that in a district and city the size of Chicago that there is not only additional need for full time virtual options to serve students for whom a virtual option is their best learning environment, but also a need for a more effective approach to truly engaging virtual/online learning. We seek to not only meet this need, but to also put forth a virtual learning model that provides students a more engaging learning environment and yields higher levels of student success. The following application outlines our experience, model and commitment to providing an authentically personalized, 21<sup>st</sup> century virtual school model to serve the students of CPS.

## Domain 1: Community Engagement and Support

**Domain 1: Community Engagement and Support assesses whether the applicant garnered authentic parent and community support and demonstrated true demand for the proposed school.**

The Illinois Prep design team is committed to partnering and engaging with community in the design, launch and operations of our school. Our approach to community engagement is to meet with local alderman, leaders, community members and stakeholders as a first step in each local community. We have found that this is critical to building a broad base of support from multiple neighborhood stakeholder groups including parents, faith based organizations, cultural institutions, businesses and other members of the community. In addition, because we plan to operate inside of an existing facility (Daley College) we know we require the support of City Colleges and the City of Chicago. As such, upon release of the RFP, we started scheduling meetings with aldermen in the priority communities and have been able to meet with several aldermen, community leaders and stakeholders over the past few weeks.

We understand the critical importance of not only garnering community support for this unique option, but also measuring the authentic need for a virtual school program in CPS.

To date we have conducted the following activities:

- Meetings with City Colleges of Chicago
- Meetings with the President of Daley College (Eduardo Garza)
- Meetings with Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council
- Meetings with program directors at hospital-based school refusal treatment centers

In addition, in order to yield critical data regarding actual student/parent need for this option we coordinated with the existing sole provider of full time virtual learning in Illinois (Chicago Virtual Charter Academy which is a K12 Inc. school). K12 Inc. widely advertises in Illinois about the benefits of full time virtual learning as an option for students who are best served by full time virtual learning. They maintain and/or run:

- Television and print advertisements
- An Illinois-specific website to obtain additional information about virtual school options in Chicago
- A wait-list for the current Chicago Virtual Charter Academy
- A “need/demand” list of families seeking additional virtual school options in Chicago

Through K12 Inc. we were able to obtain the following information:

- Current total of full time virtual learners at CVCA - 652
- Current wait-list at CVCA - 204
- Current family inquiries about a full time virtual option for their child over the past three years - 3,874

It is evident that in a district and city the size of Chicago that there is additional need for full time virtual options to serve students for whom a virtual option is the best learning environment. In addition, as described below, the only full time virtual option in Chicago is located in the West Loop with a once a week attendance option. We wholeheartedly agree that students do best in a full time virtual option when blended learning support services are made available. However, it is critical that this option is expanded to serve additional communities outside of the downtown/Loop area with site-based supports that are reachable by families living on the south and west sides of Chicago.

In order to continue to engage the community in this process we will:

- Hold community engagement sessions
- Participate in local community events and fairs
- Provide information via local and city-wide newspapers including:
  - The Chicago Tribune
  - The Chicago Sun Times
  - La Raza
  - Hoy

Additional critical information about the citywide community of learners we wish to support, along with specific information about students who are underserved by the current option, is in the Community Overview section below.

Should we be approved for Tier 1, we will continue to work closely with the community to ensure that our team continues to design a program that meets the needs of Chicago families and students.

## Section 1.1: Community Overview

### 1.1.1: Targeted Communit(ies)

**Cite the possible location(s) of the proposed school. Explain the student recruitment area for the proposed school(s) and the targeted communit(ies) within it.**

Unlike schools that target a specific geographic area, Illinois Prep offers a citywide virtual option that meets the needs of a targeted population. The population of students will include:

- Students for whom attending a traditional school is not possible due to health issues
- Students who have school refusal issues resulting from social emotional, mental health and/or bullying issues
- Students who have life circumstances that make attending a traditional school difficult/impossible (i.e. students who travel extensively for competitive sports, students who are parenting full time, students who are working actors/performers)
- Students who are historically underserved by virtual and 21st Century options
  - Further information is included below regarding unmet needs for full time virtual options

### 1.1.2: Community Characteristics

**Provide a detailed summary, including references, about the neighborhood(s) within the recruitment area that includes:**

- **A historical overview containing information critical to understanding the community that the school seeks to serve (e.g., the major political, economic, educational, demographic, or community-specific trends);**
- **Community demographics, including number of school-aged children, median or average family income, average level of educational attainment, and unemployment rate;**
- **Population trends, including a recent estimate of the total number of residents;**
- **Major employers;**
- **Local businesses and non-profits;**
- **Community newspapers; and <sup>2</sup> Please note that Illinois law (ILCS 27A-7(a)(1)) requires that the name of the proposed charter school must include the words “charter school.”**
- **Public and private schools in the area, highlighting instances of overcrowding within the schools or in the community as a whole.**

The Illinois Prep Academy seeks to meet the needs of underserved students looking for a full-time virtual option. In a district of over 350,000 students located in the third largest city in the US, there is currently only one virtual option, which is located in the West Loop with a once-per-week attendance requirement. This option leaves hundreds of students in

need of a full-time virtual school without an attendance option. Illinois Prep would co-locate its site-based blended support services center at the Daley College campus on 75th and Pulaski and its satellite campus, The Arturo Valesquez Insitute, located in the Little Village Neighborhood.

The community we wish to serve is 21st century learners across the city with unique educational needs. The world has changed substantially in the last 100 years, and education needs have changed as well. In order to ensure our children are fully prepared for a world we could hardly imagine when we were growing up, it is critical that options are provided that meet each child's individual needs. While traditional school structures may fit the needs of most students, there are students for whom a brick and mortar environment and typical school schedule is not only ill suited, but is actually an impossible environment based on significant life and learning needs. "One-size-fits-all" education is no longer the only available option. A personalized learning approach works—for both learners and teachers—by using technology to go beyond the borders of traditional classroom structures, match the pace of instruction to students' needs, and tailor learning to their interests. Personalized learning empowers new options to meet students' individual learning needs.

### **21st Century, Engaged Virtual Models**

"Virtual School" may conjure up notions of students sitting all day at a computer completing online reading passages and multiple choice quizzes. Illinois Prep represents the new generation of virtual school possibilities. Rather than passively receiving and reiterating information, students in 21st century personalized learning environments take an active role in their education and contribute to their own learning. They can work with teachers to set learning goals for themselves, and are able to work toward them through virtual and applied learning options, combining web-based and face-to-face interaction with their teacher and the use of education technology.

Virtual personalized learning also gives students the opportunity to independently seek out resources beyond those that are offered at school. Students are given the chance to think critically, explore "beyond the lesson" and apply learning to the world around them.

## Why families choose virtual options

# Why Families Choose Online School



Parents choose to educate their children at home using a virtual school for a variety of reasons. In fact, most families identify several contributing factors. After all, with so many ways to customize the learning method, schedule, and environment, online school can be personalized to a child's needs. Yet, while there are many reasons for choosing this form of education, recent data revealed that the most common fall into several broad categories.

### Not so traditional

Fifty-one percent of families surveyed reported that their children do not learn well in a traditional school setting. This is not surprising, in light of the comments parents make once they've made the switch to online learning. We often hear them mention the benefit of having fewer distractions and a quieter learning space. This statistic may also reflect those children who need more one-on-one attention to learn, as well as those who thrive with extra parental involvement.

### Change of setting, options and learning environment

In the same way that parents choose any charter option as an alternative to the neighborhood school, parents who seek a virtual option are seeking a different learning setting that meets the needs of their child. Forty-three percent of parents named wanting a "change in the learning environment" as a reason for opting out of their previous school situation. Another 32 percent specified their desire to have a "setting that better matches their child's needs."



### **Change of pace**

Another top answer was the desire for “a more flexible schedule.” Creating the daily schedule to suit the child’s needs can be one of the most critical benefits of virtual school. While the traditional schedule works for some, it does not work for all. Some students need additional time on task. Other students want to move ahead to advanced learning options.

Our surveys tell us that their kids learn more with our schools because they have the ability to work at their own pace. Students can move more quickly through concepts they find easy and take their time when the topic is more difficult. Flexibility can mean arranging the schedule to accommodate a child’s physical needs, allowing time for medical or dental appointments—or simply sleeping in when bedtime was later than usual due to health or other issues beyond the child’s control.

Another 7 percent of parents indicated that their children were pursuing performing arts or athletic careers. The flexible scheduling of online school allows these kids to work learning around lessons, practice, performances, competitions, and travel.

### **No more bullying**

It shouldn’t happen to any child, but sadly, 16 percent of parents indicate that they switched to virtual education because their children were bullied in their traditional school. Many families report that their kids are happier and begin to regain confidence as online school students. Others say the one-on-one attention from teachers, interaction with other students in the virtual classroom, and in-person field trips help their previously bullied children build their social skills.

Illinois Prep seeks to serve a citywide, but specific population of over 400,000 school-aged children in the city of Chicago, of which approximately 350,000 currently attend CPS.

### **According to the most recent US Census, Chicago demographics are as follows:**

#### **Population estimates, July 1, 2016, (V2016) 2,704,958**

<b>Population</b>	
Population estimates, July 1, 2017, (V2017)	<a href="#">NA</a>
Population estimates, July 1, 2016, (V2016)	2,704,958
Population estimates base, April 1, 2010, (V2017)	<a href="#">NA</a>
Population estimates base, April 1, 2010, (V2016)	2,695,620
Population, percent change - April 1, 2010 (estimates base) to July 1, 2017, (V2017)	<a href="#">NA</a>
Population, percent change - April 1, 2010 (estimates base) to July 1, 2016, (V2016)	0.3%

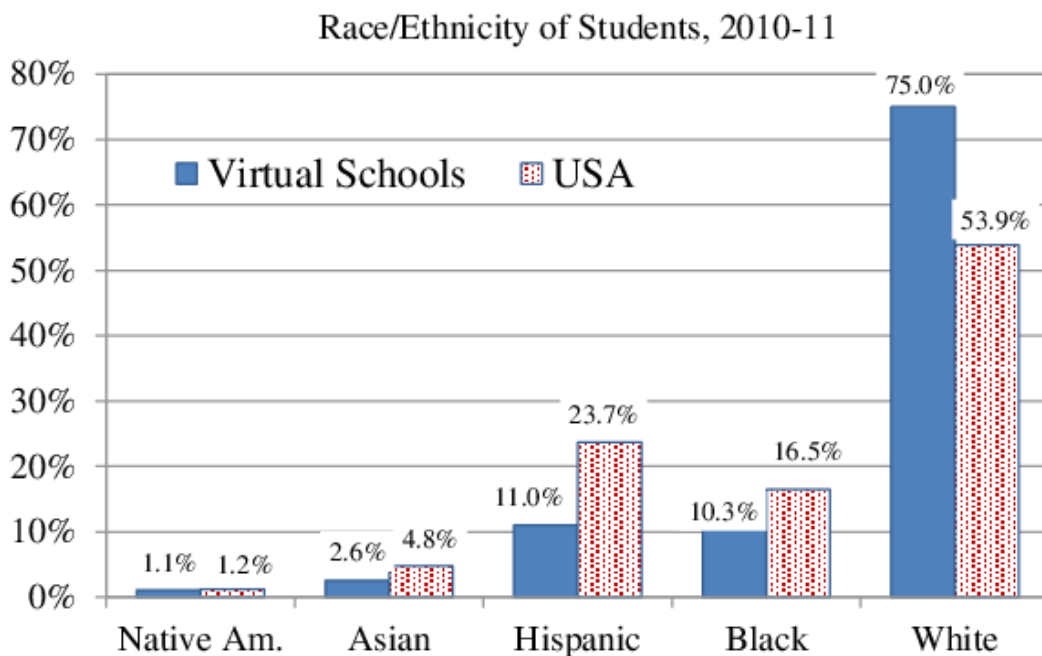
<b>Population, Census, April 1, 2010</b>	<b>2,695,598</b>
<b>Age and Sex</b>	
Persons under 5 years, percent	6.6%
Persons under 18 years, percent	21.9%
Persons 65 years and over, percent	11.2%
Female persons, percent	51.5%
<b>Race and Hispanic Origin</b>	
White alone, percent <a href="#">(a)</a>	48.7%
Black or African American alone, percent <a href="#">(a)</a>	30.9%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent <a href="#">(a)</a>	0.3%
Asian alone, percent <a href="#">(a)</a>	6.1%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent <a href="#">(a)</a>	0.0%
Two or More Races, percent	2.5%
Hispanic or Latino, percent <a href="#">(b)</a>	29.1%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent	32.3%
<b>Population Characteristics</b>	
Veterans, 2012-2016	78,919
Foreign born persons, percent, 2012-2016	20.9%
<b>Housing</b>	
Housing units, July 1, 2016, (V2016)	<a href="#">X</a>
Owner-occupied housing unit rate, 2012-2016	44.1%
Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2012-2016	\$225,200
Median selected monthly owner costs -with a mortgage, 2012-2016	\$1,847
Median selected monthly owner costs -without a mortgage, 2012-2016	\$637
Median gross rent, 2012-2016	\$987

<b>Building permits, 2016</b>	<a href="#">X</a>
<b>Families &amp; Living Arrangements</b>	
<b>Households, 2012-2016</b>	1,042,579
<b>Persons per household, 2012-2016</b>	2.55
<b>Living in same house 1 year ago, percent of persons age 1 year+, 2012-2016</b>	84.1%
<b>Language other than English spoken at home, percent of persons age 5 years+, 2012-2016</b>	36.2%
<b>Education</b>	
<b>High school graduate or higher, percent of persons age 25 years+, 2012-2016</b>	83.1%
<b>Bachelor's degree or higher, percent of persons age 25 years+, 2012-2016</b>	36.5%
<b>Health</b>	
<b>With a disability, under age 65 years, percent, 2012-2016</b>	7.1%
<b>Persons without health insurance, under age 65 years, percent</b>	16.3%
<b>Economy</b>	
<b>In civilian labor force, total, percent of population age 16 years+, 2012-2016</b>	66.4%
<b>In civilian labor force, female, percent of population age 16 years+, 2012-2016</b>	62.1%
<b>Total accommodation and food services sales, 2012 (\$1,000)<a href="#">(c)</a></b>	8,996,441
<b>Total health care and social assistance receipts/revenue, 2012 (\$1,000)<a href="#">(c)</a></b>	20,064,843
<b>Total manufacturers shipments, 2012 (\$1,000)<a href="#">(c)</a></b>	26,503,402
<b>Total merchant wholesaler sales, 2012 (\$1,000)<a href="#">(c)</a></b>	33,134,983
<b>Total retail sales, 2012 (\$1,000)<a href="#">(c)</a></b>	22,627,328
<b>Total retail sales per capita, 2012<a href="#">(c)</a></b>	\$8,335
<b>Transportation</b>	
<b>Mean travel time to work (minutes), workers age 16 years+, 2012-2016</b>	34.4
<b>Income &amp; Poverty</b>	

<b>Median household income (in 2016 dollars), 2012-2016</b>	<b>\$50,434</b>
<b>Per capita income in past 12 months (in 2016 dollars), 2012-2016</b>	<b>\$30,847</b>
<b>Persons in poverty, percent</b>	<b>21.7%</b>

**National Demographic Data on Virtual School Students**

While city-wide data is a critical component of understanding a citywide option, perhaps more important is to examine the demographics of students who are currently enrolled in full time virtual school options in the US and the apparent under-representation and available options to minority students, and in Chicago particularly Latino students. Nationally, the proportion of minority students in virtual schools has slowly increased a few percentage points over the past few years. Nevertheless, aggregate data from full-time virtual schools still differs substantially from national averages in terms of student ethnicity. Just over 65% of the students in virtual schools were White-Non-Hispanic, compared with the national mean of 49.8% (see Figure below). Not surprisingly, then, the proportion of Black and Hispanic students in virtual schools was noticeably lower than the national average. Only 15% of students in virtual schools were Black while the national average was 25.5%; only 12% of students in virtual schools were Hispanic while the national average was 15.5%.



**Chicago Public Demographic Data on Virtual School Students**

While Chicago data for African American students is significantly higher than the national average, (51% vs. 15%) the percentage of Hispanic students is similar to national averages (19% vs. 12%). While one can rightfully conclude that Chicago is doing a better job of

providing equity in 21st century education options, it is important to note that 46% of CPS students are Hispanic while only 19% of students who currently have access to a full-time virtual option are of Hispanic heritage. Illinois Prep has intentionally located one of its site-based blended support centers in a historically Hispanic neighborhood to ensure increased and equitable access to the vital services that a full-time virtual option can provide students who are best served in this environment.

### Chicago Full Time Virtual Student Demographics

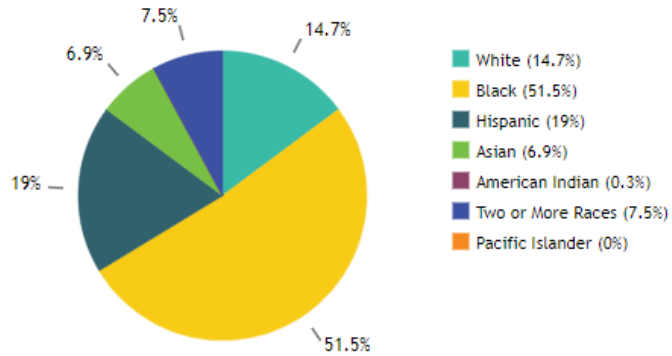
CHICAGO VIRTUAL CHARTER SCHOOL (K-12) - CITY OF CHICAGO SD 299

[View At-a-Glance PDF](#)

- School Snapshot
- Academic Progress
- School Environment
- Students
- Enrollment
- Racial/Ethnic Diversity
- Low Income Students
- Students with IEPs

#### Racial/Ethnic Diversity

Percentage of students belonging to a particular racial/ethnic group.



Illinois Prep seeks to address to critical student school/community population issues:

1. There is a significant wait-list for full-time virtual options in Chicago
2. There is a lack of opportunity for this critical option for students who are not able to attend the only full-time option (which has a once-per-week attendance requirement in the West Loop)
3. There is a lack of Hispanic minority access and participation in full time virtual options, in spite of documented need and demand for these options.

In 2017, the Chicago area lost population for a third year in a row, while the country’s Southern and Western areas saw population gains. At the heart of the problem is Cook County, which topped the list of population losers in 2016. One key reason cited by researchers is that fewer immigrants are moving to the city and many are leaving.

#### History:

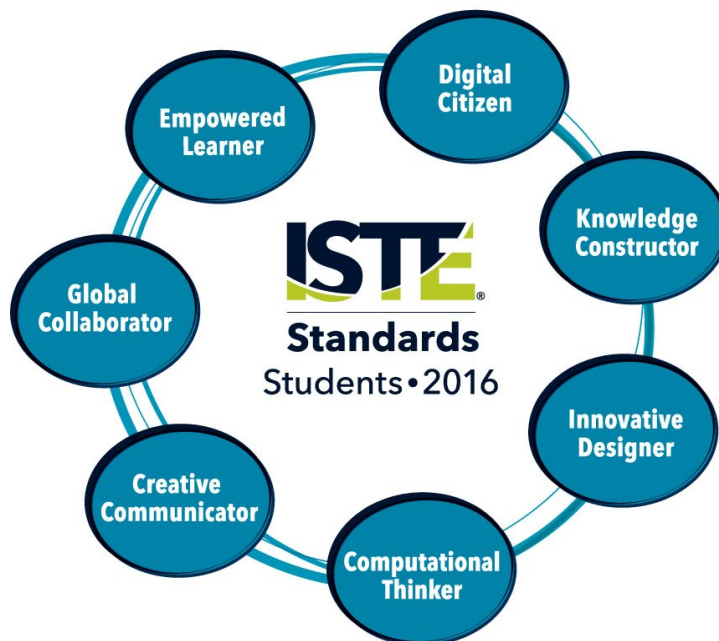
The fate of Chicago’s population has always been tied to national migration trends. By 1870, immigrants already made up 48 percent of the city’s population, according to Chicago demographer Rob Paral. With restrictive immigration laws in the early part of the 19th century, the city’s population ebbed; when the laws changed in 1965, opening the

door to the biggest, most diverse wave of immigrants, it grew. Chicago and its suburbs started filling out, largely because of immigrants from Mexico, for whom it was the top destination after L.A. During the 1990s, this Mexican influx made up a staggering 105 percent of the total population growth—head and shoulders above other large hubs like Dallas (73 percent) and L.A. (63 percent) (*the Chicago Council of Global Affairs researchers*).

Ensuring equitable access to education options for all students is a critical concern for the future of Chicago. Illinois Prep is committed to serving all students in Chicago for whom a virtual school model is the best learning environment. Unlike traditional schools where you might see overcrowding, a virtual school instead has wait-lists and students that go unserved and seek options such as home school. Currently there are hundreds of students on the wait-list for the only full-time virtual school option in CPS (CVCS) with hundreds more interested students, as indicated by recently conducted needs surveys.

### **Preparing Chicago Students for the 21st Century Job Market**

Chicagoland continues to attract technology-based and tech-focused businesses. Our model uniquely prepares students for the world of work in these future jobs where connections are made as frequently via technology as they are face-to-face. Students in our model are immersed in and use technology daily as a means of communicating, creating, and completing their work. Students are required to operate in a world where they connect globally, requiring the skills of digital communication, information synthesis, applied learning and other critical digital skills. These skills, as outlined by ISTE below, are both 21st century learning as well as workforce skills.



Chicago's 100 biggest digital tech companies alone employ nearly 48,000 people, up from 41,000 in 2016. The number of people employed by Chicago's biggest tech companies rose 15 percent between 2016 and 2017. That figure hews closely to last year's report, which found a year-over-year growth rate of 17 percent. Major employers in Chicago that are seeking students highly trained in technology include:

- Motorola
- Groupon
- Boeing
- United Airlines
- Google
- Salesforce

In addition, Chicago is actively seeking to attract new technology-based companies, such as Amazon. A tech-ready workforce is critical to "the new day in The Second City."

### **1.1.3: Student Population**

**Provide an overview of the anticipated/target student population that includes:**

- **Anticipated performance levels;**
- **Anticipated demographics;**
- **Target percentage of special education students;**
- **Target percentage of English learners;**
- **Target percentage of homeless students; and**
- **Anticipated academic and social, emotional, and physical health needs.**

Illinois Prep intends to serve a citywide population that reflects the demographics of CPS. We are intentionally seeking to locate our blended support service centers on the south and southwest side in locations that are accessible to a variety of populations. The current fully virtual option (CVCS) is located in the West Loop and does not have a student population that reflects the district as a whole. We will work to better communicate our school option to the Latino and African American communities, along with other populations to ensure our school serves all student populations in CPS. As such, we anticipate that the demographics of our proposed school will mirror those of the students at our first school:

- Economically Disadvantaged Students: 77.7%
- English Language Learners (ELL): 18.0%
- Students with IEPs: 13.7%

#### **Student Racial Makeup**

- African American: 37.0%
- Asian: 4.1%
- Hispanic: 46.8%
- White: 10.2%

Homeless students who elect to participate in Illinois Prep will be highly encouraged to take advantage of the blended learning support service center as their home base for learning. However, we anticipate a lower than average number of homeless students (with district wide percentage of approximately 6%).

### **Anticipated Performance Levels**

As a citywide option, Illinois Prep anticipates serving students with performance levels that relatively mirror citywide data. Currently, while 61% of Caucasian students in CPS meet or exceed standards, 16% of African American and 26% of Latino students meet or exceed proficiency standards. Illinois Prep recognizes the tremendous accomplishments of CPS in moving the overall graduation rate to over 80% in CPS. However, there is still work to be done in closing the achievement gap in terms of meeting and exceeding proficiency standards for all students.

Illinois Prep seeks to work to close the achievement gap not only in graduation rates, but also in growth, mastery and proficiency.





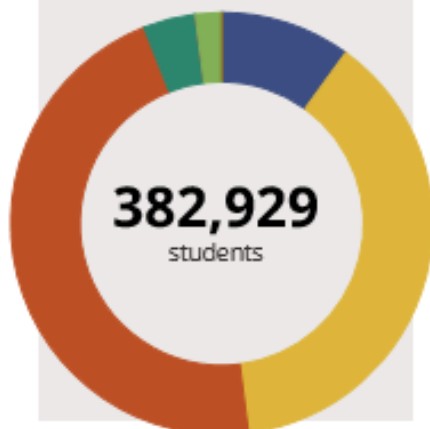
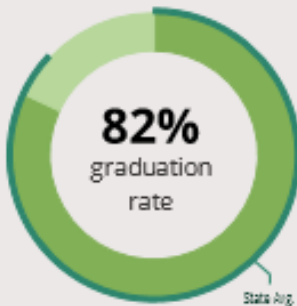
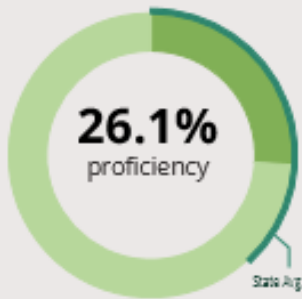
# CITY OF CHICAGO SD 299

42 W Madison St 2Nd Flr Chicago, IL 60602 4413 (773) 553-2747

Grades: P-12

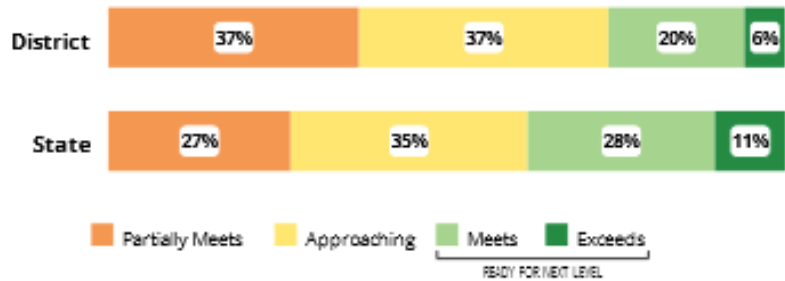
Superintendent: Dr. Janice

## FAST FACTS



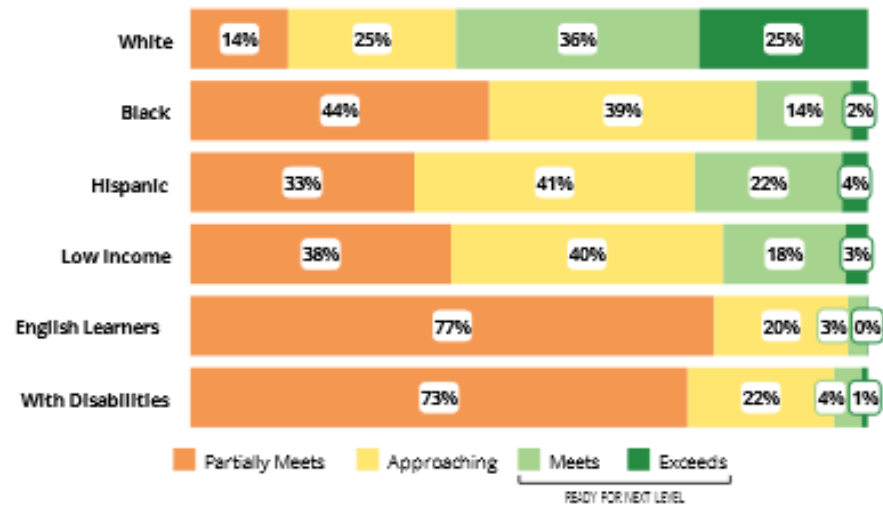
## Academic Success

High school students take the SAT in Math and English Language Arts. The display shows SAT results in four performance levels.



## Success by Student Group

This display shows SAT performance levels for each student group. No data is shown for groups with fewer than 10 students.



## Student Characteristics

White	10%	Low Income	83%
Black	38%	English Learners	18%
Hispanic	46%	With Disabilities	11%
Asian	4%	Homeless	4%
American Indian	0%		
Two or More Races	2%		
Pacific Islander	0%		

## Section 1.2: Facilities

*Note: Per Illinois law (105 ILCS 5/27A-7(a)(3)), the applicant must identify at least two viable independent facility options unless it has fully secured an independent facility. Applicants will must update to this section in the Tier II Application. Applicants should refer to the Tier II application to familiarize themselves with the questions and submissions required in Tier II.*

### 1.2.1: Space Requirements

**Provide an overview of the space requirements needed to successfully implement the proposed school model, including a description of how the proposed site will need to evolve to support the school as it grows.**

While Illinois Prep will operate as a full time virtual school, we understand the critical importance of students having access to site based blended support services. Students will have the option of receiving these services at one of two proposed locations:

Daley College: 7500 South Pulaski Rd, Chicago, IL 60652

Arturo Velasquez Institute (a satellite campus of Daley College): 2800 S Western Ave, Chicago, IL 60608

These locations were selected to provide

1. A virtual/blended school option to serve the south side of Chicago.
2. A second, centrally located location to provide a secondary option/location for students to receive blended support services.

Both of these options are part of the City College system and Daley College. Because students would be primarily served via a full time virtual option, the location would be used to serve no more than 1/5th of students at any given time (as students would be required to attend no more than one day a week for on-site support as needed).

Daley College has provided an upfront commitment of use of their space should this program be approved. Three classrooms to be used as learning labs, along with a flex learning lab, office space and student counseling centers would be made available. These spaces would be used as “drop-in” learning and support centers to ensure that students have access to academic, social emotional and other supports.

As the program and school grows, Illinois Prep will work with City Colleges to identify additional space as needed.

## Domain 2: Academic Plan

**Domain 2: Academic Plan assesses whether the applicant has the capacity, leadership skills, and experience to open and operate a high-quality school that achieves the school's mission and prepares students for long-term success.**

### Section 2.1: The School Model

#### 2.1.1: School Mission

**Provide the mission statement that defines the core purpose(s) or outcomes and priorities of your school. Include your target population and proposed grade levels.**

The mission of Illinois Prep is to prepare all students for 21st century post-secondary success through an innovative model that leverages virtual learning options to allow for a global learning community enabled, empowered and connected through digital technologies. Illinois Prep would serve k-12 students. To achieve this, we will create a new model that leverages technology to personalize learning while stressing project based and applied learning. The Illinois Prep Academy seeks to serve underserved students seeking a full-time virtual option. In a district of over 350,000 students located in the third largest city in the US, there is currently only one virtual option which is located in the West Loop with a once a week attendance requirement. This option leaves hundreds of students in need of a full time virtual school without an attendance option. Illinois Prep would co-locate its site-based blended support services center at the Daley College campus on 75th and Pulaski and it's satellite campus, The Arturo Valesquez Institute, located in the Little Village Neighborhood.

Unlike schools that target a specific geographic area, Illinois Prep offers a city-wide, virtual option that meets the needs of a targeted population/needs. The population of students will include:

- Students for whom attending a traditional school is not possible due to health issues
- Students who have school refusal issues resulting from social emotional, mental health and/or bullying issues
- Students who have life circumstances that make attending a traditional school difficult/impossible (i.e. students who travel extensively for competitive sports, students who are parenting full time, students who are working actors/performers)
- Students who are historically underserved by virtual and 21st Century options

### 2.1.2: Key Design Elements

Provide a clear and concise overview of the proposed school model, highlighting the key design elements, i.e., those aspects of the school model critical to its success, including:

- **An explanation of how the key design elements reflect the school's mission, vision, and educational philosophy;**
- **An explanation of how the school model aligns with community assets and needs, including any need to improve educational outcomes in the community; and**
- **A clear rationale for the key design elements, citing research and evidence of success with similar student populations or, for innovative or untested models, a strong rationale for the likelihood of success.**

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*Note: Any applicant proposing a Next Generation/Blended Learning Design Model must complete all additional questions found in Appendix 1 to this RFP, available on the RFP website: [www.cps.edu/2018RFP](http://www.cps.edu/2018RFP).*

The Illinois Prep school model is based on active and applied personalized learning in a virtual school setting. Our design team are leaders in the development, design and implementation of personalized, blended and online learning models. We have taken our years of experience to craft a new model for virtual learning that fully employs new technologies to provide a more robust and engaging learning experience for virtual students. Key features include:

- An authentically engaging curriculum that combines online learning courses with **project based and applied learning options**
- High-touch and **daily live learning** to foster relationships between teachers and students and peer to peer collaboration
- An emphasis on the whole-child through an embedded school-wide **Social Emotional Learning Model**
- A **personalized learning framework** that guides all facets of teaching and learning

What is new and innovative about our model is that we are proposing a new approach to virtual school that combines the best of solid pedagogical approaches (applied learning, project based learning, MTSS) with a clear emphasis on REAL-TIME instructional supports coupled with new capabilities in providing authentically personalized learning paths and plans.

Our personalized learning education philosophy is designed around ten Education Philosophy and Goals statements. The first point is a statement that sums up the overall purpose of education, noting that it is to empower students to find their own paths to their own dreams; create life-long learners who are prepared for both the modern world and the future; and to empower individuals to make a positive impact in the world. The remaining points expand upon this philosophy, presenting the how and why of it, while listing specific goals

- Education’s purpose is to empower students to find their own paths to their own dreams; to create lifelong learners who are prepared for both the modern world and the future; and to empower individuals to make a positive impact in the world.
- To this end, a personalized education program is student-centered; a student’s educational program is tailored to the student’s learning styles, interests, current skill levels, and personal goals.
- Learning is competency- and mastery-based, allowing for extra time and assistance to master concepts a student finds difficult, while also allowing the student to move quickly through previously-mastered material, and eliminating arbitrary limitations on student progress.
- However, as Dewey notes in *Democracy and Education*, “not the target but hitting the target is the end in view,” so more important than learning specific concepts is learning how to learn, and gaining competencies that will aid in the hitting of many targets, both current and those yet to be imagined.
- Therefore, education must be forward-leaning, recognizing that the “real world” for which students are being prepared is dynamic, with exponential changes especially in technology.
- To adequately prepare students for a future that is difficult to even imagine, a personalized education program places the greatest value on creativity and the ability to engage in independent, critical thinking.
- Students are guided to become self-cognizant, life-long learners prepared not just for today’s world but equipped to continue learning for whatever the future holds.
- As such, a personalized education program is student-driven; students take an active role in their education, from the development of their education plans to collaboration with course instructors.
- Instead of taking authoritative roles or seen as the sole purveyors of knowledge, instructors are instead mentors, offering guidance and feedback while respecting the diverse needs and goals of each student.
- Students also learn to identify and understand cause-and-effect relationships, recognizing connections that span and go beyond content areas, and engage in proactive behaviors leading to personal development and engagement in the service of their community and beyond.

## Section 2.2: Program of Instruction

### 2.2.1: Academic Standards

**Identify the educational standards by subject area and grade level that will guide your school’s academic program. Explain your rationale for choosing them. Include your chosen standards as an attachment, or provide a link if publicly available.**

All curriculum and instruction will be aligned to the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Math, Next Gen Science Standards and the Illinois Social Science

Standards, along with College and Career Readiness Standards. A complete link to the Illinois State CC Aligned standards by grade level and subject is listed here:

<http://www.ilclassroomsinaction.org/standardsbooks.html>

### **2.2.2: Curriculum**

**Describe the school's curriculum for each subject area and instructional level, along with rationale for the curriculum development or selection decisions.**

**Applicants *must* address the following:**

- **Describe the curricula for your proposed school in the core subjects of reading/ELA, math, science, and social studies. Explain the rationale for your curricular choices, such as textbook selection and supporting materials by subject. Provide evidence that any selected curricula are research-based, standards-aligned, have been effective with students similar to those the school expects to serve, and will keep students on track for college and career readiness.**
- **Identify the full sequence of subjects/courses that students will be required to complete and the exit standards necessary to graduate from your school. Include any optional subjects/courses.**
- **Provide a detailed timeline for the selection and development of additional curricula (in any areas where it is not already fully developed). If the school will develop the curriculum, detail the responsible staff, the development process, key milestones, and the status of the development process.**
- **Explain how teachers will know what to teach and when to teach it, including the curriculum resources that will support instructional planning. Identify who will be responsible for creating or selecting these resources.**

#### ***Appendix 2.2.2***

*In Appendix 2.2.2, applicants must provide the following:*

- *An overview of the curriculum for each subject/course and level, including:*
  - *A general description of the content and skills to be addressed;*
  - *Whether the curriculum will be developed in-house or selected;*
  - *The names of any selected curricular programs/textbooks; and*
  - *The curriculum's alignment with the Illinois Learning Standards and any additional standards used by the school, and an explanation how any gaps in alignment will be addressed.*
- *At a minimum, samples of the following curriculum resources developed for your school for one subject in one grade from each grade span that the school will serve (elementary, middle, high school):*
  - *A Curriculum map;*
  - *A Unit plan; and*
  - *A Lesson plan.*

*For additional guidance, please consult the Resource Guide.*

## **Curriculum and Instruction**

Illinois Prep will utilize a combination of the commercial vendor curriculum from Fuel Education coupled with in-house developed open-source content for enrichment. The rationale behind selection of Fuel Education as the commercial content vendor is from:

- Research of that curriculum and it's alignment to iNACOL Quality Standards for Online Courses and Curriculum
- Alignment of the curriculum to Quality Matters Standards Quality Rubric for Online Courses and Curriculum
- The adoption of Fuel Education curriculum and successful implementation of the curriculum in existing CPS Charter Schools (including YCCS and other CPS I&I charter schools)

Students and teachers will require access to:

- A laptop computer with built-in storage and connectivity capability (to be supplied by Illinois Prep)
- High speed internet connectivity
- The learning management system (PEAK Fuel Education LMS)
- The digital content/courses housed on the LMS

In addition to the commercial vendor content, online teachers will have access to highly-vetted and CCSS aligned OER resources that have been selected to provide enrichment and project based learning options for students to increase engagement and applied learning. These resources were selected and vetted for alignment to both iNACOL and Quality Matters Standards as well as alignment to the CPS REACH Framework.

## **Overview of Curriculum, course offering and scope and sequence**

Illinois Prep will utilize the Fuel Education curriculum. This curriculum has been previously approved and is currently in use at numerous CPS schools and has a long history of serving Chicago Public Schools for credit recovery, remediation and alternative learning as well as for traditional online coursework, advanced coursework and CTE programs.

## **Addressing the needs of individual students is critical for the success of Virtual School Learners**

Each student has different learning strengths and gaps, and that's why a truly adaptive curriculum is core to achieving success in virtual schools. Fuel Education allows teachers to:



- Quickly assess individual student skills mastery and deficiencies
- Understand student mastery of state and national standards
- Develop customized learning paths for struggling students to improve outcomes

With their diagnostic-driven model, the online courses are crafted to keep students on task and moving forward, utilizing a differentiation of content methodology to increase retention as well as pre-recorded audio, pre-teaching of vocabulary, and if needed, English language learner support.

All FuelEd Online Courses have been crafted based on extensive education research, are aligned to state and national standards. In Core courses, topics are broken into discrete modules that are taught in tandem with the framework students need to develop strong study skills. Rich, engaging content with interactive demonstrations and activities help students absorb and retain information.

The Fuel Education embedded Anywhere Learning System (ALS) is also a widely implemented, effective way to target learning remediation needs, especially for those students with learning gaps of a grade level or greater. Its built-in assessments help identify precise gaps in students' skills and understanding. ALS empowers teachers to prescribe and customize content that puts students on a path to mastery.

The Fuel Education curriculum is inclusive of all CPS graduation requirements. A full list of courses and detailed descriptions are included in the appendix section of this proposal. A scope and sequence of courses with a brief description is provided there as well.

### **Standards Alignment**

Fuel Education has works closely with a wide variety of standards organizations to ensure that our high-quality, well-researched curriculum is developed based on and aligned to Common Core State Standards and aligned to the individual state standards where programs are implemented. We have worked in Chicago Public Schools for over eight years and have closely worked with CPS to ensure full alignment to:

- The CPS Scope and Sequence
- The Illinois State Learning Standards and
- New CPS requirements

The Fuel Education team of curriculum specialists continually reviews state and national standards to ensure their curriculum is aligned and uses the best practices identified across federal and local education entities. Thus, the Scope and Sequence for courses offered by Fuel Education map to appropriate state and national standards, and courses are developed to align with the Common Core State Standards.

### **Instructional Model and Instructional Program**

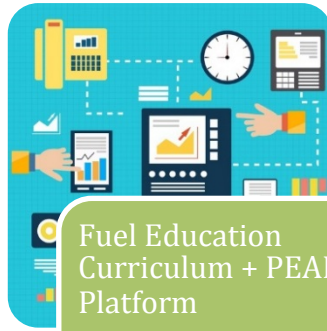
FuelEd delivers its curriculum through PEAK, an open, online platform that is designed to meet the specific needs of students, teachers, and administrators. Not only does it help teachers and administrators to easily manage their online and blended programs, but it also empowers teachers to monitor performance, customize courses, and differentiate instruction to meet students' individualized needs.





### Zia Instructional Model

- Highest quality online and blended instruction
- Emphasis on SEL and whole child
- Enrichment, applied and project based learning options



### Fuel Education Curriculum + PEAK Platform

- CPS Vetted, state and nationally CCSS curriculum
- Rich and engaging content
- Robust data and reporting and personalized learning paths and plans



### Illinois Prep School Model

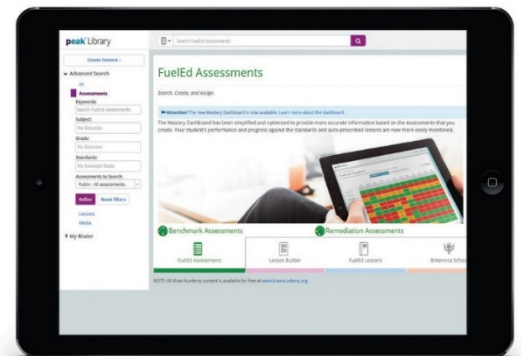
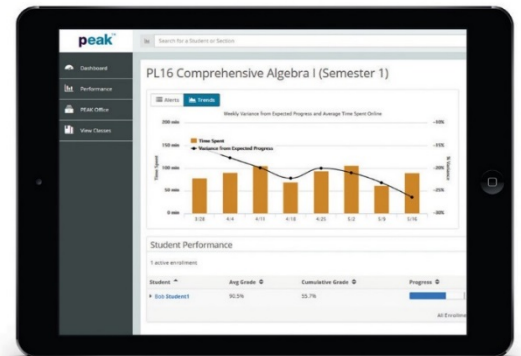
- Virtual School Model with Blended Supports
- Emphasis on live learning and real-time support
- A more interactive and engaging approach

Illinois Prep will implement the Fuel Education Curriculum coupled with the PEAK adaptive personalized learning platform. This platform couples core curriculum with real-time adaptive assessments to generate a personalized learning path and plan. An authentic personalized learning model using adaptive digital curriculum allows teachers to know:

- Where students in are in precise learning objectives
- What students need in order to gain proficiency in skill gaps while providing a system that not only moves students forward in obtaining requisite graduation credits, but also mastery of skills that will lead to a generation of learners that are exceeding standards and are ready for post-secondary and work.

The PEAK LMS has the unique ability to target remediation specific to learning skill gap while working in concert with a credit based course that can flex and truly adapt to a student's specific criteria. PEAK, which stands for Personalize, Engage, and Achieve with K12, is an intelligent management center for online learning that enables schools and districts to manage and personalize their online learning program solutions – including K12 and third-party solutions, open education resources, and district-authored or -generated content – from one place.

The critical differentiator between PEAK and other digital curriculum systems is the integration. The LMS, curriculum, assessment and student information systems are all designed to work together (rather than a post-purchase integration of multiple systems from a variety of vendors). The true integration and interoperability of these systems is





key. The analytics gathered through the constant formative assessments drives the adaptive release of content based on ongoing student performance. Furthermore, the solution looks at curriculum not simply from a discrete course level, but the full k-12 spectrum. Thus, if a student in an Algebra I course is missing critical skills from, for example, 6<sup>th</sup> grade math, they will get the support they need – even if it comes from skills presented in grade levels three, four or more years prior.

The combination of these technologies coupled with onsite support and true facilitator/teacher support is a genuine

solution to the education epidemic – rather than an online pass-through program that perpetuates the problem. It allows for student recovery, not merely credit recovery, and provides a system where students can receive an authentic, personalized learning environment that allows for not only remediation, but also advancement to higher levels of attainment.

### **Real-Time Support and Instruction and Authentic Personalization**

The personalization isn't solely through the technology. Rather, use of adaptive technologies and curriculum allows for teachers to focus on learners rather than content. But that is just the beginning. This system allows not only for a new learning model, but also for a new virtual instructional model – a facilitated approach to digital instruction. Zia is a true innovator in this space and developed the Framework for Facilitated Personalized Instruction to provide a clear implementation model for teachers.

With the systems and tools in place to provide individualized, adaptive digital curriculum to each student based on daily formative assessment data, driven not by a manual approach and teacher analysis of data, but rather an a system-driven approach, teachers are free to work with students to address their individual needs and provide both academic and social/emotional support. Teachers use adaptive and formative assessments to craft individualized learning paths and plans for learners and target interventions and support.

### **Increasing Engagement through BUILT IN/EMBEDDED Project Based and Applied Learning**

We have developed a unique and custom approach to personalized learning and instruction. People often point to the nature of personalized learning as a means to achieve three goals:

1. Provide students anytime access to exactly what they need
2. Provide teachers a means to work more directly with students and address their individual needs and
3. Allow for more engaging and rich learning options.

Zia Learning understands that increased engagement and outcomes through applied and hands-on project based learning options doesn't simply "happen" nor can teachers be expected to simply create these options "on the fly" or without resources. This is particularly true when working with virtual school student populations where teachers must support both the academic and social/emotional and life needs of students on a constant basis.

That is why Zia Learning spent two years creating digital applied PBL and hands-on offline activities aligned to EVERY SUBJECT AND EVERY UNIT of the high school course curriculum. These applied and PBL options have been integrated directly into the core curriculum used by our partner schools and districts. We have developed these engagement options to ensure that teachers and students have multiple, differentiated ways to learn information and multiple means to show what they know. Our bank of over 5,000 fully aligned applied learning options live inside of the same LMS that houses the core curriculum and alongside the lessons in our fully differentiated instructional model (Learn, Watch, Try, Apply and Assess):

**Learn:** Students use the digital curriculum (fuel education) for the core academic instruction

**Watch:** Learning is reinforced via carefully vetted video educational resources

**Try:** Students complete a digital simulation that allows them to immerse themselves in the materials

**Apply:** Students apply what they've learned in a project based, hands-on learning option tied to their interests, current events, community issues or other applied learning options

**Assess:** Students are given an option to "show what they know" in addition to the quizzes and assessments. These performance-based assessments are tied to the REACH CPS performance tasks.

As noted in the CPS REACH Framework, a performance task is one type of performance assessment. According to Peter Afflerbach, a performance assessment "represents convergences of student learning, incorporating skills, strategies, and the content domain learning that are goals of effective instruction. Performance assessments can help us determine not only what students can understand...but also how they use what they understand." A performance task is a written or hands-on demonstration of mastery, or progress towards mastery, of selected standards or skills. They ask students to perform or to generate meaning on their own rather than select answers from a pre-determined list. They can yield rich insights not only into what students know and do not yet know, but how they apply their knowledge to complex questions or tasks. This provides teachers with formative information they can use to help students improve not just their content knowledge, but the facility with which they can "put it all together."

To ensure that students are truly ready for a personalized learning environment we provide direct instruction in autonomous learner skills that are transferable 21<sup>st</sup> workforce readiness skills. This program, developed by Zia and known as SEL Skills for Success is an approved CPS district-wide model through the department of College and Career Readiness (Zia was selected in a competitive RFP process two years ago and holds a district-wide

contract with CPS for these services). All students in Zia programs complete this upfront and ongoing program.

### Student Success through Student Readiness and Support

Academic achievement in a virtual/distance learning program begins with student readiness. Zia Learning has developed a comprehensive SEL Skills for Success model that focuses on:


- Digital literacy
- Time management
- Goal setting and motivation skills
- Study skills
- Decision making skills
- 21<sup>st</sup> century communication skills


Research shows that the time invested in providing upfront and ongoing support in these areas increases student success in their virtual/online learning and beyond (as these skills are highly transferable college and career readiness skills). All participants of our program are given access for all students to our program “The Digital Edge – SEL Skills for Success.” This program has led to meaningful, measurable results in districts across the US, including a 38% increase in pass rates in the statewide Ohio Virtual Learning model, LifeSkills.

### Student Readiness and Success – Program Structure

All courses are developed with a differentiated instructional approach that provides students multiple methods to learn information along with multiple means to demonstrate competency. Each module is structured based on the research-based Zia “Learn, Watch, Try, Apply, Write and Assess” method which includes:

**Learn:** Interactive reading modules which include audio tracks

 Staying Motivated to Reach Your Goals



Have you ever set a goal for yourself, like getting fit, making honor roll, or being picked for a team? Like lots of people, maybe you started out doing great, but then lost some of that drive and had trouble getting motivated again.

**You're Not Alone!**  
Everyone struggles with staying motivated and reaching their goals. Just look at how many people go on diets, lose weight, and then gain it back again!

The reality is that refocusing, changing, or making a new start on something, no matter how small, is a big deal. But it's not impossible. With the right approach, you can definitely do it.

**No Quick Fix**  
It often takes several attempts to achieve a goal. For example, the American Lung Association says that the average person who quits smoking tries to stop up to six times before successfully quitting for good.

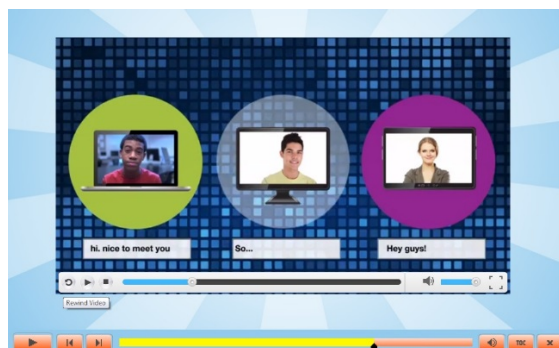
**Getting Motivated**  
So how do you stay motivated and on track with your goal? It all comes down to good planning, realistic expectations, and a stick-to-it attitude. Here's what you need to do:

**First, know your goal.** Start by writing down your major goal. Your major goal is the ultimate thing you'd like to see happen. For example, "I want to make honor roll," or "I want to get fit enough to make the cross-country team," or even, "I want to play in the Olympics" are all major goals because they're the final thing the goal setter wants to see happen (obviously, some goals take longer and require more work than others). It's OK to dream big. That's how people accomplish stuff. You just have to remember that the bigger the goal, the more work it takes to get there.

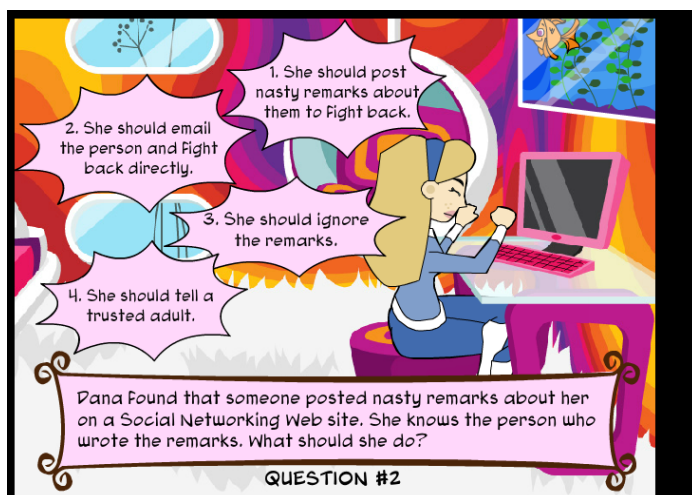
**Watch:** Digital media segments that show concepts presented by diverse teens in real-world applications. Videos are fully produced, rich media that immerse students in scenarios that bring concepts to life.



[Click here for this lesson's reading assignment](#)



**Try:** Game-based simulations that test students understanding of concepts and challenge them in fun, interactive components that challenge students in each SEL competency.



**Apply:** Project-based applied learning options that bring a hands-on approach to digital curriculum. Students complete tasks that apply concepts to core curriculum, current events and real-world options that become part of their digital portfolio.

**Write:** Journal and writing activities that ask students to extend learning through higher level questions and thought provoking discussion groups. In addition, students complete writing components that become part of their digital portfolio.

**Assess:** Formative and summative assessments, along with final unit projects are included to provide students feedback and teachers data on completion and proficiency in each SEL skill.



#### Your Digital Journal



In this lesson you learned about the importance of setting goals. What are your long term goals?

What are the steps that you will take to reach those goals?

In this journal entry list your "ultimate goal" (it might be a career, college or life goal) along with three steps you can take now to begin reaching that goal.



#### Digital Edge Unit 1 Quiz



#### Digital Literacy Certification Badge 1 GOAL SETTER

Enabled: Adaptive Release

Way to go! You're on your way towards your digital literacy certification. Part of being a 21st century learner is to be an independent learner who knows how to set and achieve goals.

In this unit you set a goal to receive Microsoft Digital Literacy Certification and began that journey through learning about the basics of computers and networking. In the next units you will learn more about programs and tools as well as what it means to be digitally literate!



#### Apply Your Time Management Skills



Click the link above to apply your time management skills and make it through a school-daze maze!



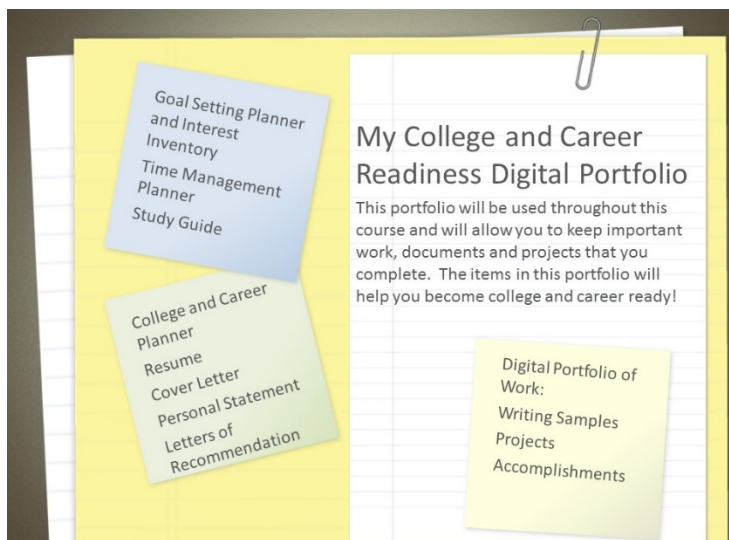
#### Journal



In this lesson you learned about the importance of time management.

In this journal entry describe some ways you can manage your time more efficiently. How would you spend the extra time that you have gained? For this journal you will start by reading a short article and then you will create a time management chart.

Click the link above to get started on better time management!



In addition, students compile a digital portfolio of their work throughout the course which archives writings, documents and projects that are instrumental in becoming college and career ready. The completed portfolio includes:

- An interest inventory
- An inventory of strengths and areas identified for improvement
- Goal setting and goal sheets
- Time management and task completion sheets
- A personal statement and essay
- Reflection journals
- Additional writings and activities

### **2.2.3: Promotion and Graduation Policy**

**Explain the school's policies for promoting students from one grade to the next, including criteria for promotion or retention. Indicate when and how the school will inform students and parents about promotion and graduation policies and decisions.**

**If the school will offer high school grades within the proposed agreement term, include specific graduation requirements and the rationale for their selection. How will the graduation requirements ensure student readiness for college or other postsecondary opportunities?**

*Appendix 2.2.3*

*In Appendix 2.2.3, applicants must provide promotion and graduation policies.*

Illinois Prep will follow the CPS graduation and promotion policies. As per the CPS Policy, promotion decisions for students in grades 3, 6 and 8 will be made during the last week of school. Promotion status and applicable summer school requirement(s) will be determined by the student's District-Wide Assessment (DWA) scores in reading and math, followed by a review of the student's academic performance. To determine a student's promotion status and applicable summer school requirement(s), please see grid below. All students must receive a passing score on The Constitution of the United States of America and The Constitution of the State of Illinois exams to receive an 8th grade diploma.

District-Wide Assessment (DWA) NWEA	Academic Performance	June Achievement Level	Summer School Status & Requirement(s)	Summer School Final Achievement Level	Final Promotion Status
DWA scores in both reading <b>AND</b> math <u>at or above</u> the <b>24<sup>th</sup> percentile</b>	Passing final report card grades in reading <b>and</b> math	<b>1A</b>	<b>Summer School <u>Not</u> Required</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote to the next grade in June</li> <li>Participate in June graduation ceremony (Grade 8)</li> </ul>		
	Failing final report card grade in reading <b>or</b> math <b>or</b> both	<b>1B</b>	<b>Summer School Required</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Summer Exit Exam <u>not</u> required</li> <li>Promote to the next grade in August <b>after</b> successful completion of summer school</li> </ul>	<b>Satisfactorily completed</b>	<b>Promoted with Supports</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promoted 8<sup>th</sup> grade students receive a diploma</li> </ul>
DWA scores in reading <b>OR</b> math <b>OR</b> both between the <b>11-23<sup>rd</sup> percentile</b>	Final report card grades in reading <b>and</b> math of "C" or above	<b>2A</b>	<b>Summer School <u>Not</u> Required</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promoted with supports to the next grade in June</li> <li>Participate in June graduation ceremony (Grade 8)</li> </ul>		
	Final report card grade in reading <b>or</b> math <b>or</b> both below "C"	<b>2B</b>	<b>Summer School Required</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Summer Exit Exam <u>required</u></li> <li>Promote to the next grade in August <b>after</b> successful completion of summer school and receiving a passing score on Summer Exit Exam</li> </ul>	<b>Satisfactorily completed</b>	<b>Promoted with Supports</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promoted 8<sup>th</sup> grade students receive a diploma</li> </ul>
DWA scores in reading <b>OR</b> math <b>OR</b> both at or below the <b>10<sup>th</sup> percentile</b>	Final report card grades in reading <b>and</b> math of "C" or above	<b>3A</b>	<b>Summer School Required</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Summer Exit Exam <u>required</u></li> <li>Promote to the next grade in August <b>after</b> successful completion of summer school and receiving a passing score on Summer Exit Exam</li> </ul>	<b>Satisfactorily completed</b>	<b>Promoted with Supports</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promoted 8<sup>th</sup> grade students receive a diploma</li> </ul>
	Final report card grade in reading <b>or</b> math <b>or</b> both below "C"	<b>3B</b>	<b>Summer School Required</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Summer Exit Exam <u>required</u></li> <li>Promote to the next grade in August <b>after</b> successful completion of summer school and receiving a passing score on Summer Exit Exam</li> </ul>	<b>Not Satisfactorily completed</b>	<b>May be Retained with Supports</b>



As per the CPS Policy, Illinois Prep will require high school students to successfully complete a minimum number of credits before they can be promoted to the next grade level and graduate. Listed below are the CPS high school and graduation requirements.

<b><i>9th Grade Promotion</i></b> To be promoted from 9th to 10th grade, students must pass at least three of their core subject courses during both semesters and must have successfully completed a minimum of 5 units of credit.
<b><i>10th Grade Promotion</i></b> To be promoted from 10th to 11th grade, students must pass at least three of their core subject courses during both semesters and must have successfully completed a minimum of 11 units of credit. All 10th grade students must have completed at least 20 hours of community service learning in order to be promoted to the 11th grade.
<b><i>11th Grade Promotion</i></b> To be promoted from 11th to 12th grade, students must have successfully completed a minimum of 17 units of credit.
<b><i>Graduation</i></b> To graduate, students must complete a minimum of 24 units of credit and 40 hours of community service learning.

## Section 2.3: Instructional Methods

**Describe the instructional approach and methods that will be used in the classroom. Include any specific requirements for implementation (e.g., co-teaching or aides, technology, physical space, etc.).**

- **Cite research or existing models that support the use of these instructional methods, especially considering the school’s target population; and**
- **Describe how the instructional methods will achieve the school’s mission and support implementation of any unique elements of the school’s design.**

The traditional virtual school model is set up for efficiency and cost effectiveness and not necessarily student success. Traditional virtual schools have not historically provided opportunities to establish the meaningful relationships and to create structures that foster student engagement. Illinois Prep does.

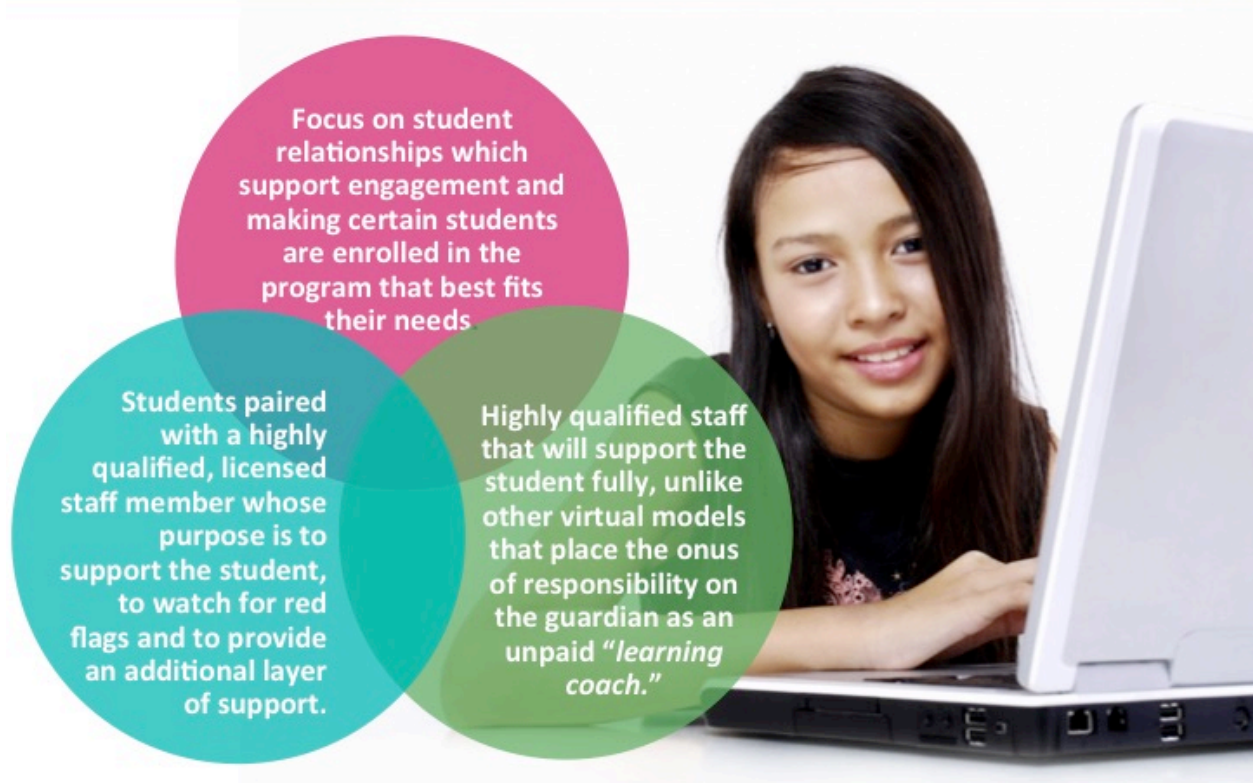
### **Ensuring Success in the Virtual Model**

- Mandatory weekly check-ins
- Regular live learning (combining distance learning and online learning)
- Real-time response to questions
- Engaging, relevant curriculum
- Fostering a sense of digital citizenship and community
- Providing family engagement and supports

Student engagement is fostered in the following ways:

- Synchronous, live daily instruction and support
- Each student is provided with a competent, skilled teacher; we do not require guardians to serve as 'learning coaches'
- Meaningful relationships established with each student
- Communication that is **real-time**, regular and supportive
- Proactive teachers who contact students before a slight setback can become the turning point that leads to drop out
- Robust data dashboard that has real-time student information to better inform teachers the support each student needs
- Assessments are real world, frequent, and individualized. Formative assessments allow for just-in-time interventions that prevent a student from disengaging.
- Project based learning options
- Partnership with the community college system that allows for online and face to face dual credit and certification options

## A different way



## **Constant Monitoring of Students**

- According to the Center for Public Education, traditional virtual schools may not monitor students as closely as they should and the amount and how they monitor varies greatly from school to school.
- Many virtual schools only monitor student final grades with only half of virtual schools tracking log-in activity or time spent online.
- In our school, due to a robust data dashboard and skilled, trained teachers, student progress is regularly monitored and if there are concerns, the teacher will reach out to the student. This just-in-time communication results in better relationships and maintains student engagement.
- Formative assessments, both formal and informal, are used to continue to engage with students and ensure that early warning signs are noted and plans put in place.

## **Regulations + Policies and Guidelines = Increased Success**

- Students must have a demonstrated need for fully virtual that led to dropping out such as:
  - Pregnant or full-time parenting without access to childcare
  - Bullying issues that could not be resolved in their local or an alternative school
  - Documented mental health or school-based anxiety issues that could not be resolved in their local or an alternative school which led to dropping out
- Students must have been documented to be at-grade-level in reading and math prior to dropping out
- Students must attend a face-to-face interview with their parents or legal guardians and Zia and Illinois Prep staff to verify:
  - Family supports and structure in place conducive to an online education
  - Family and student understanding of expectations and guidelines
  - Family and student agreement to weekly check-ins (to be conducted at the student's home by our student success coach)

In 2010, the U.S. Department of Education released a meta-analysis and review of empirical studies focused on digital learning in K-12 schools and higher education from 1996-2008. Their findings revealed that “students in online conditions performed modestly better, on average, than those learning the same material through traditional face-to-face instruction” (p. xvi). In another study conducted by Allen and Seaman, 77% of academic leaders rate the learning outcomes in online education as the same or superior to those in face-to-face classrooms (2013). Virtual options, when offered with strict guidelines for both the school and students, are highly successful.

Full-time virtual schools provide a vital service to students for whom traditional modalities are not a viable option. In a virtual school, technology and access to rigorous, aligned digital

curriculum is crucial. Technology also supports our teachers' ability to personalize learning and differentiate instruction. Below are some examples of how we leverage technology to provide personalized learning for students:

- Varying pacing based on student profile and individual needs
  - Assigning modules for online programs based on formative assessment data
  - Providing enrichment activities for students that have demonstrated mastery on specific skills
- Building background knowledge and strengthening foundational skills according to the needs of each individual student, including SEL Skills for Success
- Building and supporting student-focused and student-led learning
- Allowing students to receive instruction through their preferred modalities
- Offering choice and access to information
- Increasing peer-to-peer and teacher-to-student collaborations
- Increasing rigor through dynamic content (Bloom's Taxonomy: Analysis, Evaluation, Creation; Teaching above the line with SAMR)
- Allowing students to accelerate and take specialized, online courses

Despite leveraging technology, Zia Learning also understands that a 'high touch' personalized environment is necessary for student success. We have redesigned the basic virtual school to bring together best practices from distance learning, virtual schools and blended models. As part of our priorities, all students will have **daily interactions** with their teachers. Those interactions may involve:

- Skype or other virtual meetings where teachers and students communicate in real-time while also having the benefit of seeing each other
- GoToMeeting or other virtual meeting platform
- Google Hangout
- Video conference
- Virtual field trips
- Phone conversations
- Threaded discussions
- Twitter Chats
- Traditional face-to-face meetings
- Meet-ups
- Prom

Over the past decade, Zia Learning has worked closely with districts to develop successful, innovative virtual learning programs that serve diverse learner populations. It is increasingly recognized that digital/online learning programs can overcome the logistic barriers to success for many students by offering students any course they need, anytime they need it while allowing for self-pacing and competency-based approaches. However, our educational philosophy is that these programs can only be truly successful when the following three conditions are in place:

- A supportive learning environment that provides both academic and social emotional supports and ensures student readiness to learn
- A personalized learning program that identifies learning gaps and allows for an individualized learning path and plan to graduate from high school prepared for the workforce and/or post-secondary education and training options
- An applied approach to teaching and learning that teams hands-on, project-based options with engaging digital curriculum.

Virtual classrooms, like any educational environment, require careful and intentional instructional planning. Online learning provides many opportunities to engage students in 21st century skills and in ways that were not possible before, and our teachers will take full advantage of those opportunities. Research indicates that in order for students to be successful in an online learning model, students must develop autonomous learning skills. Palloff and Pratt (2013) explain that an effective online instructor is someone “who is open to giving up control of the learning process” *by making students active participants in their learning process* (p. 24). A learner-centered approach acknowledges what students bring to the online classroom—their background, needs, and interests—and what they take away as relevant and meaningful outcomes. Students are given more control and responsibility on a gradual release basis around how they learn, including the opportunity to teach one another through collaboration and personal interactions (Palloff & Pratt, 2013).

We have developed a unique and custom approach to virtual learning and instruction. People often point to the nature of virtual/personalized learning as a means to achieve three goals:

1. Provide students anytime access to exactly what they need
2. Provide teachers a means to work more directly with students and address their individual needs
3. Allow for more engaging and rich learning options.

Zia Learning understands that increased engagement and outcomes through applied and hands-on project-based learning options doesn't simply “happen” nor can teachers be expected to simply create these options “on the fly” or without resources. That is why Zia Learning spent two years creating digital applied Project-Based-Learning (PBL) and hands-on activities aligned to every subject/unit. These applied and PBL options have been integrated directly into the core curriculum used by our partner schools and districts. We have developed these engagement options to ensure that teachers and students have multiple, differentiated ways to learn information and multiple means to show what they know. Our bank of over 5,000 aligned, applied learning options are housed in the same LMS as the core curriculum and alongside the lessons in our fully differentiated instructional model (Learn, Watch, Try, Apply and Assess).

**Learn:** Students use the digital curriculum (Fuel Education) for the core academic instruction

**Watch:** Learning is reinforced via carefully vetted video educational resources

**Try:** Students complete a digital simulation that allows them to immerse themselves in the materials

**Apply:** Students apply what they've learned in a project based, hands-on learning option tied to their interests, current events, community issues or other applied learning options

**Assess:** Students are given an option to "show what they know" in addition to the quizzes and assessments.

All performance-based assessments are tied to CPS REACH performance tasks. As noted in the CPS REACH Framework, a performance task is one type of performance assessment. According to Peter Afflerbach, a performance assessment "represents convergences of student learning, incorporating skills, strategies, and the content domain learning that are goals of effective instruction. Performance assessments can help us determine not only what students can understand...but also how they use what they understand" (2012). A performance task is a written or hands-on demonstration of mastery, or progress towards mastery, of selected standards or skills. Students are asked to perform or to generate meaning on their own rather than select answers from a predetermined list. They can yield rich insights not only into what students know and do not yet know, but how they apply their knowledge to complex questions or tasks. This provides teachers with formative information they can use to help students improve not just their content knowledge, but also the facility with which they can "put it all together."

Being an effective teacher in an online learning environment requires understanding of the tools and pedagogy necessary for effective teaching and learning. Each Zia Learning teaching staff member possesses these skills and will be provided additional supports and professional learning around these key points:

- **Teachers provide timely feedback:** Online learners generally have greater access to instructors via email and are able to have questions answered by their peers in a timely fashion on discussion boards. In addition, online tests and quizzes can be constructed with automatic grading capability that provides timely feedback (Kassop, 2003). Immediate and continual feedback throughout the learning process is beneficial for gaining understanding of difficult concepts, as well as triggering retrieval mechanisms and correcting misconceptions (Thalheimer, 2008).
- **Teachers encourage student-student interaction:** Chickering and Ehrmann (1996) explain that "learning is not a spectator sport...[Students] must talk about what they are learning, write reflectively about it, relate it to past experiences, and apply it to their daily lives." As described by Palloff and Pratt (2013), "Collaborative learning processes help students achieve deeper levels of knowledge generation through the creation of shared goals, shared exploration, and a shared process of meaning making. In addition, collaborative activity can help to reduce the feelings of isolation that can occur when students are working at a distance" (p. 39). Structured interactions are often necessary to ensure students engage with other online learners (Dow, 2008; Yang, Yeh, & Wong, 2010).
- **Teachers ensure opportunities for collaboration:** There are a variety of ways for students to collaborate online, including synchronous and asynchronous discussions and small group assignments. In addition, the relative anonymity of

online discussions helps to create a “level playing field” for quieter students or those from typically marginalized groups or for students whose culture maintains a quieter approach. Allowing students to communicate and collaborate with a peer or peers can be accomplished with many different tools including but not limited to Google Docs or web conferencing programs such as Google Hangouts, Skype, and other tools such as Adobe Connect.

- **Teachers consider and plan for students’ technology access when planning learning activities:** It is important to develop as comprehensive a picture as possible of the specific students who will be enrolling in the class (Angelino, Williams & Natvig, 2007).
- **Teachers increase metacognitive awareness:** Since online learners have more autonomy and responsibility for carrying out the learning process, it’s important that students understand which behaviors help them learn and apply those strategies proactively. This awareness and knowledge of one’s personal learning process involves increased metacognition—a key practice for student success (Bransford, Brown & Cocking, 2000).
- **Teachers maintain consistent and effective communication:** Teachers maintain communication logs and virtual office hours. Teachers are required to respond to student queries as soon as possible. When teachers are not online, Zia Learning maintains K12 Insight ‘s chat feature and live learning sessions to provide on-demand support and assistance.
- **Effective use of technology:** Many researchers have found strong links between effective technology use in classrooms and student achievement (Green and Siegle 2002; Noeth and Volkov 2004; Valdez et al. 2000). Gilbert Valdez along with several colleagues (2000) conducted a meta-analysis of more than 800 studies involving technology and student achievement in the early 1990s. Each of these studies showed a positive impact on student learning. At every level, from preschool to higher education, a positive correlation between effective technology use and student achievement has been routinely identified (Valdez et al. 2000).

In addition, all students will be required to complete the Zia Learning online course, Student Skills for Virtual Success, (which covers time management, goal setting, 21<sup>st</sup> century communication skills and digital literacy) prior to enrollment. This is a 10-hour course that mimics a course typical to the student experience. Academic achievement in a virtual/distance learning program begins with student readiness. The comprehensive SEL Skills for Success model focuses on:

- Digital literacy
- Time management
- Goal setting and motivation skills
- Study skills
- Decision making skills
- 21<sup>st</sup> century communication skills

As part of this course, students compile a digital portfolio of their work and archive writings, documents and projects that are instrumental in becoming college and career ready. The completed portfolio includes:

- An interest inventory
- An inventory of strengths and areas identified for improvement
- Goal setting and goal sheets
- Time management and task completion sheets
- A personal statement and essay
- Reflection journals
- Additional writings and activities

The time invested in providing upfront and ongoing support in these areas increases student success in their virtual/online learning and beyond (as these skills are highly transferable college and career readiness skills). This program has led to meaningful, measurable results in districts across the US, including a 38% increase in pass rates in the statewide Ohio Virtual Learning model, LifeSkills. In Fuel Education's California implementation, students who completed this course prior to enrollment in full-time virtual were three times more likely to successfully complete their courses. Additionally, this model has been used to increase student graduation and success rates in schools across the US and has been recognized by ISTE as a Premier Program for teaching the 21<sup>st</sup> century learner and workforce readiness skills.

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## Section 2.4: Educational Goals and Assessments

### 2.4.1: School Goals

**Chicago Public Schools uses the School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP) to assess its schools and hold them accountable for educational success. Please review the SQRP at <http://cps.edu/Performance/Pages/PerformancePolicy.aspx>.**

**In addition, the Chicago Board of Education adopted a Charter School Quality Policy aligned to the SQRP that will be helpful to consult when setting goals for school performance. Please review this policy at [http://www.cpsboe.org/content/actions/2015\\_10/15-1028-PO1.pdf](http://www.cpsboe.org/content/actions/2015_10/15-1028-PO1.pdf).**

**In your proposal, identify the academic, non-academic, and mission-specific goals and metrics for the proposed school. Your answer must:**

- **Include a table in the narrative that details the school's quantifiable goals, including targeted assessment scores, attendance levels, and additional metrics for each of its first five years of operation.**
- **Highlight and discuss the rationale for any differences between your school's goals and metrics and those included in the SQRP at the grade level/s you intend to serve.**
- **Describe any non-academic goals for students, how those goals will be measured, and by whom.**

### **Educational Goals and Metrics**

Our educational goals and metrics will be reported using a balanced scorecard to provide a diverse perspective on student achievement. The assessment plan will be comprehensive in terms of assessing both individual student growth and overall school performance compared to similar schools against local and national benchmarks. The new CPS performance policy has been used to create overall benchmarks for school-wide growth and attainment.

### **School Level Measures**

School-wide performance measures and their evaluation are vital to school success. While setting up structures and protocols for performance management, we have identified indicators and benchmarks of school performance and growth against which the school's

success will be measured annually. The intention is to identify best practices while setting targeted supports for students.

Student growth and performance measures must vertically align to district and school standards and goals. These measures include student performance on nationally normed assessments (see assessments chart in section 2.4.2), school culture and climate, and cohort graduation rates. They are also strategically aligned with the school-level metrics on the CPS School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP).

The tables below provide the benchmarks that we have chosen from the SQRP that closely align with the student growth and attainment benchmarks set forth for our school.

Elementary School Performance Indicators	4 points on SQRP
National School Growth Percentile on the NWEA Reading & Math Assessments	Between 70th and 89th percentile
Priority Group National Growth Percentile on the NWEA Reading & Math Assessment	Between 50th and 69th percentile
Percentage of Students Meeting or Exceeding National Average Growth Norms on NWEA Reading and Math Assessments	Between 60% and 69.9%
National School Attainment Percentile on the NWEA Reading & Math Assessments	Between 70th and 89th percentile
Percentage of Students Making Sufficient Annual Progress on the ACCESS assessment	Between 45% and 54.9%
My Voice, My School 5 Essentials Survey	Organized
Data Quality Index Score	Between 95% and 98.9%
<i>*Evaluated separately for African-American students, Hispanic students, ELL, and Diverse Learners</i>	

High School Performance Indicator	4 points on SQRP
National School Growth Percentile Based on EXPLORE, PLAN and ACT Assessments	Between 70th and 89th percentile

Priority Group National Growth Percentile Based on EXPLORE, PLAN and ACT Assessments *	Between 50th and 69th percentile
National School Attainment Percentile Based on EXPLORE, PLAN and ACT Assessments	Between 70th and 89th percentile
Freshman On-Track Rate	Between 80% and 89.9%
1-Year Dropout Rate	Between 2.1% and 4%
4-year Cohort Graduation Rate	Between 75% and 84.9%
Percent of Graduates Earning a 3+ on an AP Exam, a 4+ on an IB Exam, an Approved Early College Credit and/or an Approved Career Credential	Between 30% and 39.9%
College Enrollment Rate	Between 65% and 74.9%
My Voice, My School 5 Essentials Survey	Organized
Data Quality Index Score	Between 95% and 98.9%
<i>*Evaluated separately for African-American students, Hispanic students ,ELL , and Diverse Learners</i>	

### **Student Growth Measures**

Individual student growth is the focus of our educational goals and metrics. In this section a scaffolded set of metrics will allow school teams to operationalize and monitor their instructional strategy. We measure this using the Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA) assessment in middle grades and the EXPLORE, PLAN, ACT System (EPAS) in high school (In the event CPS changes their assessments, our school will follow suit.). Like CPS, we will measure ourselves based on the percent of students making typical growth.

For students entering our school that are not yet on grade level, we will measure the percent of students making growth necessary to reach the NWEA 50<sup>th</sup> percentile by 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Our stretch goal will be for these students to meet a target of 70%. In high school, we will measure students making expected gains on EPAS and also measure the percent of students who were formally not on grade level as they reach expected growth for college readiness.

Grades 3-8 Academic Growth Measures					Goal/Target				
Benchmark	Measure	Grade Level	Reviewed	CPS baseline 16-17	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	Steady State
Typical growth	NWEA: Reading	3-8	Annually	60.4%	65%	70%	70%	75%	75%
Students entering off track	NWEA: Reading	3-8	Annually	N/A	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%
Typical growth	NWEA: Math	3-8	Annually	56.7%	62%	65%	70%	75%	75%
Students entering off track	NWEA: Math	3-8	Annually	N/A	65%	65%	70%	75%	75%
Grades 9-11 Academic Growth Measures					Goal/Target				
Benchmark	Measure	Grade Level	Reviewed	CPS baseline 13-14	CPS baseline 14-15	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22
Expected gain	EXPLORE, PLAN, ACT (EPAS)	9-11	Annually	56.1	53.5	60%	65%	70%	75%

Students entering off track	EXPLORE, PLAN, ACT (EPAS)	9-11	Annually	N/A	N/A	60%	65%	70%	75%
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### Academic Attainment

Academic attainment measures are often gatekeepers to post-secondary options and thus we will monitor them closely. The table below shows a significant increase in goals and targets. The steady state column shows how we will measure ourselves on each metric when those students that started with us as 7<sup>th</sup> graders reach the metric. We expect roughly 50% of our incoming students to score above the 40<sup>th</sup> percentile on NWEA, 20% of our students to fall between the 20-39<sup>th</sup> percentile, 30% of students to be below the 20<sup>th</sup> percentile and about 20% to be on track for college readiness. We believe that with an incoming group of students similar to this population we can move 72% to high school ready by the end of 8<sup>th</sup> grade. These students will still require “catch up growth” in high school in order to meet our benchmarks. Thus, targets for “college ready” increase from the EXPLORE to PLAN to ACT as we catch up these students. We set the overall expectation for ACT at 21, which aligns with college readiness. (The composite score for CPS in 2017 was 18.4).

We added an additional metric related to ACT; we will also measure the percent of students who achieve a 26 or higher. This target was set based on the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile of students being accepted to the University of Illinois. We not only want students to be accepted but want them to enter competitively to ensure that they will be able to succeed.

We plan to offer both Advanced Placement classes and early college courses. Like the district, we will measure ourselves both on access to such courses and student performance. We matched the enrollment to the percentage of students that are college ready but we will allow any student interested in taking an AP class to do so regardless of PLAN or ACT scores.

We will monitor 4-year college acceptance. At present, the university landscape is shifting and as such there may be new measures for attaining the skills required for professional careers. If so, these metrics might need to be adjusted. We would expect our students to do well on any new measures reflecting such changes.

Grades 9-12 Academic Attainment Measures					Goal/Target				
Benchmark	Measure	Grade Level	Reviewed	CPS Benchmark 13-14	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	Steady State

On-track" for college readiness (17 or higher)	EXPLORE	9	Annually	52.8	57%	65%	65%	70%	75%
On-track" for college readiness (18 or higher)	PLAN	9	Annually	N/A	50%	50%	60%	65%	70%
On-track for college readiness	PLAN	10	Annually	56.4	60%	65%	70%	75%	75%
College ready	ACT	11	Annually	59.6	70%	75%	80%	85%	85%
Univ. of IL ready (26 or higher*)	ACT	12	Annually	N/A	50%	55%	65%	70%	70%
Students taking 1 or more AP or early college (EC)	AP or Early College	11-12	Annually	N/A	50%	60%	70%	80%	80%
3+ (AP)	AP Exams	11-12	Annually	N/A	25%	30%	35%	40%	40%
Benchmark	Measure	Grade Level	Reviewed	CPS Benchmark 16-17	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	Steady State
Graduation Rate*		12	Annually	77.5	80%	85%	95%	100%	100%

4 year college acceptance rate			Annually	NA	70%	80%	100%	100%	100%
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### Participation

In participation, we want to closely track and monitor student acceptance and transfers to selective enrollment schools. We believe in student choice and want students to attend his/her best-fit school. If we are successful with our 7<sup>th</sup> grade students, many should qualify to take the exam and be accepted to selective enrollment schools. We also intend to offer a program that is rigorous and engaging enough to be competitive with the selective enrollment schools, thus allowing students a choice based on their preferred learning style.

### School Climate

We understand that a positive school climate is the product of a school’s attention to fostering safety; promoting a supportive academic, disciplinary, and physical environment; and encouraging and maintaining respectful, trusting, and caring relationships throughout the school community no matter the setting. To measure this, we began administering the Ed School Climate Survey from the National Center for Safe and Supportive Learning Environments.

Our results for 2016-2017 demonstrated:

- An 85% student engagement rate
- 90% of students and 95% of staff felt emotionally, physically and digitally safe and ready for an emergency
- 85% of students and 90% of staff reported satisfaction with the school environment including physical and instructional as well as SEL measures.

Benchmark	Measure	Grade Level	Reviewed	Base line	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23
Student Engagement	Ed School Climate Survey	K-12	Annually	85%	90%	95%	100%	100%	100%
Students reported: Emotionally, physically and digitally safe	Ed School Climate Survey	K-12	Annually	90%	95%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Staff Reported Emotionally, physically and digitally safe	Ed School Climate Survey	K-12	Annually	95%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Students: satisfaction with the school environment including physical and instructional as well as SEL measures	Ed School Climate Survey	K-12	Annually	85%	90%	95%	100%	100%	100%
Staff: Satisfaction with the school environment including physical and instructional as well as SEL measures	Ed School Climate Survey	K-12	Annually	90%	95%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**2.4.2: Assessment and Data-Driven Programs and Instruction**

**Describe the diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments the school will use to evaluate student knowledge and skills throughout the school year, at the end of each academic year, and for the term of the school agreement. Your answer must:**

- **Include the mandatory local and state assessments and specify the timing of their administration.**
- **Describe the purpose, design, format, and rationale for the selection of each assessment, including each assessment’s alignment with Common Core State Standards.**
- **Describe key considerations in the selection or creation of any assessments not yet identified.**
- **Describe who will be responsible and involved in data collection and analysis. Identify the formalized strategies and supports the school will utilize to collect and analyze assessment results, including the related roles and responsibilities of school staff and administrators.**
- **Describe how instructional leaders and teachers will use the assessment data to inform programmatic and instructional planning decisions and adjust instruction, curricula, professional development, and other school components.**
- **Explain how the school will communicate with parents/guardians and students about academic achievement and progress.**

*Appendix 2.4*  
*In Appendix 2.4 or the proposal narrative, applicants must provide a table, by grade level, detailing each assessment used and when it will be administered.*



A balanced system of assessments plays an important role within the overall instructional core. Well thought out and intentional assessments provide ongoing checks of student learning and tools for teacher reflection. They should reflect the learning expectations of established standards and are a key component of the instructional expectations for teachers. The school will follow guidelines established by CPS to ensure that assessments are aligned to goals and standards.

Key to designing a balanced assessment system that supports the instructional core is the use of multiple measures. Research indicates that instructional decisions, informed by data, have the ability to improve student outcomes. Assessment and instruction interact when teachers collect evidence about student performance and use it to shape their teaching. “Data analysis can provide a snapshot of what students know, what they should know, and what can be done to meet their academic needs. With appropriate analysis and interpretation of data, educators make informed decisions that positively affect student outcomes.” (Yin, 1994; Rahim & Daud, 2015) It is important to understand that a single assessment, frozen in time, cannot provide educators what they need to know to make well-informed, high-impact instructional decisions; multiple data points and multiple data sources must be employed. Examples of data points for review may include metrics on test scores/grades, socio-economic level, demographics, attendance, behavior, and performance. Data sources may include teacher observation, metrics from the learning management system (LMS), test scores, surveys, and focus groups.

Student data will be provided through a variety of formative and summative assessment instruments via digital lessons and through the LMS. Teachers receive personalized professional development to support collecting data in real time, both in digital and non-digital formats, and may include observation, formative assessments, surveys, and summative evaluations. Together, teacher/student contacts (text, phone, online, Skype, etc.) and survey instruments can begin to paint a complete picture of each student that allows the teacher to truly personalize the learner experience. The data informs many of the decisions on how to personalize including playlists, pathways, and whole child planning. Instead of going by “gut feeling” or guessing why students are not achieving, real-time data reporting makes it possible to understand root causes rather than simply treating the symptoms.

Teachers will use assessments for a variety of reasons including: to inform instructional decisions, motivate and reward students, assign grades, and report progress to families. Additionally, data will be used to support decisions about grouping for personalization, creating student learning pathways, and learning modalities. Teachers will continuously assess what students know and how they have come to that understanding by reviewing a wide range of information including student work product, facilitated discussions, answers to complex questions, listening to student conversations, and observing student work strategies.

Teachers will also utilize “summative” assessments as end-of-unit and end-of-course tests. They may select a variety of forms of assessment, from multiple-choice tests, writing

assignments or performance-based assessments guided by scoring rubrics. Teachers may use student portfolios to document student learning over time, which, in the case of technology, may often take the form of student-created projects and digital portfolios.

Assessments, including purpose and in alignment with CPS/CCSS requirements:

Assessment	Dates	Grades	Purpose	CCSS/School/District Alignment
DIBELS	BOY, MOY, EOY	K-2	The purpose of DIBELS is to help teachers identify students who may need additional support, group students for targeted intervention, and monitor progress in early literacy skills.	DIBELS Next® results are used for teacher planning, student grouping and measuring the effectiveness of academic interventions.
TRC	BOY, MOY, EOY	K-2	The purpose of TRC is to give teachers detailed information about student reading development by allowing them to record and analyze the types of errors students made when they read and assess students' reading comprehension at various text levels. TRC also helps teachers determine each student's Instructional Reading Level, which is used to plan targeted small-group reading instruction.	Teachers use the results of the assessment for instructional planning. TRC also helps identify students who may be in need of additional support in literacy (i.e. academic intervention or enrichment).

mCLASS Math	BOY, MOY, EOY	K-2	The purpose of the assessment is to help teachers identify students who may need additional support, group students for targeted intervention, and monitor student progress in early numeracy skills.	mCLASS®: Math results are used for teacher planning, student grouping and measuring the effectiveness of academic interventions.
NWEA MAP for Primary Grade	BOY, EOY	K-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To identify achievement levels of early learners</li> <li>• To guide instruction during early stages of student's academic career</li> <li>• To demonstrate academic growth over time</li> <li>• A component of CPS' School Accountability model</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Reading: Literature, informational</li> <li>* Foundational skills in K-5</li> <li>* Language Conventions</li> <li>* Use of Complex Text</li> <li>* Citing evidence from text</li> <li>*Math - Focused on the major work of grades K-8</li> <li>*Items that require explaining, critiquing, reasoning</li> </ul>
NWEA MAP	BOY, EOY	3-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To identify achievement levels of early learners</li> <li>• To guide instruction during early stages of student's academic career</li> <li>• To demonstrate academic growth over time</li> <li>• A component of CPS' School Accountability model</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Reading: Literature, informational</li> <li>* Foundational skills in K-5</li> <li>* Use of Complex Text</li> <li>* Citing evidence from text</li> <li>* Comprehensive Math Domain</li> <li>*Math - Integrative tasks/items that combine skills</li> </ul>

PARCC	MOY	3-8	<p>Built to be fully aligned to the shifts in the Common Core and created by educators from across the country. Centers on measuring problem solving and critical thinking skills and the full range of standards. Provides a writing component at every grade level. Uses innovative technology-based tasks allow for greater interaction with content. Comparable across schools, districts, and states. Formative components will eventually provide real-time, instructionally-relevant formative information on progress toward standard proficiency.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Reading: Literature, informational</li> <li>* Foundational skills in K-5</li> <li>* Writing</li> <li>* Speaking and Listening</li> <li>* Language Conventions</li> <li>* Use of Complex Text</li> <li>* Citing evidence from text</li> <li>* Embed reading and writing across disciplines</li> <li>* Comprehensive Math Domain Coverage</li> <li>*Math - Focused on the major work of grades K-8</li> <li>*Math – Integrative tasks/items that combine skills</li> <li>*Math - Items that require explaining, critiquing and reasoning</li> </ul>
Illinois Science Assessment (ISA)	MOY	5 & 8	<p>In compliance with federal testing requirements, Illinois will administer a science assessment to students enrolled in a public-school district in grades 5, 8 and once at the high school level. The high school assessment utilizes a course-based model with content aligned to Biology I. The assessment will</p>	

			be administered in an online format and is aligned to the Illinois Learning Standards for Science incorporating the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).	
NAEP	MOY	4 & 8	Nationally normed assessment in reading, mathematics, science, writing, U.S. history, civics, geography, and the arts.	
Algebra Exit	EOY/ EOS		Algebra Exit Exam	
PSAT 8/9	MOY	9		
PSAT/NMSQT	MOY	10 & 11	Scholarship Qualification for 11th Graders	
STAR	BOY, MOY, EOY	9-12	School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP)	
NAEP	MOY	12	Nationally normed assessment in reading, mathematics, science, writing, U.S. history, civics, geography, and the arts.	

SAT	MOY- EOY	11	SAT - School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP) State Promotion and Graduation Requirements	Measures critical reading, mathematics and writing skills.
ACT	MOY - EOY	11		*Reading: Literature, informational * Writing * Language Conventions * Use of Complex Text * Citing evidence from text * Comprehensive Math Domain Coverage *Math – Integrative tasks/items that combine skills
AP Exams	EOY	As needed		
IB Exams	EOY	As needed		

Special Populations				
ACCESS	MOY	K-12	The purpose of the assessment is to monitor student progress in English language proficiency (ELP) on a yearly basis and to serve as a criterion to aid in determining when ELLs have attained full language proficiency. Provides information that can be used to enhance instruction and learning for ELLs. Assess each of the four language domains of Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing	Track student progress on an annual basis and inform classroom instruction. Accountability measure for Title III funded districts: Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs). Establish when ELLs have attained English language proficiency according to state criteria.  School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP) State English Learner (EL) Exit Criteria
DLM	MOY	3-8, 11	For students with alternate assessment indicator in IEP	

Chart of additional performance assessments with purpose and frequency:

Performance assessments/benchmarks	Purpose	Frequency
Embedded in online curriculum	Formative--Check for Mastery of Grade Level Skills and Content	Daily/dependent on how many micro-tasks are completed in each lesson
Teacher-created informal assessments	Formative--Check for Mastery of Skills and Content	Daily
ACT Test prep	Formative—To check for preparedness to take and excel on the ACT	Annually

Exit tickets, quick quizzes, digital gaming, student polls	Formative--To check for understanding	Dependent on class activities
Mastery-based culminating grade	Summative--To check for content mastery and synthesis of information	At the end of each course
Project-based assessments of learning	Allows for the learner to demonstrate mastery in a variety of modalities; allows for real-world assessments including from experts outside the class/school	As projects are completed

Assessments can set levels of acceptable performance for all students and provide benchmarks against which teachers, students, and districts may view their own educational accomplishments. The assessments may motivate educators to change their practices and decision-makers to modify their policies.

“Data-driven decision making refers to the process by which educators examine assessment data to identify student strengths and deficiencies and apply those findings to their practice.” (Mertler, 2014) A robust data culture is essential to ensuring routine, consistent, and effective data-based decision-making. To support teachers and administrators through accurately informed instructional decisions, a process of critical examination of curriculum and practice must be in place and must be relative to performance on standardized tests and assessments (Mertler, 2007; Mertler & Zachel, 2006). Teacher-created assessments, including both formative and summative, are also viable sources of student data for this process (Mertler, 2014).

School leaders will form data teams to advise on data use. The data team will meet weekly and will represent a range of stakeholders inclusive of an administrator, teachers across content areas, and support professionals (such as a coach, ELL support or EC support). In addition to the stakeholder groups, a person proficient in understanding, interpreting, and sharing data information should be included. The data team will develop a shared vocabulary for discussing and sharing data and its use. The data team may want to define critical concepts such as learning, data, evidence, achievement, or collaboration. Some of the items for discussion will include performance, attendance, engagement levels, and behavior, although discussions will be guided as the data indicates.

Assessment review will occur at 3 distinct levels: teachers, teacher teams (level-alike, content-alike, PLNs, etc.) and instructional leadership teams (ILT). Careful consideration will be taken to understand what level of analysis each group is undertaking and for what purpose. Using the appropriate level of analysis ensures data findings can be leveraged for meaningful action. (For example, school-wide data will not give an individual teacher the necessary detail to target intervention. Conversely, it is neither efficient nor informative of



school-wide performance for an ILT to analyze individual student level data.) These groups will set regular meetings, both formal and informal, to review data.

In the technology-enhanced education landscape there is no shortage of data (Wayman, 2005; Wayman, Cho, & Johnston, 2007; Wohlstetter, Datnow, & Park, 2008). When it comes to improving instruction and learning, however, it is not the volume of data that matters; rather, the value is in how it is understood and utilized (Hamilton et al., 2009). In a virtual setting, teachers are provided access to a significant body of data analytics as well as provided professional development to assist in understanding the data and, more importantly, how to leverage that information to create optimal learning environments where students thrive.

Teachers may use the data to inform a variety of decisions including:

- Reframing instructional practice (Rather than attribute learning difficulties to weak students or deficient home lives, reframing is a shift from the 'problem student' to reflecting on the link between instructional practice and student learning.)
- Student grouping
- Assignments
- Personalized pathways
- Student playlists
- Different learning modalities
- Student interests
- Areas for growth
- Areas for enrichment

A school cannot be successful without the participation and support of guardians and families. Stakeholders must have access to clear, transferable learning objectives and assessment results so they understand what is expected for mastery and advancement. Given the important role a balanced assessment system plays in schools, it is critical that families are engaged in a basic understanding of assessments and provided information specific to their learner.

Timeline	Opportunity
Beginning of year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information on how parents/guardians can log into the learning management system to review student data, progress and grades.</li> <li>• Discuss how your school’s curriculum and internal formative assessments will prepare students.</li> <li>• Provide copies of assessment calendar.</li> <li>• Provide ‘Fact Sheets’ to families for each assessment to explain what is measured, its timing and use.</li> <li>• Allow time for parents to log on to NWEA, PARCC or ACT sample sites (as appropriate).</li> <li>• Allow for time to review child’s particular strengths and challenges with parents/ guardians. Explain why different assessments serve different purposes.</li> </ul>
Weekly progress check-ins	Regular reminders sent through a variety of means (may include email, texts, Remind, newsletter, reports generated through the learning management system etc.)
Quarterly parent/guardian teacher communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review how families can log-in to learning management system to see real-time data and reminders of how to review the data with their learner</li> <li>• Provide student work samples what specific next steps parents can work on at home.</li> <li>• Provide any updated assessment data.</li> </ul>
On demand parent/guardian communications	Families will be provided with the means to directly contact teachers and administration for the purpose of individualized updates and communication regarding their learner.
Mid-year updates	Update families on school progress made as measured by centralized assessments and other formative tasks.
End-of-year summative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a letter to parents in early spring explaining what summative assessments students will take, the purpose of each, and how the data will be used.</li> <li>• Provide testing calendar, as appropriate.</li> </ul>

## Section 2.5: Diverse Learners

### 2.5.1: Students with Disabilities

**Describe the school's methods and strategies for identifying and serving students with disabilities, including but not limited to students with Individualized Education Programs or Section 504 plans, in compliance with all federal laws and regulations.**

**Include the following information:**

- **How the school will identify students with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities (and avoid misidentification), develop plans for their education, and monitor their progress to ensure the attainment of each student's goals as set forth in their Individualized Education Plan.**
- **The continuum of special education services (including related services) the school will make available to students with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities in the least restrictive environment (LRE) possible.**
- **How the school will adjust the curricula, instructional practices, daily schedule, staffing plans, and supports to meet identified needs.**
- **Who will carry out responsibilities related to special education (including the identification of school staff and external professionals), how parents will be involved in this process, and how the school will ensure that there is qualified staffing to meet the needs of the student population.**
- **Cite any research or evidence that supports the appropriateness of the school's approach to serving students with disabilities.**
- **Complete and attach the ISBE Special Education Certification form: [https://www.isbe.net/documents/34-50A\\_charter\\_init\\_app\\_sped\\_svcs.pdf](https://www.isbe.net/documents/34-50A_charter_init_app_sped_svcs.pdf).**

Article 14 of the Illinois School Code applies to the education of students with disabilities. The rules and guidelines set out in Article 14 will be followed. In addition, rules are provided for the administration of special education, the design of special education programs (including class size), home or hospital programs, State-operated or private programs, special education personnel, transportation and residential care facilities. Additionally, the school will follow all rules and guidelines set forth in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

A referral process will be developed with the school staff and eligibility will be determined based on local and state guidelines. It is important for educational practices to be flexible and responsive to the strengths, needs and learning preferences of individual students. This helps create inclusive learning experiences that ensure all students are successful.

When identifying students with learning disabilities (LD), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, 2004 (IDEA 2004) allows educators to use a process, such as RTI, that is based on a child's response to scientific, research-based interventions. IDEA 2004 allows educators to use an approach such as RTI instead of, or in addition to, the IQ-achievement discrepancy approach. RTI can be applied across schools as a diagnostic approach that shapes instruction and informs decisions about intervention, eligibility for special programs, design of individualized education programs (IEPs) and effectiveness of

special education programs (Batsche et al., 2005). RTI involves a tiered approach to providing the most appropriate instruction, services and scientifically based interventions to struggling students — with increasing intensity at each tier (Cortiella, 2005).

Illinois Prep will provide:

- A full-time special education services director
- A staff of school psychologist/counselor, special education teachers and speech/occupational therapists as needed for enrolled and identified students
- The ability to personalize learning to meet IEP's via pacing, differentiation and other methodologies
- A thorough IEP referral and services process

**IEP Evaluation Process:**

1. Student enrollment - parent/student or prior records indicate IEP in place.
2. Enrollment team sends the current IEP and current evaluations to the IEP review team to write an Interim placement offer of FAPE form.
3. Form sent to the parent and a phone call to the parent to schedule meeting follows to discuss the offer of FAPE for this school placement.
4. Once agreed upon parent signs and returns the form.
5. Once received the school assigns a case manager who reaches out to schedule the 30-day IEP and schedule services according to the Interim form.

**IEP Referral Process for special education services:**

- Following an SST/RTI process, the IEP Team (general education teacher, principal, parent, school psychologist) are notified by staff or parents of areas of concern.
- An SST1 meeting is conducted where there is a discussion and review of the student's current performance levels and an intervention plan is put into effect.

# Data and Team Members in IEP Process

## IEP Team Members

- The **parents** of the child
- Not less than one **regular education teacher** and special education teacher, where appropriate
- Director of special education services
- Individual who can **interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results**
- Others who have **knowledge or special expertise regarding the child (i.e. counselor)**
- The **child** with a disability (when appropriate)

## IEP Data

- Data derived from adaptive and formative assessments, standardized test data and ongoing assessment data from the general education teacher covering a broad spectrum of academics to identify strengths and weaknesses
- Up to three specific skills are chosen and interventions and supports are put in place for a 10-12 week cycle
- During this time data is reviewed for progress in each of the specific areas identified
- Data continually reviewed for effectiveness of interventions with modifications made as required

## ADA Compliance Plan

When required students will be provided assistive technologies for accessibility to digital content. An accessible interface means that your computer interface will work for people with disabilities, many of whom use an assistive technology to access software, operating systems, and Web sites. (Lazar & Jaeger, 2011) } Commonly used assistive technologies include:

- A screen reader, which provides computer-synthesized speech output of what appears on the screen
- A screen magnifier, which enlarges the text
- Speech recognition, which allows for hands-free input
- Various alternative keyboards and pointing devices

In addition, Illinois Prep has selected digital content that follows the Keeping Pace Guidelines for High Quality and Accessible course design which include:

**Checklist for ADA Compliance in Digital Courses/Content – All Illinois Prep/Fuel Education Courses Have all Compliance Components in Place**

Links	a. Provides wordings for the links. Avoids using “click here” for the links.
	b. Uses text descriptions for the links.
Text	a. Uses <b>serif fonts</b> for easy readability
	b. Uses dark font colors on light backgrounds (preferably use black text on a white background)
	c. Avoids extremely bright colors as a background colors.
	d. Uses one font throughout the site.
	e. Avoids overuse of all CAPS, bold or italics
	f. Avoids underlining words, as the screen reader can mistake it for a navigation link.
Images	a. Images are clear.
	b. Image files are optimized for efficient loading.
	c. Use of animated images is limited to only those that contribute to the learning experience – supporting the course content.
	d. Avoids animated or blinking images, text or cursors. These can cause seizures for some people.
	e. All Images have alt texts/long descriptions attached to them.
Audio	a. Audio quality is clear.
	b. Audio file length is adequate to meet the goals of the activity without being too large to restrict users’ ability to download the file on computers with lower bandwidths.
	c. A written transcript is provided with all audio files.
	d. Audio file length is adequate to meet the goals of the activity without adding unnecessary information.
	e. Audio player required is compatible with multiple operating systems and requires only a standard, free plug-in.
Video	a. Video quality is clear.
	b. Video file length is adequate to meet the goals of the activity without being too large to restrict users’ ability to download the file on computers with lower bandwidths.
	c. Provides closed-captioning or has accompanying text-based scripts for all videos.
	d. Video file lengths are adequate to meet the goals of the activity without adding unnecessary information.
	e. Video player required is compatible with multiple operating systems and requires only a standard, free plug-in.

Illinois Prep Chicago will adhere to all policies and procedures to be in full compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability and require accessibility in all aspects of school operations, including employment, buildings, programs and activities, communications, and information technology. This process will be overseen by the Program Director and informed by legal counsel. The ADA Policies and Procedures will be in place by prior to enrollment of any students. The table below shows different compliance components and the responsible staff.

<b>Table 3.1.d. ADA Compliance</b>		
<b>ADA Compliance Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Staff Member Responsible</b>
<b><i>Employment Practices</i></b> , including addressing accommodations in hiring and employment	Illinois Prep will adopt employment policies that forbid employment-related discrimination on the basis of disability. Illinois Prep will consider all candidates, regardless of disability, that are qualified and can perform the job with or without accommodations.	Managing Director & Board
<b><i>Policies, Practices &amp; Procedures</i></b> , including making reasonable modifications if necessary to accommodate persons with disabilities	Accommodations will be provided to employees in order to perform their position duties. Activities and meetings will be scheduled in locations that ensure that all invited employees have accessibility to participate.	Managing Director, Onsite staff and outside support when required
<b><i>Buildings &amp; Activities</i></b> , including ensuring relocation of activities from any inaccessible room or space identified on the ADA report and obtaining accommodations for parents or visitors to school events who have hearing or visual impairments	Illinois Prep will ask that parents and visitors make a request for meeting accommodation within 2 days of a meeting or activity. Illinois Prep will provide the necessary accommodations.	Managing Director of Program working in Coordination with Daley College Facilities

<p><b>Communications &amp; IT,</b> including insuring that the proposed school website and all information technology in the proposed school, including hardware, software, and web-based applications are accessible to persons with disabilities</p>	<p>Illinois Prep will document the need for assistive technologies in each student’s IEP and will report it to CPS Department of Diverse Learners. Illinois Prep will accommodate employees requiring special technology to perform duties accommodations.</p>	<p>Managing Director, Onsite Staff and IT Program Coordinator</p>
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**2.5.2: English Learners**

**Describe the proposed school’s methods and strategies for identifying (and avoiding misidentification) and serving English Learners (ELs) in compliance with federal and state law and regulations.**

**Describe the specific process for identifying students whose first language is not English, including how the school will determine the scope of assistance the students may need and monitor the implementation of services and the progress of ELs, including exit criteria. This answer must describe the approach, programs, resources, and personnel, including qualifications, that the school will use to meet the needs of ELs and cite any research and evidence that supports the appropriateness of this approach.**

**Complete and attached the ISBE English Language Learning Services Certification form: <https://www.isbe.net/documents/92-15A-charter-school-initial-app-el-svcs.pdf>.**



# School-wide Commitment to ELL Learners



As part of our enrollment and intake process we will conduct initial interviews and family home language enrollment surveys to determine home language. As per the CPS Policy we will conduct:

A. Home Language Survey: Every student, Pre-Kindergarten through grade 12, newly enrolling in a CPS District school or any of the District's Pre-Kindergarten programs must complete a Home Language Survey.

B. EL Screening and Placement: Every student whose Home Language Survey response includes "yes" to one or more of the questions must be screened for English language proficiency to determine eligibility and placement in Bilingual Education Services. For K-12 grade level students, screening shall utilize the state-prescribed screener. For Pre-K students, screening shall utilize the screener specified in the Bilingual Education Handbook. All students enrolled in Pre-Kindergarten whose Home Language Survey response includes "yes," must be rescreened upon enrollment in Kindergarten. A student shall be deemed eligible for enrollment in Bilingual Education Services based on his or her screening results.

C. Incoming Transfer Students: Program eligibility and placement of transfer students shall be based on the most recent state-prescribed English language proficiency assessment

from the transferring school district if available AND only if the score was obtained during the current or previous school year. If assessment scores are not available or are available but out-of-date, eligibility and placement shall be based on the state-prescribed Screener results from the transferring school district, provided that the score was obtained within the previous 12 months. A student shall be re-screened if no valid screener results are provided by the transferring school district.

D. Parent/Guardian Requests: The parent/guardian of any student within the District who has not been identified as an English Learner has the right to request that the student be considered for placement in Bilingual Education Services.

English Language Learners are provided with supplemental content and personalized learning opportunities through the robust curriculum. Zia and Illinois Prep use an Acquired English Proficiency program that provides curriculum designed to improve reading, speaking, and writing skills for ELL students. The program emphasizes academic English and better prepares them for mainstream courses in much shorter time than the national average.

Illinois Prep and Zia achieve this through our partnership with and use of Middlebury Interactive Languages, in conjunction with Fuel Education. Middlebury (a renowned leader in ELL and World Language instruction) has developed a supplementary curriculum for upper middle and high school students based on proven best practices for language acquisition. The project-based learning program focuses on “academic English” designed to help students increase achievement on state tests as well as improve their overall ability to function in the classroom and in their broader communities.

Fuel Education offers a new way to engage English language learners that helps them grasp the complexities of the English language through:

- Learning activities that connect to the student’s prior experiences
- Complex thinking and challenging activities
- Language and literacy development
- Oral and written interpretation of readings and media
- Project-oriented peer conversations

In addition to these supports, digital materials with dual language tracks will provide direct support for ELL learners through SAFARI Montage (a CPS district-wide asset) and other digital media systems that allow for Spanish and other language track options.

Zia Learning will staff ELL certified instructors to provide additional ELL supports. Our student services program coordinator is an ELL certified teacher.

All content instructional designers are bilingual in Spanish and recently completed a major project for Chicago Public Schools Family Community and Engagement office to create Local School Council trainings in both English and Spanish. Zia Learning is committed to

ELL supports for students and families in all of our programs and through all of our services.

### **2.5.3: Multi-Tiered Systems of Support**

**Describe how the school's educational program will identify and meet the needs of students who require academic support or intervention beyond that provided in the general education program. Identify specific differentiated instructional strategies, programs, services, and supports. Note: This question does not refer to services to support students with Special Education needs or who are English Learners, but rather refers to students within the general education population who are performing below grade level and need remediation and additional support.**

Our proposed virtual school model will utilize a personalized approach to identifying and meeting students' individual learning needs and ensure that students who require academic support or interventions beyond the general education program are met. Each student has different learning strengths and gaps, and that's why we have developed a model that leverages online and blended learning for remediation and intervention to help:

- Quickly assess individual student skills mastery and deficiencies
- Understand student mastery of state and national standards
- Develop customized learning paths for struggling students to improve outcomes

We will utilize the FuelEd curriculum coupled with the PEAK LMS, which is a diagnostic-driven model. The online courses are crafted to keep students on task and moving forward, utilizing a differentiation of content methodology to increase retention as well as pre-recorded audio, pre-teaching of vocabulary. The PEAK LMS has the unique ability to target remediation specific to learning skill gap while working in concert with a credit based course that can flex and truly adapt to a student's specific criteria. PEAK, which stands for Personalize, Engage, and Achieve with K12, is an intelligent management center for online learning that enables schools and districts to manage and personalize their online learning program solutions – including K12 and third-party solutions, open education resources, and district-authored or generated content from one place.

The critical differentiator between PEAK and other digital curriculum systems is the integration. The LMS, curriculum, assessment and student information systems are all designed to work together (rather than a post-purchase integration of multiple systems from a variety of vendors). The true integration and interoperability of these systems is key. The analytics gathered through the constant formative assessments drives the adaptive release of content based on ongoing student performance. Furthermore, the solution looks at curriculum not simply from a discrete course level, but the full K-12 spectrum. Thus, if a student in an Algebra I course is missing critical skills from, for example, 6th grade math, they will get the support they need – even if it comes from skills presented in grade levels three, four or more years prior.

## Our MTSS Model and Program

In guiding schools' blended learning practices, the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) has described the similarities and differences between differentiated, individualized, and personalized instruction (Grant & Basye, 2014). Their descriptions are remarkably aligned to the principles and practices that we use as the foundation for our MTSS model. Blended and personalized learning serve as vehicles for the implementation of a high quality MTSS model.

### MTSS Structure of Support

#### TIER 3

refers to the interventions that are provided to individual students.

Through the Zia blended/personalized model students targeted needs are identified and teachers have time and information to meet student's individual learning and socio/emotional needs and work with individual students.

#### TIER 2

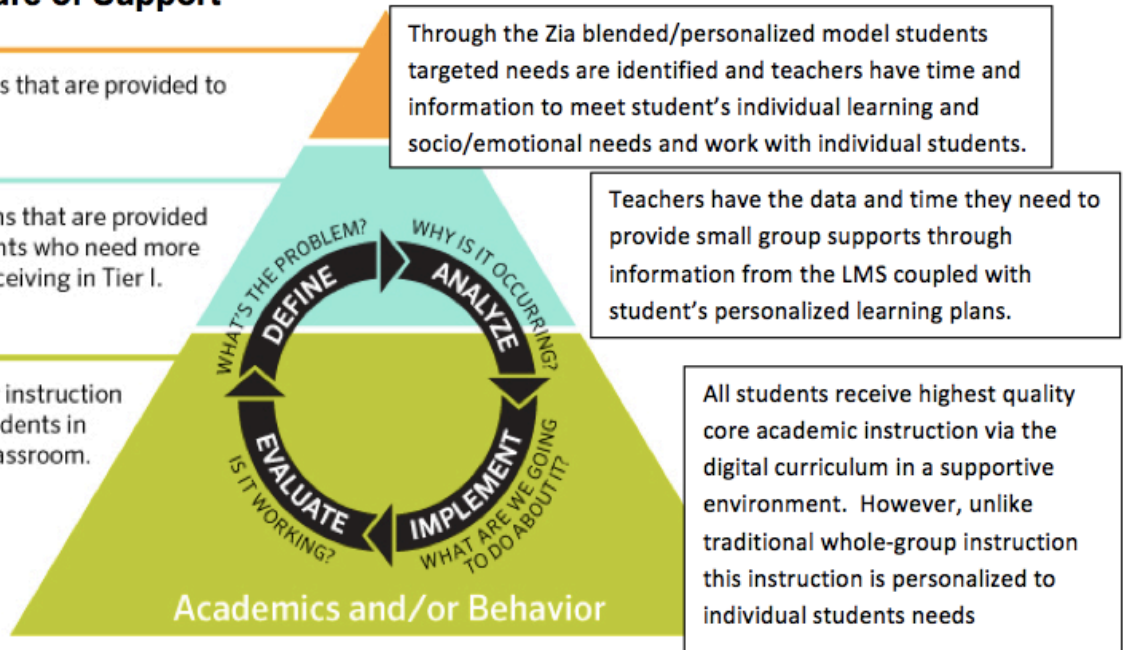
refers to the interventions that are provided to small groups of students who need more support than they are receiving in Tier 1.

Teachers have the data and time they need to provide small group supports through information from the LMS coupled with student's personalized learning plans.

#### TIER 1

refers to the high quality instruction that is provided to all students in the general education classroom.

All students receive highest quality core academic instruction via the digital curriculum in a supportive environment. However, unlike traditional whole-group instruction this instruction is personalized to individual students needs



- Differentiation with Core Environments: Teachers respond to student needs by making adjustments to process, content, and product, based on how students learn best (traditionally known as Tier 1).
- Individualized Supports, Based on Evidence of Mastery of Core Priorities: If differentiation is the how, individualization is the when. Learning progresses at different rates; some students may need to review concepts, while others may be ready to immerse themselves in those concepts (traditionally known as Tier 2).
- Personalization and Specialized Supports, at the Leading Edge of Students' Zones of Proximal Development: If differentiation is the how and individualization is the when, then personalization is the where – as in, where are students in their learning journey? Students who are not yet performing at expected levels, due to significant deficits in foundational skills, receive targeted and intensive supports at the leading edge of their zones of proximal development. Students who are meeting and exceeding age and grade expectations dig deeper into areas of interest (traditionally known as Tier 3).

#### **2.5.4 Advanced Learners**

**Describe how your education program will identify and meet the needs of academically advanced students. Identify specific programs, services, and supports.**

We believe that all students are entitled to equal opportunity to develop their academic abilities. Our school will maintain and support programs in a coordinated and comprehensive structure of informal and formal services to nurture advanced learners.

In alignment with the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) programming standards, a continuum of services will be offered at each grade level. The Standards establish a set of minimal and exemplary criteria for seven different aspects of effective programming to be used for planning purposes: Curriculum and Instruction, Program Administration and Management, Program Design, Program Evaluation, SEL skills, Professional Development, and Student Identification.

The range of services may include:

- Accommodations through modules and how students 'show what they know'
- Selection for both regular and modified classes
- Homogeneous grouping (when working with students on projects and other digital assignments)
- Acceleration, extension, or grade advancement (In alignment with CPS guidelines)

To better support students who are academically advanced requires personalized, differentiated instruction that speaks directly to a child's interests, hobbies, and aptitudes. Additionally, it is widely recognized that advanced students need models of education that allow for agency and real-world applications. To that end, much of the digital content provided includes embedded problem/project or inquiry-based learning modules. These types of learning modules allow students to use higher order Blooms' skills including analyzing, evaluation, and creation. These approaches also incorporate non-traditional assessments that are more suitable for advanced students to show academic growth, inclusive of digital portfolios/footlockers.

Research has consistently shown the greatest achievement gains for advanced students happen when they are placed with other advanced students, and when they are presented with appropriately differentiated curriculum. Professional learning will include best practice for grouping and differentiating students in virtual environments.

In alignment with the NAGC and CPS, Illinois Prep will follow a systematic, multi-phased process for identifying advanced students *not previously identified by CPS*. Students previously screened and selected by CPS for advanced learning will not be re-tested. If students have not been previously screened, there is a nomination/identification phase followed by multiple screenings and identification.

To identify students, the school will rely on a wide range of information sources, including both qualitative and quantitative information. Academic talent may present in different ways; therefore, it is important to collect information on both the child's performance *and* potential through a combination of objective (quantifiably measured) and subjective (personally observed) identification instruments. A range of methods for potential identification are listed below.

1. Previously identified CPS students
  - a. Students previously tested by CPS and not selected for advanced learning paths may request to be re-evaluated.
2. Teacher/staff nominations
3. Assessment of learner work products (portfolios, digital portfolios, exemplars)
4. Peer nominations
5. Parental interest
6. Discussions with potential students

Illinois Prep will follow CPS practice in identifying elementary/middle grades students.

Grades K-4: All age-appropriate students applying for kindergarten through grade 4 will be tested. Parents will not be allowed to participate with their learner nor may they be present in the testing room or within the line of sight of their learner.

Grades 5-8: Testing eligibility for students applying for grades 5-8 is based on the student's NWEA MAP scores in both reading and math.

IEP: Students with an IEP applying for grades 5-8 must score at or above the 50th percentile in either reading or math, and at or above the 40th percentile in the other subject (reading or math) in order to be eligible for testing.

## Section 2.6: School Calendar and Schedules

### 2.6.1: Annual Calendar

**Briefly describe the annual calendar and how it will support the mission of the school. Complete the calendar template provided in the RFP resource materials. Describe how the annual calendar may change in years 2 through 5.**

## Appendix 2.6

In Appendix 2.6, applicants must provide the school calendar for the proposed school's first year of operation that clearly articulates:

- Total number of days of instruction for the school year;
- Total number of hours of instruction for the school year;
- First and last day of classes;
- Organization of the school year (i.e., semesters, trimesters, quarters, etc.);
- All planned holidays and other days off, as well as planned half days, including Professional Development days or meetings; and
- Dates for summer school, orientation and other activities outside of the core academic calendar.

The Illinois Prep school calendar will mirror the CPS calendar with the exception of the three weeks of teacher induction (the induction is marked as teacher institute days on the attached calendar). It will include:

- 180 days of instruction
- 4 professional development days
- 2 student-parent-teacher conference days

No changes are planned for years 2 through 5.

### 2.6.2: Student Schedules

For each division of the school (i.e., lower elementary, upper elementary, middle, and high), provide the following for a typical week of instruction:

- **A Sample Student Schedule;**
- **A description of a typical school day from the student's perspective. Include start and dismissal times and any regular variations, (for example one day a week early dismissal for teacher professional development), what happens during the school day, including the structure of academic and enrichment/elective courses, before or after school activities, and remediation or other non-core academic components of the proposed school design. If responsibilities or schedules vary significantly among students in the same grade division, include additional scenarios and an accompanying explanation; and**
- **Describe any changes planned for the student schedule in years 2 through 5.**

### Daily and Weekly Schedule

The daily schedule at Illinois Prep will run from 7:30 am—4:30 pm Monday through Friday. Students will have staggered start and end times based on their individual needs in order to provide flexibility that is oftentimes required by virtual school students due to health or other issues. However all students will be required to participate in a full school day of 7 hours of instruction (which may be independent, teacher-led, project and applied,

intervention, core academic, elective or other instruction). The actual schedule of a student will be based on their individual needs.

Students are expected to be online, working and active during school hours. However, they can access learning and curriculum 24/7. Students can request a modified schedule after the student and family meet with counselors and a joint decision is made around a need for a differentiated daily schedule. However, the student must be engaged, active and learning for the full, required time to constitute a full day of instruction.

Our virtual school structure allows for increased collaboration and inter-disciplinary work. Classes are scheduled so that students spend roughly 50% of their day in the Humanities area of the curriculum and 50% in the STEM area. Students in a section will be engaged in a variety of activities ranging from individualized, on-line instruction, small group instruction led by a live web-based teacher, collaborative problem solving and project based learning (independently or with smaller and larger peer groups via virtual collaboration), and coaching/facilitation seminars. The mix and balance of activities can be personalized for each student based on his/her learning profile. At various points during the day, depending on student need and formative data, students may attend live coaching sessions.

Our physical blended learning support services center, where students and their families can access support services, coaching and live face to face support, will be open to students from 8:30 am—4:30 pm Monday through Friday. (See academic section for a full explanation of the blended learning support services).

Our weekly schedule was created based on practices that our master teachers deem critical to student success. Students attend a check-in meeting with their assigned advisory teacher (HS) or core K-8 teacher each Monday that is designed to motivate students and set expectations for the week. As part of the weekly cycle, students will set weekly goals that drive how they spend the flexible portions of their time within each block.

Part of the mission of Illinois Prep is to cultivate student independence and perseverance. Thus, students will be given shared ownership over how they spend their time. Real-time monitoring of student progress will help to make this possible while ensuring that students do not fall behind and progress toward mastery of grade-level standards. As students develop as independent learners, they will gain increased ownership over the designated independent work time in their schedules.



### 2.6.3: Teacher Schedules

Provide the following for a typical week of instruction:

- **A Sample Teacher Schedule;**
- **A narrative describing a typical teacher day and week, including the length of the teacher's work day and time devoted to core teaching assignments, planning, professional development, and other activities and responsibilities (e.g. lunch duty, advisory groups, etc.). If responsibilities or schedules vary dramatically among teachers in the same grade division, include additional scenarios and an accompanying explanation; and**
- **Describe any changes planned for the teacher schedule in years 2 through 5.**

Teachers in a virtual setting have a unique job and thus, a unique schedule. Illinois Prep teachers will work in varied, yet connected work settings:

- Onsite - providing direct individual and small group instruction at the blended learning support center
- Online real-time/synchronous teaching - providing daily whole group instruction
- Online real-time/synchronous small group and individual support, remediation or instruction
- Online asynchronous teaching and support

In addition, all staff will participate in

- Curriculum and lesson planning
- Grading and review of student work
- Daily data checks on all students to identify needed supports
- Weekly cross-curricular planning sessions
- Ongoing staff development
- Regular communication with students and parents

A sample teacher schedule is listed below, however teachers will have morning or afternoon start and end times (7:40-11:40 am or 12:00-4:00 pm) to allow for maximum availability of live teaching staff both onsite and online for students. Teachers will work half the day onsite providing blended onsite supports as well as online live instruction, and half the day online teaching duties from their home base to be scheduled based on student need. Actual schedules will be based on student need, but the blended learning support site will be staffed with teachers for both the morning and afternoon shift. While there are no planned changes in years 2-5, we will revisit the model annually and make determinations based on the performance of school.

Virtual school teaching is unique and no two days are the same. However, we have developed a model that provides:

- Structure while still allowing for flexibility
- Accountability for both students and staff
- Real-time support (online and face-to-face)

Below is a sample teaching schedule for an Illinois Prep high school Algebra teacher working the onsite morning shift and offsite in the afternoon.

Day	7:40-8:30 am	8:35-9:25 am	9:30-10:20 am	10:25-11:15 am	11:15-11:40 am	11:40 am - onward
Mon	Onsite individual blended learning sessions	Onsite group instruction and PBL	Onsite online delivery of synchronous live learning	Onsite remediation and support sessions (individual or group)	Onsite remediation and support sessions (individual or group)	Online/virtual teach time (offsite) based on student need
Tues	Onsite remediation and support sessions (individual or group)	Onsite individual blended learning sessions	Onsite group instruction and PBL	Onsite remediation and support sessions (individual or group)	Onsite online delivery of synchronous live learning	Online/virtual teach time (offsite) based on student need
Wed	Onsite online delivery of synchronous live learning	Onsite remediation and support sessions (individual or group)	Onsite group instruction and PBL	Onsite remediation and support sessions (individual or group)	Onsite individual blended learning sessions	Online/virtual teach time (offsite) based on student need
Thurs	Onsite online delivery of synchronous live learning	Onsite remediation and support sessions (individual or group)	Onsite individual blended learning sessions	Onsite group instruction and PBL	Onsite remediation and support sessions (individual or group)	Online/virtual teach time (offsite) based on student need
Fri	Onsite individual blended learning sessions	Onsite remediation and support sessions (individual or group)	Onsite remediation and support sessions (individual or group)	Onsite group instruction and PBL	Onsite online delivery of synchronous live learning	Online/virtual teach time (offsite) based on student need

**(\*\*Flex teaching time is to allow for maximum availability of scheduling of live additional individual support sessions and asynchronous online teaching duties. Teachers will work onsite versus offsite on either a morning or afternoon shift with 4 hours onsite and 4 hours offsite).**

## Section 2.7: School Culture and Engagement

### 2.7.1: School Culture

**Describe the school's general approach to, and rationale for, its school culture, along with the policies, systems, and traditions that will help the school achieve this culture. Address the following:**

- **Describe how the school will establish and maintain a culture that supports students' intellectual and social development, including the plan to communicate expectations for school culture to students, teachers, administrators, and parents/guardians.**
- **Describe any extracurricular activities that the school will offer to develop and nurture the social needs of students.**
- **Identify the members of the leadership team and/or staff who will be responsible for implementing, monitoring, and assessing the components of this section.**

Culture and climate is at the heart of the Zia Framework and is the foundation of our school model. Educating the whole child is core to our mission and begins with the unwavering belief that every student can succeed. We promote a culture of success through focusing on each student's individual needs and celebrating every student's success and growth. We will establish and maintain a culture of both academic success and social development. Our virtual model is designed to provide a truly personalized learning environment that allows students to reach their highest potential through adaptive technologies, engaging curriculum and highest quality web-based instruction from teachers who are dedicated to providing an authentically supportive learning environment that overcomes barriers of space and time through real-time communication, collaboration and instruction.

We understand the unique challenges that a virtual environment can pose to fostering a truly collaborative, supportive and engaging school culture that supports both intellectual and social development. Traditional virtual school models do not fully leverage available technologies. Illinois Prep will be a new model of virtual learning. We are committed to REAL TIME INSTRUCTION AND SUPPORT. This is achieved by harkening back to distance learning models and combining that with new technologies. Teachers, counselors and coaches will provide daily, real time instruction via video/web conferencing. Students will participate with online peers in real time. In our increasingly digital world, fostering positive social interactions via digital technologies can provide positive outlets for social interactions between students who may have struggled with collaboration and communication in traditional settings. In addition, for students who are dealing with health or other issues that prevent them from attending schools in a traditional environment, establishing and maintaining a culture of positive peer interactions via virtual methods is a vital resource for meeting students' social emotional needs.

Attending class is a fundamental part of school, but it's only one facet of a student's experience. Another important way children can grow both personally and socially is by

participating in extracurricular clubs and activities. Illinois Prep will offer programs based on student input from the following options:

- Fine Arts Club
- Student Counsel
- Anime and Gaming Club
- Digital Newspaper Club
- Debate Club
- Model UN
- Beta Delta Sigma Math Club
- Creative Writing Club
- Future Business Leaders of America
- History Club
- International Club
- National Honor Society
- Technology Club
- Virtual Science Fair
- Yearbook

### **2.7.2: Graduation and College Readiness Support**

**If proposing a school serving any combination of grades K-8:**

- **Describe any components of your school culture designed to ensure that students are prepared to attend and succeed in a rigorous high school program.**
- **Describe any components of your school culture designed to provide age-appropriate college awareness and college readiness supports.**
- **Identify the members of the leadership team and staff who will be responsible for implementing, monitoring, and assessing the components of this section. If proposing a school serving any combination of grades 9-12:**
- **Describe any components of your school culture designed to prepare students for success after they graduate from high school.**
- **Describe any specific programs or supports beyond the academic curriculum that your school will implement to prepare students to access, enroll, persist, and succeed in college, as well as any other post-secondary training and/or career supports following graduation.**
- **Identify the members of the leadership team and/or staff who will be responsible for implementing, monitoring, and assessing the components of this section.**

*Note: If proposing a school serving a combination of grades in both K-8 and 9-12 (e.g., serving grades 6-12), provide responses to all of the questions above.*

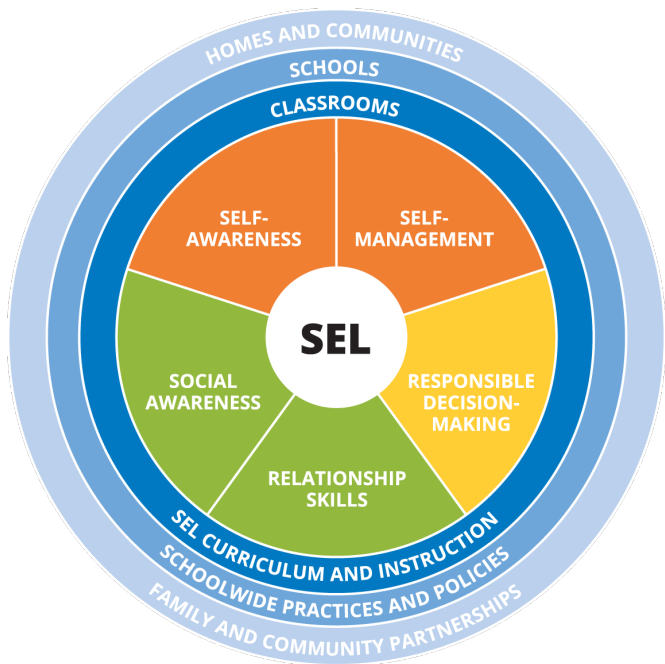
Illinois Prep will foster a college and 21<sup>st</sup> century career readiness environment at all levels and throughout the school in age appropriate ways. These services will be coordinated by our school guidance counselors. These activities, services and programs will include:

- The completion of goal setting activities to include post-secondary plans
- An ongoing career and college portfolio to document interests and understand career paths
- Virtual college and career fairs
- Individual and group counseling sessions for post-secondary plans
- Access to AP courses, dual credit options and courses that lead to industry certifications
- A comprehensive SEL model that focuses on goal setting, decision making, ownership and growth mindset with explicit components around college and career readiness

Illinois Prep will implement a model for personalized learning to ensure that **ALL** students receive a highest quality educational experience that meets their individual needs to prepare them for rigorous high school programs, post secondary education and career and college readiness, while empowering them with 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce, training and post-secondary experiences that will lead to quality lives and competitive employment. We achieve this through:

- **A supportive learning environment** that provides both academic and social emotional supports and ensures student readiness to learn
- **A personalized learning program** that identifies learning gaps and allows for an individualized learning path and plan to graduate from high school prepared for the workforce and/or post-secondary education and training options
- **An applied approach to teaching and learning** that teams hands-on project based options with engaging digital curriculum
- **A focus on college and career readiness**
- **A workforce readiness and development program** that provides students certifications in critical need jobs

Our model adheres to the CPS policies and initiatives for college and career readiness by offering comprehensive career pathways, a full curriculum aligned to CPS graduation requirements and a comprehensive model of support that includes instruction in critical 21<sup>st</sup> century career and college readiness skills. In addition to direct career skills, all students receive life skills training through the SEL Skills for Success program, which developed based on the American School Counselor Association National Model, coupled with ISTE 21<sup>st</sup> century learner and workforce readiness skills.



- This program was developed to address the “mindsets and behaviors” identified by ASCA as critical to student academic and post-secondary success including:

- Academic Development – Standards guiding school counseling programs to implement strategies and activities to support and maximize each student’s ability to learn.

- Career Development – Standards guiding school counseling programs to help students 1) understand the connection between school and the

world of work and 2) plan for and make a successful transition from school to postsecondary education and/or the world of work and from job to job across the life span.

- Social/Emotional Development – Standards guiding school counseling programs to help student develop self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, responsible decision making and relationship skills.

### **Student Success Plan/High School Transition Plan**

Illinois Prep will utilize a combination of the Zia Learning SEL Skills for Success and an Individual Learning Plan and Portfolio to plan for, track and assist students in their high school transition. While each student will have different career, education and post-secondary plans and goals based on their individual needs, interests and goals, all students will develop and complete a plan/path that leads to:

- Enrollment back to the traditional high school setting when appropriate
- Career plan and path that includes workforce development and/or career courses and certifications
- Participation in either a career placement, internship or onsite work training program (through our partnership with Daley College)
- Participation in dual credit courses when appropriate to career plan/path
- Enrollment in post-secondary education, training or placement in full time employment post graduation based on career plan/path

The transition plan is not simply a plan to be completed upon enrollment and then revisited upon completion. Rather, the transition plan serves as the overarching goal and daily motivator for student success. Each student will complete the ongoing SEL Skills for success program that provides direct instruction in goal setting, decision making, career connections and planning, time management, motivation skills and other critical skills.

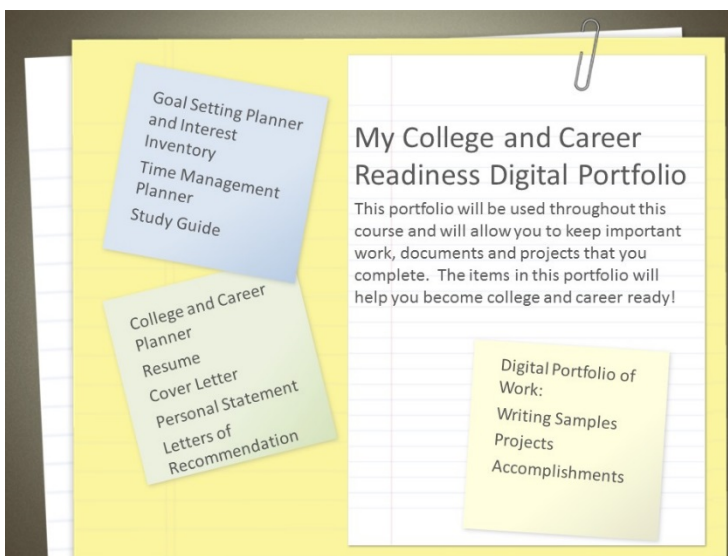
Research shows that the time invested in providing upfront and ongoing support in these areas increases student success in their virtual/online learning and beyond (as these skills are highly transferable college and career readiness skills). All participants of our program are given access for all students to our program “The Digital Edge – SEL Skills for Success.” This program has led to meaningful, measurable results in districts across the US, including a 38% increase in pass rates in the state-wide Ohio Virtual Learning model, LifeSkills.

When students see the clear connection between completion of their coursework and their ultimate goal/transition then they are more motivated to succeed.

### **Monitoring of goals and transition planning**

Using the data from the Learning Management System students and teacher are able to:

- Develop personal daily, weekly and semester goals
- Track progress on those goals
- Monitor daily participation/engagement rates
- Track task completion rates



In addition, students compile a digital portfolio of their work throughout the course which archives writings, documents and projects that are instrumental in becoming college and career ready. The completed portfolio includes:

- An interest inventory
- An inventory of strengths and areas identified for improvement
- Goal setting and goal sheets
- Time management and task completion sheets
- A personal statement and essay
- Reflection journals
- Additional writings and activities

### 2.7.3: Parent and Community Engagement

How will the school engage parents/guardians and the community once it is open?

Your answer must:

- Describe how the school will build strong family-school partnerships to engage parents and guardians in the life of the school and their child(ren)'s education. Outline any commitments, volunteer activities, or requirements for parents' involvement in their child(ren)'s education.
- Describe the formalized mechanism(s) to ensure that parents/guardians and the community are involved in the governance of the school and/or have opportunities to provide regular feedback to the board of directors.
- Provide a plan for how parents/guardians and students can submit or share a concern about a governing board decision, administrative procedure, or practice at the school. Describe the policies and/or procedures for complaint (grievance) resolution.
- Identify the members of the leadership team and/or staff who will be responsible for implementing, monitoring, and assessing the components of this section.

*Appendix 2.7*

*In Appendix 2.7, applicants may include a parent handbook.*

Family and Community Engagement is a critical component of the Illinois Prep model. In a full time virtual program, parents are truly partners in their child's education. As such, Illinois Prep will work closely with parents and under the direction of the Principal and the leadership team will provide:

- Upfront and ongoing information sessions on the role of families in a full time virtual option and parents' role in supporting their student
- Upfront and ongoing training sessions on the technologies and data portal systems (parent view) in order to ensure parents have access to real-time student performance data
- The creation of a FACE (Family and Community Engagement) committee that provides parent support and an organization for families to collaborate and work together to create a school community
- Outreach via the FACE committee to local partner and community based organizations to provide students and families additional social services and support
- The creation and support of a PTO (parent teacher organization)

Parents will be given ongoing opportunities to share feedback via surveys, an online "feedback/tipline" and the ability to schedule time with administration to share concerns or grievances. All parent, student and family concerns will be treated with seriousness, immediacy and respect and the school administration will work with families and staff to



come to a resolution that is in line with CPS Policy, student code of conduct and Illinois Prep guidelines.

## Section 2.8: Classroom Management and Intervention

### 2.8.1: Discipline, Behavioral Intervention, and Classroom Management

**Describe the school's approach to student discipline, behavioral intervention, and classroom management. Highlight key policies, systems, and structures related to these areas. Your answer must:**

- **Describe how the school will communicate its approach and related policies to students and families.**
- **Describe your school's approach to exclusionary discipline, including a list of offenses that may lead to suspension or expulsion.**
- **Explain interventions and consequences that the school will use as alternatives to exclusionary discipline. Include a description of how the school's approach to discipline will comply with the recently adopted amendments set forth in Senate Bill 100 (effective September 15, 2016).**
- **Explain how the school will protect the rights of students with disabilities/impairments in disciplinary actions and proceedings.**
- **Explain how the school will afford due process for all students.**
- **Describe the appeals procedures that the school will employ for students facing possible expulsion.**
- **Include as an attachment the school's proposed discipline policy. If the school will use the CPS Student Code of Conduct, state so here.**
- **Identify the members of the leadership team and/or staff who will be responsible for implementing, monitoring, and assessing the components of this section.**

#### *Appendix 2.8.1*

*In Appendix 2.8.1, applicants who are not using the CPS Code of Conduct must provide their School Discipline Policy and supporting documents related to behavioral interventions or classroom management. The policy should include other school policies that address student behavior, including, for example, promotion or graduation policies when student behavior is an element of successful promotion/graduation.*

### **Behavior Management/Intervention Strategies**

All students will be held accountable in accordance with the CPS Student Code of Conduct. Behavior management and intervention strategies at Illinois Prep will be founded in our strong focus social emotional learning and supports. Students at Illinois Prep will receive upfront and ongoing instruction and modeling of responsible decision-making, relationship building, and management of emotions and behavior to our students—skills critical to success both in school and in college and career.

The **connection between social emotional learning and classroom management** is well-documented. There is a library of research, such as the 2014 report [\*Social Emotional\*](#)

[Learning is Essential to Classroom Management](#) by [Stephanie M. Jones, Rebecca Bailey, Robin Jacob](#) which documents how students' social-emotional development can support learning and improve academic achievement. Their research confirms how specific social-emotional learning programs that "can help teachers understand children's development and provide them strategies to use with students effectively." [The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning \(CASEL\)](#) offers [guides to other social emotional learning programs](#) that are also evidence based. Many of these programs establish that teachers need two things to manage their classrooms: **knowledge about how children develop** and **strategies for dealing effectively with student behavior**.

In the Jones, Bailey, and Jacob study, classroom management was improved by combining social emotional learning with the principles of planning, environment, relationships, and observation. They noted that across all classrooms and grade levels, these four principles of effective management using social emotional learning are constant:

1. **Effective classroom management is based in planning and preparation;**
2. **Effective classroom management is an extension of the quality of relationships in the room;**
3. **Effective classroom management is embedded in the school environment; and**
4. **Effective classroom management includes ongoing processes of observation and documentation.**

The goal is a proactive approach to behavior management that fosters a sense of student ownership and positive relationships in the classroom. However, there will be times when disciplinary violations do occur. Dealing with those violations in a timely, appropriate and restorative manner is critical to maintaining a positive learning environment. Illinois Prep realizes that a safe and orderly educational environment is vital to effectively and efficiently deliver high-quality instruction. Students who display problem behavior, break rules or commit serious school offenses, can disrupt this environment and jeopardize the safety and learning of other students. While educational practices may have been to simply remove a "problem student" researcher demonstrates that exclusionary punishment is associated with increased drop out rates, decreased academic achievement, poor school climate, and increased juvenile delinquency. Instead, Illinois Prep will employ a restorative approach to behavior management.

### **What is a Restorative Approach?**

At its core, the restorative approach is a philosophical shift away from the traditional, punitive approach to wrongdoing. The restorative perspective views misbehavior as an offense against relationships. This approach maintains a focus on accountability of actions with a specific emphasis on empathy and repairing of harm. To that end, RP seek to address underlying issues of misbehavior and reintegrate wrongdoers back into the school and classroom community.

Traditional/ Punitive Approach	Restorative Approach
What rule was broken?	Who has been hurt/what relationship was damaged?
Who broke the rule?	What are the needs of those harmed and what parties have a stake?
What do they deserve/how will they be punished?	What stakeholders will be involved and what process will put things right again?

### What Will a Restorative Approach Look Like at Illinois Prep?

Restorative practices will be used as a framework and set of practices used for the *prevention* of rule breaking and as an *intervention* after a rule is broken. At the classroom level teachers will focus on building a sense of community and fostering relationships to develop a shared sense of responsibility for the well being of each group member. Implementation of school-wide RP require expertise and consultation from trained professionals, thus restorative practices and SEL training will be a critical component of professional development.

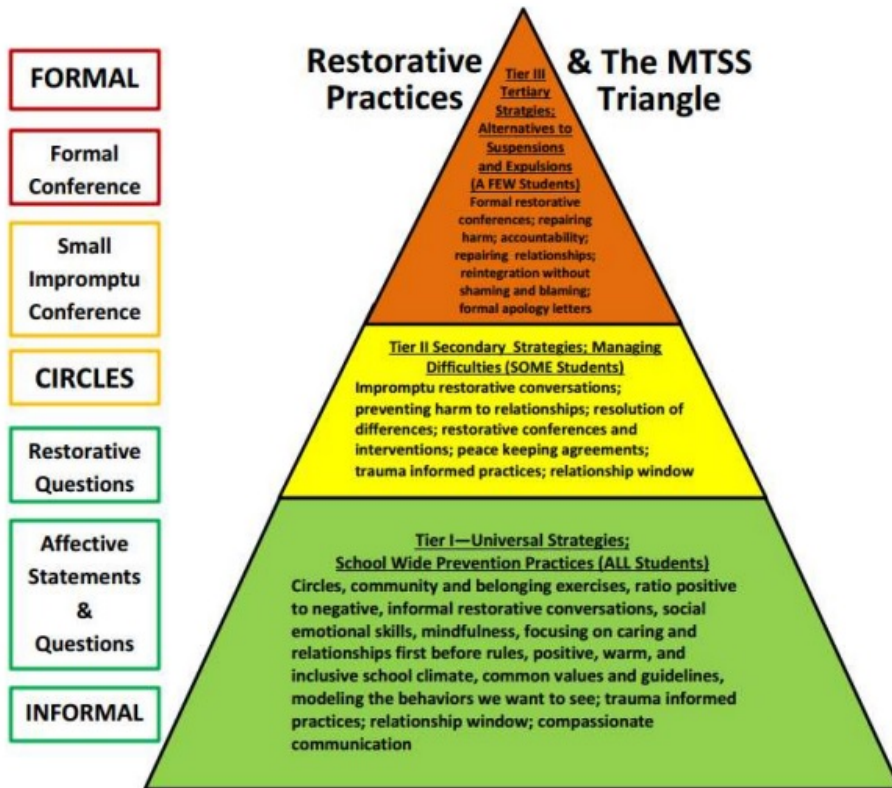
### Proactive Practices in the Classroom

- “*Fair processes*” such as establishing classroom rules and expectations as a group to engage in shared decision-making.
- Teach, model and practice “*affective statements/questions*” that explain/ask how others are impacted by the positive or negative behavior of an individual.
- Through the use of “*proactive or responsive circles*” in which the class comes together in a circle to discuss topics of concerns or problem solve.
- The use of “*student-led conferences*” to discuss academic and social progress.

### Intervention Practices-School wide

- *Peer Mediation/Juries/Courts*- student-centered programs that hear “cases” on rule breaking or offenses
- *Restorative/Family Conferences*-all stakeholders come together, including the one who committed the harm, to discuss the offense and the feelings of those involved, how to make things right and how to prevent a similar situation in the future. Depending on the severity of the offense, a trained facilitator may be required.
- *Restitution Planning/Restorative Agreements*-a plan of action to repair or “put right” the offense
- *Reintegration Following Exclusion*-holding a restorative meeting circle with all involved parties (parents, administrators, teachers, the party harmed and one who committed the harm) to reintegrate the offender back in to the school community.

## *Restorative practices will be implemented via the MTSS Model*



Tier 1: Build Relationships. Immerse the whole school in restorative community building to create a caring culture where every member can thrive.

Tier 2: Respond to Conflict and Harm. Provide restorative practices to heal harm, resolve conflicts, and create learning opportunities.

Tier 3: Provide Individualized Support. Provide formal individual conferences and interventions for individual behaviors that require tier 3.

### 2.8.2: Social, Emotional, Mental, and Physical Health Needs

- Describe how your school will identify, address, and monitor the social, emotional, mental, and physical health needs of all students on an ongoing basis, including students in at-risk situations (such as homelessness, exposure to violence, alcohol or drug addiction, etc.). What programs, resources, and services (both internal and external) do you plan to provide related to these needs?
- Identify the members of the leadership team and/or staff who will be responsible for implementing, monitoring, and assessing the components of this section.

The Illinois Prep model is designed to support students with social, emotional, mental and physical health needs. The model and school itself has been developed with students who may have ongoing mental, physical or social emotional issues at the core of its design. Those students may include students with:

- Mental health issues, including school refusal issues and other issues that make a traditional brick and mortar school a barrier to success
- Physical health issues that prohibit a child from attending a traditional school environment
- Social/emotional issues, such as profound bullying that has led the child and family to seek a safe and supportive learning environment to address these issues

By providing students a flexible and supportive learning environment they are able to focus on their education without the added burden of these mental, physical or social emotional health issues. In addition, Illinois Prep will employ full-time social workers and counselors that will serve to provide additional supports to students. They will work in tandem with parents, students and in the communities we serve and develop partnerships with local entities and agencies to serve the academic, social emotional and other needs that can lead to school failure in traditional settings. We believe in truly personalized approaches to learning and that every child can succeed when given the right supports and learning environment. We know the challenges that face students who have been failed by traditional systems. We also understand the life obstacles that oftentimes become barriers to success.

Educating the whole child is core to our mission and begins with the unwavering belief that every student can succeed. We promote a culture of success through focusing on each student's individual needs and celebrating every student's success, even those that on the surface are seemingly small. As part of our SEL Skills for Success we teach students critical skills such as time management, goal setting, motivation/perseverance, and decision-making skills. When students set and reach a goal, we celebrate that achievement (such as completing a particular assignment, going on a job interview, etc.) and we make certain students see a clear path between these micro-goals and their "big goals" as part of their portfolio. We foster a sense of security, both emotional and physical. Our learning option programs are "safe spaces" where students know that they will have:

- Caring, supportive and trained adults who can provide guidance and counseling to assist them in dealing with social/emotional and life circumstance needs
- Access to support services through our community partnerships
- A safe space for learning in a zero-tolerance space that ensures safety and security for all students and staff

We understand that a positive school climate is the product of a school's attention to fostering safety; promoting a supportive academic, disciplinary, and physical environment; and encouraging and maintaining respectful, trusting, and caring relationships throughout the school community no matter the setting. To measure this, we began administering the Ed School Climate Survey from the National Center for Safe and Supportive Learning Environments.

Our results for 2016-2017 demonstrated:

- An 85% student engagement rate
- 90% of students and 95% of staff felt emotionally, physically and digitally safe and

- ready for an emergency
- 85% of students and 90% of staff reported satisfaction with the school environment including physical and instructional as well as SEL measures.

Illinois Prep will have a school-wide focus on social emotional learning and will implement our SEL Skills for Success program across all grade levels. The full curriculum scope and sequence is attached as an appendix to this application and an overview is provided below.

## Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision-Making

### SEL Skills for Success Program and Curriculum Overview

Zia Learning provides a comprehensive social-emotional learning curriculum and program specifically designed to address the needs of 21st century students. Schools use this engaging program to help students develop self- agency, autonomy, decision making and goal setting skills, along with interpersonal skills that lead to increased overall achievement along with increased overall positive classroom climate and individual positive behavior.

Our program addresses the five recognized components of social emotional learning connected to core instructional strategies and within the context of a personalized and 21st century learning environment.

Zia understands that the new focus on personalized learning calls upon students to become more autonomous learners. The personalized and digital classroom has brought about both new opportunities and new challenges. Teachers are now freed from the front of the classroom, whole-group instructional model. They are given more time to know and service individual student needs. However, they need tools and strategies to understand and address the social-emotional needs of students.

At the same time, students have been given more freedom and autonomy in a personalized learning model. However, they may lack critical skills to thrive in this model. Zia Learning has developed a blended social emotional learning program (online digital course coupled with face-to-face teacher led instruction) based on the CASEL SEL Competencies.



The Zia SEL student curriculum ties these five competencies to digital learner readiness to create a comprehensive student program to address student meta-cognitive and non-cognitive skills in an engaging and interactive environment that presents the competencies via simulations, media, game-based challenges and awareness surveys.

## Section 2.9: Human Capital

### 2.9.1: Recruitment and Selection

- **Briefly describe the staffing model (number of administrators, co-teachers, aides, etc.) and explain how it will support student achievement. Provide teacher-student ratios.**
- **Provide an organizational chart for year one and for when the school is operating at all proposed grade levels. Explain the lines of reporting and accountability between the board, staff, any related bodies (such as advisory bodies or parent/teacher councils), and the Management Organization (if applicable). Describe the rationale for this structure. If working with a Management Organization, please detail who will manage the relationship and the interaction with different staff.**
- **Describe your design team's strategy, process, and timeline for recruiting and hiring the proposed school's teaching staff, including conducting criminal background checks. Include the selection criteria, planned combination of experienced and new teachers, and any unique considerations to support your school design.**
- **Explain your strategy for recruiting bilingual-certified, special education, and other high-need teaching specialties.**
- **Discuss the proposed salary ranges and benefits (including pensions) listed in the attached budget (Section 4.1) and explain any financial incentives or rewards that may be included in the compensation system. Explain how the salary and benefit plans will enable the school to compete with other schools to attract and retain high- quality staff.**

Illinois Prep will be governed by a seven-member Board of Directors who will establish a contractual agreement with the Management Organization (A3 Education). The Board of Director's relationship with the Management Organization (MO) is codified with a performance-based contract.

The executed management agreement in Appendix 6.1 outlines the duties and responsibilities of each party and the specific performance requirements of the MO.

The school will independently adopt a comprehensive budget on an annual basis, which will include all forms of revenue and all expenditures. Any and all budget amendments will require Board approval. On a monthly basis, the MO will provide a detailed accounting of

all school revenues and expenditures. In addition, the MO will report, on a monthly basis, the current student enrollment of the school and the number of students on the waiting list (if any). The MO will provide monthly financials, which will include a statement of revenues and expenditures prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

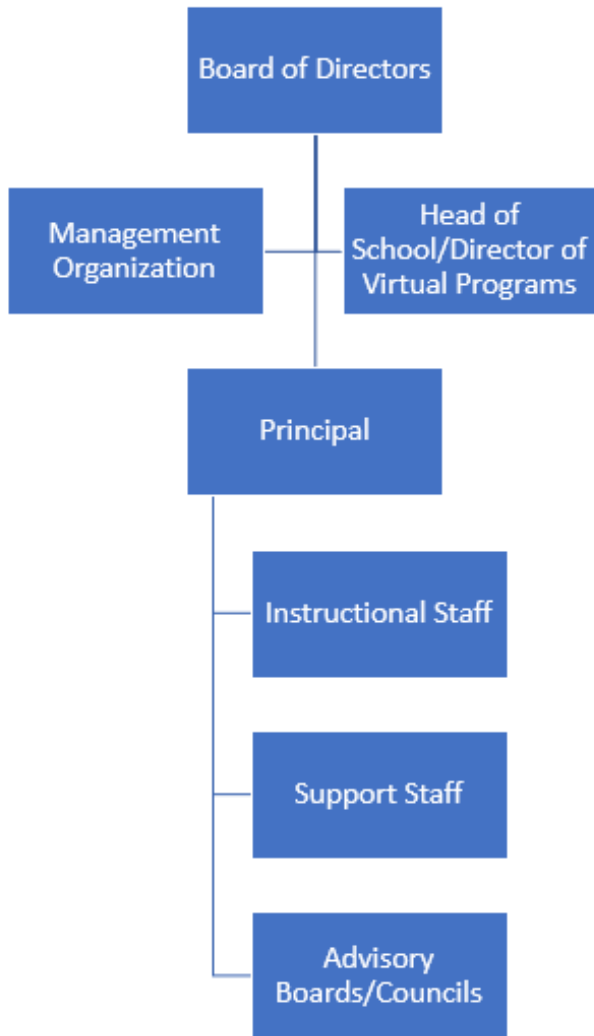
The MO will be responsible for the daily financial management of the school, subject to the budget and oversight of the Board. The Board will be responsible for overall policies regarding Illinois Prep's governance, academic, personnel, discipline, and grievance policies. It is our responsibility to hold the MO responsible for the successful operation of the school and its ability to deliver academic results. This system of accountability ensures that Illinois Prep will be devoted to its mission of providing a rigorous educational program.

The head of school will be hired by (and report to) the Board and will be responsible for implementing the virtual learning program. A principal will be hired and report to the Head of School for virtual programming but will also have operational duties while enforcing all policies set forth by the Board. School employees will be responsible for, above all else, the delivery of Illinois Prep's rigorous academic program. Day-to-day operational duties will be administered by the principal, with fiscal and HR oversight and support provided by the MO. It will be the joint responsibility of the head of school and principal to recruit teachers and support staff; all staff are ultimately employed by the Board, with the Board retaining ultimate authority over the hiring and firing of teachers and staff.

Several advisory boards will be developed to ensure continuity of communication between key stakeholders (parents, community, etc.) and each advisory board will report to the principal of the school.

This organizational structure allows for the MO to provide expertise in areas such as fiscal management, human resources, and compliance/regulations in partnership with the head of school who will oversee curriculum implementation, and the principal who will oversee teacher and staff evaluations as well as overall day-to-day school operations.





The Board will be an equal opportunity employer and will recruit quality staff throughout the year for job openings using a progressive and innovative recruiting plan. Recruitment will occur locally, statewide, and nationally through various resources that include:

- Indeed.com website.
- School's website.
- Education job fairs.
- College recruiting by identifying colleges and universities, both locally and nationally in order to attract and hire newly graduated teachers.
- Select educational, professional, and job recruitment websites to advertise and communicate teaching openings.
- Minority referring organizations to help ensure that the workforce is reflective of the diverse community served.
- Strategic advertisement relationships with our Management Organization.

The MO will manage job advertising, conduct applicant screening, and refer qualified applicants to the school administration and Board for interviews to ensure Illinois Prep's staffing needs are met. A consistent process of screening, interviewing, and selecting employees is essential to our ability to recruit qualified staff. A consistent process will ensure that candidates are provided an equal opportunity to demonstrate and/or articulate their skills and abilities.

The Board and the MO will follow the protocol established for screening school employees, vendors, and Board members. The head of school will be responsible for complying with and arranging the criminal background check policy, which will follow all state and district requirements. Every 5 years, school staff will be required to pass a criminal background check.

A comprehensive criminal history background check will be conducted on each applicant. The Board and MO will also ask legal questions on its employment application in relation to felony convictions, probation, pleadings, and pending disciplinary actions. If a candidate misrepresents information, the Board reserves the right to end the hiring process or employment relationship.

The selection process is informed by factors identified in applied psychology, such as interview structure and phrasing of questions, and draws on effective teacher research. Interview protocol focuses on job-related questions and is within the legal bounds of interviewing guidelines. Every hired employee signs an offer of employment (contract) with the Board. Staff is hired on a year-to-year contractual basis. Extensions of employment offers are recommended on an annual basis. All instructional personnel are considered 10-month employees paid over a 12-month period.

The first 90 days of employment will be an introductory period. During this period, the employee may resign without reason and/or notice and the Board may terminate employment without cause and without notice. After this period, all employee resignations will be accepted as long as they are submitted in writing with proper notice.

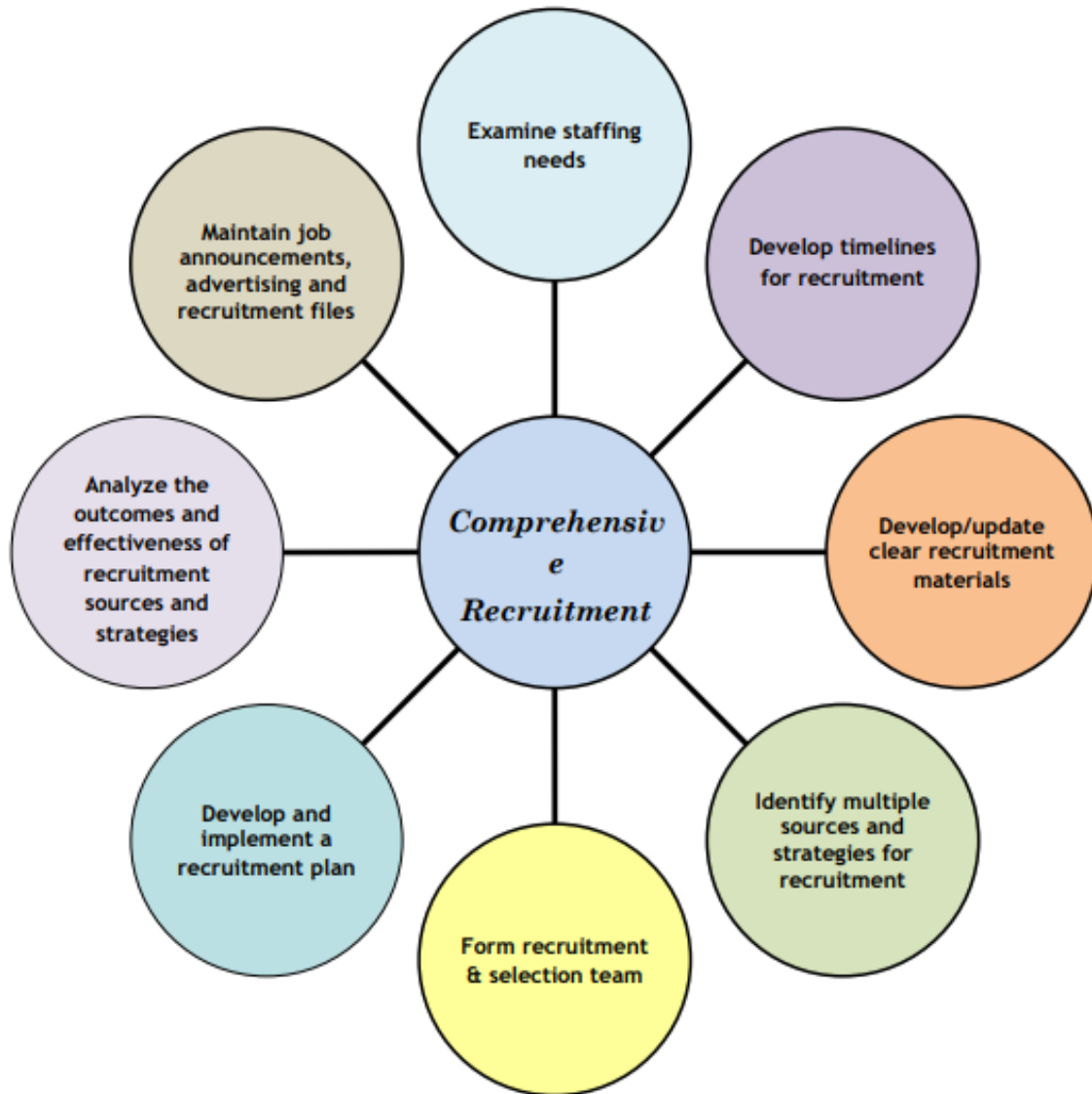
Retention of highly-qualified and effective teachers will be part of the head of school's annual evaluation system. The principal will be encouraged to set goals and the annual evaluation will be based upon achieving those goals.

Illinois Prep will seek candidates with a minimum 3-5 years of teaching experience for ALL teachers due to the nature of the school's teaching and learning model. The following criteria will be used to ensure that we recruit teachers who will be effective in this type of learning environment.

- Licensed to teach in the State of Illinois
- 3-5 years of teaching experience
- Understands and can articulate why technology-enhanced teaching and learning is effective
- Demonstrates effective use of technology

- Preference given to teachers who have either taught online or in a blended-learning setting

Illinois Prep will follow a comprehensive recruitment process for all staffing and will be assisted by the A3 management organization to ensure the school identifies needs such as bilingual-certified teachers, special education teachers and teachers in other high need areas.



Illinois Prep will follow a similar recruitment process for all teachers using the aforementioned job sites and advertisement outlets. In addition, the board will make recruitment of bilingual/ELL/special education teachers a priority by using a variety of means for recruitment, including professional organizations, Illinois teacher preparation programs, job fairs, and "word of mouth," as well as developing collaborative programs

with local school districts and community colleges. In addition, Illinois Prep will expand recruitment efforts beyond the state of Illinois and most importantly, offer financial incentives to all bilingual/ELL/special education teacher candidates.

## **COMPENSATION**

Illinois Prep will develop a competitive compensation system after conducting extensive research into the Chicago charter school employment market and have pegged our salaries and benefits package to accomplish three goals:

- Attract, develop and retain the best teachers to build a pipeline of teacher leaders
- Reward overall performance and the success of the Illinois Prep model
- Develop a culture of appreciation and professionalism

To accomplish these goals we have:

- Pegged our starting salaries to be in line with or above other charter schools
- Established Master teacher salaries far above the charter norms to attract top teachers
- Created a teacher career path to motivate development and growth

Salary ranges:

- The salary range for master teachers is \$70,000-\$90,000 with an average salary of \$80,000.
- The salary range for teachers is \$45,000 to \$65,000 with an average salary of \$55,000
- The salary for teacher aides average \$30,000
- All other positions are pegged to exceed the 50% percentile for other charter schools

Benefit rates were established to align with the average benefits for other charter schools.

### **2.9.2: Professional Development**

**Describe the school's approach to professional development for instructional staff and explain how it will support the effective implementation of the educational program, including:**

- **Which staff members will be responsible for leading professional development;**
- **The extent to which professional development will be conducted internally or externally;**
- **How the school will identify professional development topics;**
- **The purpose and frequency of teacher observation;**

- **How the school calendar will accommodate formal professional development sessions and teacher planning or collaboration time, and how the school budget will account for professional development;**
- **How the professional development program will meet the needs of all teachers, including novice teachers, teachers new to the school, veteran teachers, and teachers of all subjects;**
- **How teachers will be prepared to deliver unique or particularly challenging aspects of the curriculum and instructional methods;**
- **What professional development will take place prior to school opening and the topics that will be covered during this induction period; and**
- **The process for evaluating the efficacy of the professional development program.**

**Beyond professional development, how will your school promote a positive professional culture that will help develop and retain talent? Include opportunities for staff to be involved in school-level decision-making, development of new initiatives, or opportunities for teacher collaboration and advancement.**

Student achievement is inextricably linked to teacher quality. Consequently, professional development will be designed to cultivate instructional talent and build capacity. The overall goal is to develop and retain the best teachers, nurture a culture of ongoing professional learning and collaboration, and build a pipeline for teacher leaders.

Teachers will receive observations on a monthly basis for the purpose of support, not merely evaluations. Embedded coaching and real-time support is critical to new schools and the implementation of a model. Teachers will have regular scheduled time for professional development at both monthly PD sessions, weekly cross-curricular planning sessions and ongoing embedded coaching and support. Our calendar and schedule notes these days and times. Prior to the opening of the school teachers will receive PD on:

- Personalized Learning
- Virtual/Online Instructional Practices
- Social Emotional Learning
- Training - on the school's LMS, digital curriculum, web-conferencing and other requisite technologies

Professional development is an ongoing process - not simply PD days. Thus, we provide a comprehensive PD model.

### **Our PD Model**

Zia was founded in 2011 in based on successful blended and personalized learning models developed through the work of school and district-level leaders in the personalized learning movement. The implementation and professional learning models developed by Zia have been used in major districts such as Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Houston ISD, Dallas

ISD and over 15 Alternative Learning Charter Schools in Ohio. Each of these successful implementations led to meaningful, measurable results.

Our founder, Robin Gonzales, is a recognized leader in the personalized learning movement and served as the Chair of the Mindset Standards for Teaching in the Personalized and Blended Learning Classroom for iNACOL. She is also the author of the Framework for Personalized Learning. The standards and Framework are in use in classrooms across the United States and have helped to define and promote high quality instruction and engaged student experiences in the personalized classroom.

Combining these powerful digital tools with our team of expert 21<sup>st</sup> century educators gives us both the on-ground staff and online tools to provide authentic embedded coaching and ongoing support.

We take great pride in our company history of being built by teachers and district leaders. Understanding not only the technology but the pedagogy behind personalized learning is critical to authentically engaging teachers in the process of re-envisioning teaching and learning.

Effective professional development evaluation systems promote the improvement of professional practice resulting in the improvement of student performance. To ensure that student performance continually improves through the work of excellent teachers and leaders, an evaluation system must use measurement that is clearly articulated, research-based, and proven performance targets. These targets align to appropriate state and/or national standards and include evidence linked to the impact of student performance.

Zia Learning is an approved PD provider in Chicago Public Schools for personalized, blended and 21<sup>st</sup> century learners and an approved provider of SEL student services through CPS College and Careers support. Zia Learning is proud to not only serve to implement highest quality blended and personalized learning programs across the US but also to work with schools as a leading provider of professional development in the field of personalized learning, 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching practices and educational models to serve alternative needs/at-risk youth. Teachers and staff will participate in nine full days (63 hours) of professional development along with weekly PLC and data team meetings. In addition, staff will participate in relevant conferences in order to stay abreast of the most relevant and timely information and research to best serve students. Professional Development will be targeted to school-wide priorities and initiatives as well as personal PD Plans based on teacher readiness for a blended/facilitated learning environment.

Professional development sessions will cover targeted topics that are critical to program success. Those overarching topics fall under two major domains, teaching and supporting learners in a personalized and blended learning model and supporting alternative needs/at-risk students through SEL supports and interventions.

We hope to create a professional culture in our school that is philosophically aligned with the mission of our school and that inspires staff to go beyond compliance and into engagement and empowerment.

In the beginning, our school staff will be a very small, close-knit group of individuals working as a team in developing an innovative, scalable, and sustainable school model. We will have ample opportunity to give and receive informal feedback. We will also build formalized systems to survey staff on their attitudes, beliefs, level of satisfaction, and needs. Teacher surveys, retention rates, and student surveys will be used to gauge the success of our work in creating a professional culture that is intrinsically motivating and rewarding. Consistent monitoring and focus on staff morale will limit staff turnover and significantly contribute to a positive professional culture.

Staff will be given weekly time for PLC meetings after student dismissal. In addition, staff will participate in quarterly PD days (student non-attendance days) as well as a week-long summer institute.

Zia Learning will evaluate PD on an ongoing basis through pre and post surveys and evaluations as well as teacher/classroom observations, teacher self-evaluations and ongoing evaluations through data teams and PLC's. In addition a quarterly program evaluation will yield critical information to determine the impact and effectiveness of PD as well as determine professional development deficits and needs.

Zia provided an alternative blended charter school organization in Ohio (LifeSkills) in their transition to a new blended and full-time virtual/distance model. They sought to increase student engagement, student achievement and teacher's ability to provide high quality instructional environments and SEL supports to students. Zia provided:

- Strategic planning and program design services
- Upfront teacher readiness surveys and evaluation of those surveys
- Onsite PD services for personalized and blended learning and SEL student supports
- Teacher training and in-depth professional development
- PLC structure and personalized professional development plans
- Curriculum development and delivery services (Zia developed a full k-12 online/virtual curriculum and delivered that digital curriculum via LMS) and teacher training in the enrichment of blended learning environments

These efforts yielded meaningful, measurable results including:

- A 39% increase in overall pass/achievement rates
- The implementation of a full teacher training and professional development/learning program that provides staff upfront training and ongoing support
- The creation of onsite and digital PLCs
- Ongoing reporting on professional development and the development of personalized professional development plans
- The development of parent support and training program with 85% of parents reporting increased levels of support and communication over prior program years
- Development of a new digital curriculum that is fully differentiated and offers:

- o Project based learning options
- o Career connections in EVERY unit of EVERY subject
- o Live learning options that connect students to industry experts, special events, museums and other institutions

Teachers and staff will be provided upfront professional development in a week-long summer institute prior to program launch. Ongoing embedded coaching will be provided throughout the year along with PD institute days.

Teachers, like all other learners have diverse learning needs. Every teacher comes to the classroom with a different background, different set of skills, and differences in how they learn best. In an effort to individualize their own learning, teachers may try a variety of tools and strategies including twitter questions and chats, shared videos of their practice, and by seeking out face-to-face or blended opportunities on topics of need or interest. By contrast, the majority of professional development opportunities still adhere to the one-size-fits-none strategy of the “sit and get.” Teachers know what they need and they often have a robust network of practitioners they work with or consult for answers. As part of our strategy to ensure differentiation for our teachers, they will be part of the ongoing conversation what PD do they need. Additionally, teachers will gain a deeper understanding on how to leverage data to better inform decisions around their professional learning and how to use data to support whole faculty PD options.

### 2.9.3: Staff Evaluation

**Describe how school leader and staff performance will be monitored and evaluated, including the calendar, staff roles, and supplemental documents. Explain how the school intends to handle unsatisfactory teacher and staff performance, as well as leadership/teacher changes and turnover.**

#### *Appendix 2.9*

*In Appendix 2.9, applicants must provide:*

- *A chart showing the school staffing model that lists all administrative, instructional, and non-instructional staff positions over the school's first five years of operation;*
- *A school-level organizational chart that shows the lines of authority and reporting within the school and clearly delineates the roles and responsibilities of staff members over the school's first five years of operation;*
- *Job descriptions for all leadership positions, teachers, and key support staff; and*
- *A professional development calendar for the first year of operation.*

*Applicants may provide additional documents, including:*

- *Personnel policies or an employee manual;*
- *Resumes of prospective staff members who have been identified for specific positions with a description of why they are uniquely qualified for success in the position; and*
- *Any documents, policies, tools, or forms related to staff evaluation and performance.*

A critical component to effective schools is the effective evaluation of staff. Although virtual teachers are not in a classroom down the hall, easily observed, there is a plethora of data, collected in real-time, that makes the evaluation of online teachers just as effective, if not



more so, than traditional brick-and-mortar teachers. Technology has bridged physical distances and its ability to log large amounts of data—accessible with the click of a button—has made the evaluation process more thorough, useful and transparent. For example, a principal in a brick-and-mortar school may complete a summative teacher evaluation based on, at best, a handful of classroom observations, a standardized checklist of goals, and student learning outcomes. A virtual school administrator, however, has 24/7 access to review the teacher’s data and create both formative and summative assessments.

Our school will evaluate teachers and administrators in alignment with CPS REACH standards for evaluation. Unlike a traditional classroom observation where the administrator is physically present while the teacher works with students, a virtual observation may include reviews of student data, student information, number and quality of teacher contacts and other points. Some examples of ‘observation’ may include:

- Communications with students are respectful and professional
- Instructor uses multiple forms of communication and/or interaction with students (i.e. messages, digital communications, discussions, announcements, etc.)
- Instructor response time
- Instructor moderation of discussion forums and subsequent feedback timeline
- Instructor actively encourages students to participate in the course
- Instructor offers both positive feedback and constructive criticism during the grading process
- Netiquette expectations are clearly stated and enforced
- It is evident that the instructor is present, proactive, and engaged in the course
  - o Response times
  - o Presence in commenting in forums
  - o Grade book up-to-date
  - o Digital feedback is routinely provided
- Course materials are at an appropriate level for students
- Teacher has differentiated for students with special needs, remediation, or extension
- Through the course organization, communications, or chosen course materials/activities, the instructor has demonstrated a command of the subject matter
- Student feedback

Note: formative evaluation in an online environment will be defined as gaining feedback during a course to improve the ongoing teaching and learning process. This data can be accessed through the LMS.

The major components of our teacher evaluation plan will include:

a. The Zia instructional framework that:

- (i) is based upon research regarding effective instruction in blended and digital environments

- (ii) addresses planning, instructional delivery, and classroom management
- (iii) aligns with the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards.

b. In alignment with CPS standards for evaluation, each teacher in contractual, continued service (tenured) will be evaluated at least once every two years; however, a tenured teacher who receives a needs improvement or unsatisfactory rating must be evaluated in the next school year after receiving that rating. Each teacher not in contractual continued service (non-tenured) must be evaluated at least once every year.

c. Evidence of each teacher's professional practice will be collected by review of data, face-to-face or phone interview and observation of teacher lesson components and how they interact with students and families.

- (i.) For each tenured teacher who received an excellent or proficient rating, a minimum of two observations are required during the cycle in which the current evaluation is conducted, one of which must be a formal observation.
- (ii) For each tenured teacher who received a needs improvement or unsatisfactory rating, a minimum of three observations are required in the school year immediately following the year in which the needs improvement or unsatisfactory rating was assigned, of which two must be formal observations.
- (iii) For each non-tenured teacher, a minimum of three observations is required each school year, of which two must be formal observations.

d. As observations may not necessarily include watching a teacher deliver instruction, conferences may be held throughout the year as the school leader reviews digital benchmarks. The evaluator must share with the teacher any evidence collected during an observation and the evaluator's judgments concerning the evidence. A formal observation can include participation in student-teacher conferences or review of a standard list of expectations including student interaction, student engagement, student work products and grades or other information contained within the LMS.

- (i.) Following a formal observation, the qualified evaluator must meet with the teacher to discuss the evidence collected about the teacher's professional practice and provide written feedback to the teacher.
- (ii.) Following an informal observation, the qualified evaluator must provide feedback to the teacher either orally or in writing and, if the feedback is in a written format, must also provide the teacher with an opportunity to have an in-person discussion with the evaluator.

The evaluation plan outlined in the framework provides for the consideration of teacher attendance (as evidenced by regular interactions, contact, grading, student responsiveness, etc.), planning, instructional methods, classroom management (grouping, developing student agency, etc.), and competency in the subject matter taught.

f. The evaluation plan must provide for the use of student growth as a significant factor in each teacher's evaluation. In accordance with CPS policy, "significant factor" means that data and indicators on student growth must be at least 25 percent of the evaluation rating

in the district's first and second years of implementation. After the first two years, student growth must be at least 30 percent of the evaluation rating.

Any tenured teacher rated 'needs improvement' will receive a professional development plan. If a tenured teacher is rated unsatisfactory, the leadership will develop and commence a plan for 90 school days of remediation, which may involve coaching, professional learning and more frequent check-ins. The remediation plan must involve a consulting teacher and include multiple evaluations. The teacher will be dismissed if he or she fails to complete the remediation plan with a rating of proficient or better. A non-tenured teacher must be dismissed if he or she is not eligible for tenure at the end of his or her probationary period.

In alignment with CPS, our school will utilize a principal evaluation system that holds principals accountable for student growth and provides support to help principals succeed as school leaders. It is standards-based and includes student growth indicators as well as professional practice ratings. Principals will receive two formal observations conducted by Zia Learning. Zia Learning will work in conjunction with the network office to ensure that principals are evaluated by a certified person. After the observations, evaluators provide feedback to and share collected evidence with principals. Each principal has the opportunity to set goals and submit a self-assessment. In alignment with CPS, there are 5 competencies that are evaluated:

- Competency A: Champions teacher and staff excellence through continuous improvement to develop and achieve the vision of high expectations for all students
- Competency B: Creates powerful professional learning systems that guarantee learning for all students
- Competency C: Builds a culture focused on college and career readiness
- Competency D: Empowers and motivates families and the community to become engaged
- Competency E: Relentlessly pursues self-disciplined thinking and action

In alignment with CPS, the following metrics will be reviewed to determine growth:  
High School

- Student Growth on ACT Educational Planning and Assessment (EPAS)
- Growth of Priority Groups on EPAS: English Learners (EL), Diverse Learners (Students with an IEP), and African-American and Latino Students
- Attendance, Freshman On-Track, Graduation and Dropout Rates
- Early College/Career Credentials

Elementary School

- Student Growth on Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA MAP)
- Attendance
- Growth of Priority Groups on NWEA MAP: English Learners (EL), Diverse Learners (students with an IEP), and African-American and Latino Students
- Percentage of Students Meeting/Exceeding National Growth on NWEA

- English Learners' (EL) Development on Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State (ACCESS)

Keeping great principals and teachers begins with hiring the right personnel. It must be recognized, however, that some attrition is inevitable. In any traditional school there is usually some turnover; the same is true in a virtual school. Zia Learning has a structured plan for succession of a principal and follows the best practice in teacher and administrator retention. In the event a staff member moves on he/she will be replaced by a highly qualified teacher with past experience and track record of success in the digital classroom. In the unlikely event an HQ teacher is not available, the teacher will be replaced by a substitute that is a content area specialist until a suitable replacement can be made. As part of our robust professional development, principals are lead to create a succession plan and are encouraged to anticipate the opening, recruit or promote the right candidate, and foster effective succession. Zia Learning employees 24 HQ teachers in a variety of content areas and does not anticipate difficulty in replacing a teacher.

**Staff Professional Development Calendar**

Although there is a lot of support for personalizing the learner experience, often times personalizing for professional development is forgotten. It is of critical importance that in our school teachers experience personalized professional learning and following the best practices of andragogy they should also have a say in what they study and in sharing their own expertise. There will be several professional learning opportunities that are designed for all staff and a traditional plan for supporting teachers new to the school. That being said, we will empower teachers to choose from a variety of opportunities and to lead others. Below, please find a comprehensive list of a year-long look at professional development.

Regular scheduled professional learning		
Summer	Structured ILT will lead this work with input from the staff	Prior to the opening of the school 2018-19, teachers will receive PD on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personalized Learning</li> <li>Virtual/Online Instructional Practices Social Emotional Learning</li> <li>Managing and leveraging student data</li> <li>Training - on the school's LMS, digital curriculum, web-conferencing and other requisite technologies</li> </ul>

Summer	Structured	<p>New teacher topics- After our inaugural year there may be a need to onboard new teachers. Part of that process will be staff and teachers creating the trainings based on what someone new to the school will need to be successful. These topics will be based on need and may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Technology – LMS, logging in, usernames and passwords</li> <li>· Technology – what technology is routinely used, how to use it to create a dynamic class</li> <li>· Culture – what are important pieces of the shared culture</li> <li>· Content-specific information</li> <li>· Meet your mentor/coach</li> <li>· Administration – paperwork, HR, etc.</li> </ul>
Daily	Informal	Teachers are encouraged to touch base with their fellow teachers on a daily basis to compare concerns and to assist each other in trouble-shooting. Additionally, they are encouraged to have student data discussions. The Lead teachers and the leadership team will be available to answer questions and provide support.
Weekly	Informal	Staff will be given time for PLC meetings
Monthly	Structured; Last work day of the month.	Ongoing embedded coaching will be provided throughout the year along with PD institute days. There will be ½ day of professional development provided each month on topics most requested by teachers or identified as a need by the leadership team.
Monthly		Embedded professional development occurs on the first Wednesday of each month as well as throughout the month, online as well as in-person based.
Technology	Informal; unconference style	Technology professional development occurs on the last Tuesday of each month.
<b>Level-Alike/Content alike meetings</b>		

Elementary	Lead by ES Lead teachers	Grade Level Meetings will occur every Tuesday at all elementary schools during planning periods. This time is used for grade-level planning, on-going coaching cycles, and individualized professional learning on an as-needed basis.
Secondary	Curriculum lead teachers	Content Meetings are scheduled for the 2nd and 4th Wednesday afternoons of each month.
<b>Additional Opportunities</b>		
Virtual PD	Formal	PD units of study that the leadership team may assign or the teacher may choose to complete. Playlists and pathways may be assigned.
Book Studies	Formal, leadership team led	Supplemental book studies will be throughout the course of the year. Teachers may request a topic or a specific book and not all teams are required to read every book. The book study description will include the projected completion date, the format of the study, and the intended audience

**Section 2.10: Design Team Experience and Capacity**

**2.10.1: Experience**

- **For each design team member and candidate for staff positions, please provide a summary of each person’s experience and credentials, their role during the design phase, and intended role in the proposed school (if applicable), making sure to identify any proposed board members. (board resumes are requested in Section 4.4.1 – Governance Start-up.)**
- **Describe the team’s individual and collective qualifications for implementing the school design successfully, including in areas such as:**
  - **School leadership;**
  - **Curriculum, instruction, and assessment;**
  - **Operations;**

- **Finance;**
- **Accounting and internal controls;**
- **Fundraising and development; and**
- **Law.**
- **Describe any experiences that team members or proposed staff members have in serving the school's targeted population.**
- **List any advisors, consultants, and organizational partners that have supported the development of the school or will support school operations. Describe their specific role.**

**Robin Gonzales** has over 20 years of online learning and teacher development experience. Her work has centered around using blended and personalized learning and 21st Century Tools to address the diverse needs of today's learners. As the Director of Online Learning for the 3rd largest school district in the United States, Robin developed one of the largest online and blended learning programs in the nation. In this capacity she grew the Chicago Public Schools online and blended school program from 500 students to over 5,000 and increased pass rates from 38% to over 80% through the development and implementation of a teacher professional development and student skills program. As CEO of Zia Learning, Robin will lead the design, development and implementation of a comprehensive framework for teacher professional development. Illinois Prep will use this framework, and the accompanying evaluation tools, to provide support to teachers for the innovative practice of blended learning. Both the F2BI Framework and the Evaluation tool are based on over two decades of experience in blended and technology-rich classrooms and support the iNACOL Standards for High Quality Blended Teaching and Learning.

Ms. Gonzales will serve as the Head of School and Manager of the Virtual Programs.

**Dave Edwards** has designed and launched 4 blended and project-based learning charter schools in North Carolina. He previously served as the Chief Professional Learning and Development Officer for the North Carolina Virtual Public School, the 2nd largest state-run public online high school in the nation. He brings over 25 years of instructional technology and online learning design and administration to the Zia Learning team. His work also includes consulting and authoring for the International Association of K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL), where his work was focused on developing quality student outcomes metrics for full-time virtual charter schools.

**Alanna Mays** will serve as the Principal for Illinois Prep. Ms. Mays is an Illinois licensed administrator and brings a wealth of educational leadership to the school. She served as Director of the NASA Science Engineering Mathematics Aerospace Academy for 4 successful years. In addition, she has served as a Lead Coach for the New Teacher Center, Technology Specialist for Chicago Public Schools, Adult Educator in higher education and recently the Career and College Ready Director for Zia Learning. With over 15 years of educational administration experience and familiarity with the target student population for Illinois Prep, Alanna will provide overall responsibility and leadership in developing and evaluating high quality teaching and learning.

**Dr. Hope Dugan's** career spans 23 years as a North Carolina educator inclusive of both teacher and district leadership roles. As a district innovator for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, she led the design, implementation, and evaluation of digital learning programs including instructional design and professional development for online and blended learning. She was instrumental in the creation of the first blended learning school (iMECK) and the fully virtual e-Learning Academy. Dr. Dugan will work collaboratively with the design team to ensure that curriculum and instructional practices meet state and national (iNACOL) standards for quality. In addition, her expertise in aligning innovative instructional practices with student needs will be instrumental in ensuring that students with special needs are identified and provided with appropriate support structures.

**Jennifer Kolar-Burden** has almost 15 years of digital education experience and has worked in all aspects of 21st Century education. She currently serves as the Director of Curriculum for Illinois Virtual School and has served as an online instructor and course developer. Jennifer continues to serve as a reviewer for Quality Matters, reviewing online courses for alignment to quality standards.

Her consulting specialties will include providing support to the Illinois Prep Board and Head of School in the initial design of:

- education program and institution management
- design, implementation and evaluation of digital education programs
- efficient curriculum planning, design and evaluation
- data analysis
- teacher hiring, mentoring and evaluation
- fostering positive team-oriented working environments
- building productive relationships with industry partners and clients
- long and short term curriculum and marketing strategies
- targeted professional development training
- program/project implementation and analysis

Upon successful charter approval, Jennifer will serve as the Director of Curriculum and Instruction for the school.

**Jennifer Berezewski** has almost 20 years of experience teaching math at the high school and post-secondary level. She led the product and content development group for Zia Learning for three years and now leads Zia's digital curriculum and PD implementation for districts. Jennifer's expertise in high school curriculum development and teacher preparation will be leveraged to build out the high school framework for teacher professional development at Illinois Prep. She will also serve as the lead professional development specialist for grades 9-12.



## **2.10.2: Leadership**

*Note: All applicants responding to the RFP for operators new to Chicago must identify a proposed instructional leader with their Tier I submission.*

- **Briefly describe the proposed leadership structure, citing roles and responsibilities of the school's leadership team beyond the principal/head of school.**
- **Briefly describe the identified school leader(s), including experience and training. Explain how these individual(s) are well qualified to launch and lead the proposed school. Describe plans to address any gaps in skill or experience to ensure success in the role.**
- **Include additional information about other members of the proposed leadership team, if identified.**

Illinois Prep has identified an outstanding instructional leader and leadership team. This team consists of:

- A Head of School (full time)
- A Principal (full time)
- A Director of Innovation and Implementation (consultant)
- A Director of Curriculum and Instruction (consultant)
- A Director of Professional Development (consultant)

**Robin Gonzales** will serve as the Head of School and Manager of the Virtual Programs. She has over 15 years of online learning and teacher development experience. Her work has centered around using blended and personalized learning and 21st Century Tools to address the diverse needs of today's learners. As the Director of Online Learning for the 3rd largest school district in the United States, Robin Gonzales developed one of the largest online and blended learning programs in the nation. In this capacity she grew the Chicago Public Schools online and blended school program from 500 students to over 5,000 and increased pass rates from 38% to over 80% through the development and implementation of a teacher professional development and student skills program. As CEO of Zia Learning, Robin will lead the design, development and implementation of a comprehensive framework for teacher professional development. Illinois Prep will use this framework, and the accompanying evaluation tools, to provide teachers support for the innovative practice of blended learning. Both the F2BI Framework and Evaluation tool, are based on over two decades of experience in blended and technology rich classrooms and support the iNACOL Standards for High Quality Blended Teaching and Learning.

**Alanna Mays** will serve as the Principal for Illinois Prep. Ms. Mays is an Illinois licensed administrator and brings a wealth of educational leadership to the school. She served as Director of the NASA Science Engineering Mathematics Aerospace Academy for 4 successful years. In addition, she has served as a Lead Coach for the New Teacher Center, Technology Specialist for Chicago Public Schools, Adult Educator in higher education and

recently the Career and College Ready Director for Zia Learning. With over 15 years of educational administration experience and familiarity with the targeted market for Illinois Prep, Alanna will provide overall responsibility and leadership in developing and evaluating high quality teaching and learning.

**Dr. Hope Dugan's** will serve as the Director of Innovation and Model Implementation. Her career spans 23 years as a North Carolina educator inclusive of both teacher and district leadership roles. As a district innovator for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, she led the design, implementation, and evaluation of digital learning programs including instructional design and professional development for online and blended learning. She was instrumental in the creation of the first blended learning school (iMECK) and the fully virtual e-Learning Academy. Dr. Dugan will work collaboratively with the design team to ensure that curriculum and instructional practices meet state and national (iNACOL) standards for quality. In addition, her expertise in aligning innovative instructional practices with student needs will be instrumental in ensuring that students with special needs are identified and provided with appropriate support structures.

**Jennifer Kolar-Burden** will serve as the Director of Curriculum and Instruction and has almost 15 years of digital education experience and has worked in all aspects of 21st Century education. She currently serves as the Director of Curriculum for Illinois Virtual and has served as an online instructor and course developer. Jennifer continues to serve as a reviewer for Quality Matters reviewing online courses for alignment to quality standards.

Her consulting specialties will include providing support to the Illinois Prep Board and Head of School in the initial design of:

- education program and institution management
- design, implementation and evaluation of digital education programs
- efficient curriculum planning, design and evaluation
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- teacher hiring, mentoring and evaluation
- fostering positive team-oriented working environments
- building productive relationships with industry partners and clients
- long and short term curriculum and marketing strategies
- targeted professional development training
- program/project implementation and analysis

Upon successful charter approval, Jennifer will serve as the Director of Curriculum and Instruction for the school.

**Jennifer Berezewski** has been a high school math teacher and adjunct math professor for over 20 years. She has led the product and content development for Zia Learning for 3 years and now leads Zia's digital curriculum implementation for districts. Jennifer's expertise in high school curriculum development and teacher preparation will be leveraged to build out the high school framework for teacher professional development at Illinois Prep. She will also serve as the lead professional development specialist for grades 9-12.

### **2.10.3: Evidence of Success**

**Provide evidence of the team members' and the proposed school leaders' collective and individual capacity and track record driving academic achievement and growth among students similar to those the school will serve. Include quantitative data where available.**

**(If a national operator new to Chicago or an organization proposing to contract with a MO): Provide evidence that the proposed model has driven academic achievement and growth among similar student populations. Submit third party, externally validated quantitative data demonstrating student academic growth, student academic attainment, and student behavioral outcomes for each school in the network (see the Resource Guide for more detail). If the student demographics of the targeted community are different from those that the existing operator has served, explain how the operator will understand and address the needs of the targeted student population. Refer to the National Operator Replication Table available on the RFP Website, [www.cps.edu/2018RFP](http://www.cps.edu/2018RFP), and provide an explanation on how you meet these criteria.**

#### *Appendix 2.10*

*In Appendix 2.10, applicants must provide:*

- *Resumes of all design team members and candidates for positions in the school, including the identified school leader and members of the proposed leadership team. It is not necessary to provide personal addresses or phone numbers.*
- *In a table or Excel spreadsheet, the demographic data on student populations served at each existing school in the network, including the following (%):*
  - o Free- and reduced-price lunch (FRL);*
  - o African American, Hispanic, Caucasian, Asian American, and other;*
  - o English Learners;*
  - o Students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs); and*
  - o Students in Temporary Living Situations.*
- *State or district report cards (via links to public websites where the data are stored, if available), vendor reports, or other verifiable sources of data demonstrating the academic track record of all existing campuses.*
- *A list of all previous authorizers with whom the management organization (MO) has worked, including contact information for each listed party. CPS reserves the right to contact authorizers to ask additional information about the operators' track record.*

Zia Learning is a nationally recognized leader in assisting districts and schools in the development of virtual and distance learning options. Zia recently assisted a charter school organization in Ohio (LifeSkills) in their transition to a new blended and full-time virtual/distance model. Zia provided:

- Strategic planning and program design services

- Teacher training, PD and recruitment services
- A marketing plan, materials, videos and campaign to increase enrollment
- Parent communication, training and support
- Curriculum development and delivery services (Zia developed a full k-12 online/virtual curriculum and delivered that digital curriculum via LMS)

These efforts yielded meaningful, measurable results including:

- A 39% increase in overall pass/achievement rates
- Development of a marketing campaign and recruitment of over 500 additional students
- The development of parent support and training program with 85% of parents reporting increased levels of support and communication over prior program years
- Development of a new digital curriculum that is fully differentiated and offers:
  - o Project based learning options
  - o Career connections in EVERY unit of EVERY subject
  - o Live learning options that connect students to industry experts, special events, museums and other institutions
- The implementation of a full teacher training and professional development/learning program that provides staff upfront training and ongoing support

Our founder was on the design team for the VOISE Academy in CPS and is a founding member of the Illinois Virtual School. Zia Learning was formed seven years ago, bringing together educational experts from across the nation in the area of online, virtual/distance learning and blended/personalized learning programs. Zia works with districts as a true partner to provide:

- An upfront needs analysis
- Strategic planning and support
- Marketing, consulting and on-site support
- Insight into industry leaders in the selection of best of breed technology, curriculum and other required services
- Teacher and staff training, supervision and support
- Student recruitment and support

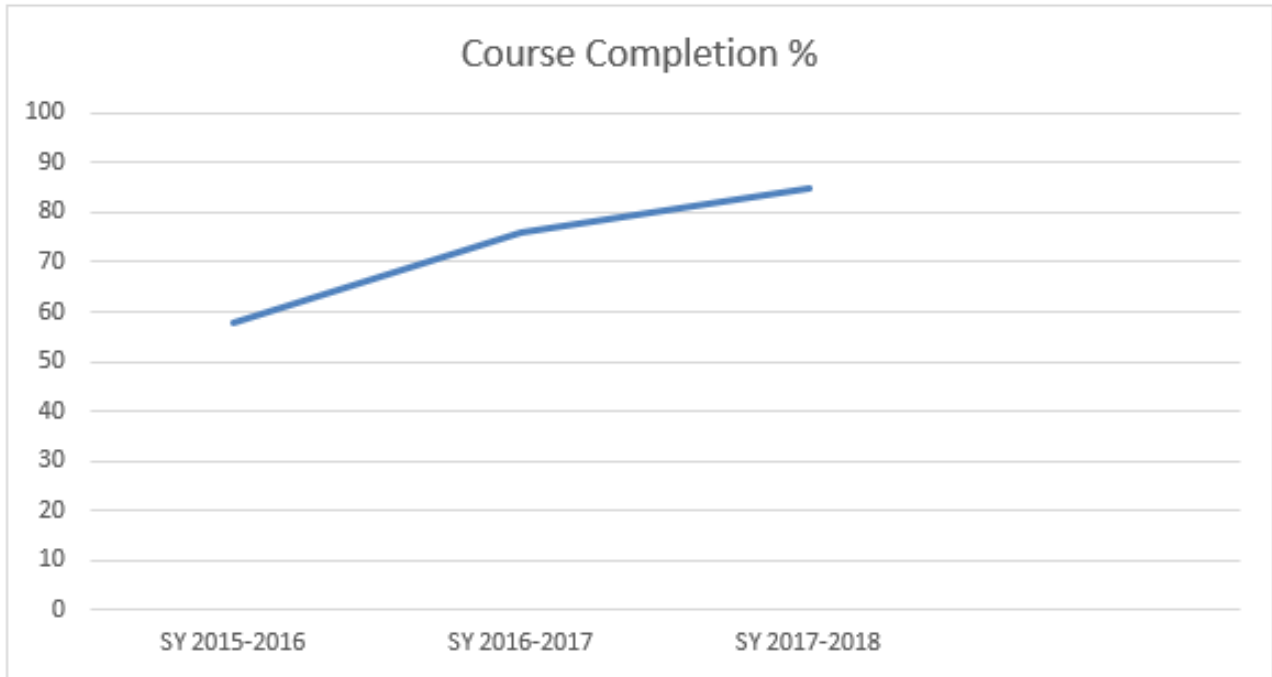
Zia is proud to partner with A3 for the management of this full time virtual option. A3 serves to provide management, financial support, oversight and technical support to their partner schools and ensure highest quality alternative learning options for students. Zia Learning has formed a partnership with A3 after careful review of their programs and past performance. They offer a wide range of options that fit the specific needs of the students in the partner school. Their existing virtual charter options are focused on providing access to core academic online/blended learning options and CTE/Workforce Certification options and have consistently yielded outstanding outcomes for the students enrolled in their programs.

Students and families are attracted to A3 managed schools for the flexibility and personalized learning experience that students receive. This desire for flexibility and personalization takes many forms and there are many subgroups of students that makeup A3's target population. Here are a few examples of student groups that are looking for the opportunities that A3 schools provide:

- Students who are overage and under credit. A3's instructional model is designed to provide the scaffolding these students need to be successful. Student support services are even more critical to the success of students in this group than in other groups. A3 provides students with an opportunity to re-engage in school in order to earn a high school diploma, complete certificate programs in 1 of 16 career pathways, and/or earn college credit while in high school..
- Students who are engaged in extra-curricular activities that have demanding schedules that are difficult to meet when enrolled in a traditional school environment. Athletes, dancers, and actors are some of the more common types of students that fall into this category, but there are others.
- Homeschool families who prefer for their students to be educated in the comfort and safety of their own home and according to a daily school work schedule that fits within the families schedule.
- Students with anxiety and other medical conditions that make attending a traditional school environment difficult.
- Students who are bullied or who attend a school where they do not feel safe.
- Students who need flexibility in their schedule in order to work a part time job to help support their family.
- Students who want to be able to work at their own pace and accelerate or makeup credit.

The target population for the Illinois Prep is very similar to the target populations that A3 serves in its existing schools on a daily basis.

A3 schools had an average attendance rate across all schools of 95.7% for SY2016-2017



### **Valiant Academy**

A3 took over the management of Valiant Academy of Los Angeles and Valiant Academy of Southern California midway through SY2016-2017. The overall average percentage of students who earned score of meets or exceeds the standard was 24% in Reading and 8% in Math. Substantial increase in enrollment and the implementation of a more comprehensive instructional student support model has led to some significant improvements in a short period of time. Internal diagnostic assessments are projecting that 57-71% of students will earn a score of meets or exceeds the standard in Reading and 48-61% of students will earn a score of meets or exceeds the standard in Math. This anticipated improvement in student performance will be a huge accomplishment for these schools.

### Math

48% of students in A3 Schools scored on or above level in math on the iReady fall diagnostic assessment. Based on the results of the fall diagnostic iReady predicts that 60% of the students will receive a score that meets or exceeds the standard on the SBAC in 2018. If the SBAC proficiency predictor is accurate A3 students will significantly outperform the state average. The state average for SY 2016-2017 was 37%. Even if only 48% of A3 students earn a score of meets or exceeds the standard, as they did on the fall diagnostic, A3 schools will outperform the state average by 11%.

### Reading

57% of students in A3 Schools scored on or above level in Reading on the iReady diagnostic assessment. Based on the results of the fall diagnostic iReady predicts that 72% of the students will receive a score that meets or exceeds the standard on the SBAC in 2018. If the SBAC proficiency predictor is accurate A3 students will significantly outperform the state

average. The state average for SY 2016-2017 state average was 48%. Even if only 57% of A3 students earn a score of meets or exceeds the standard, as they did on the fall diagnostic, A3 schools will outperform the state average by 9%.

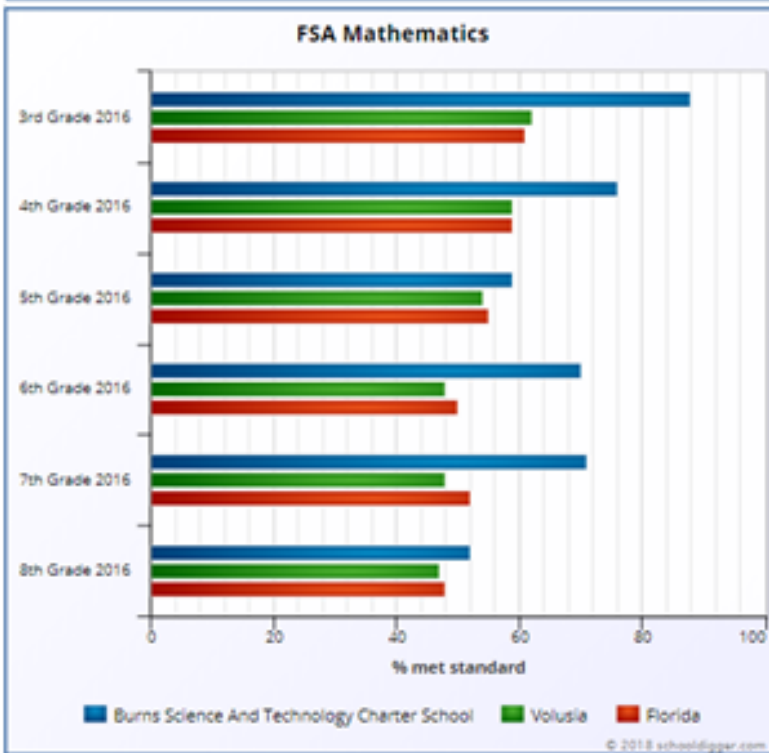
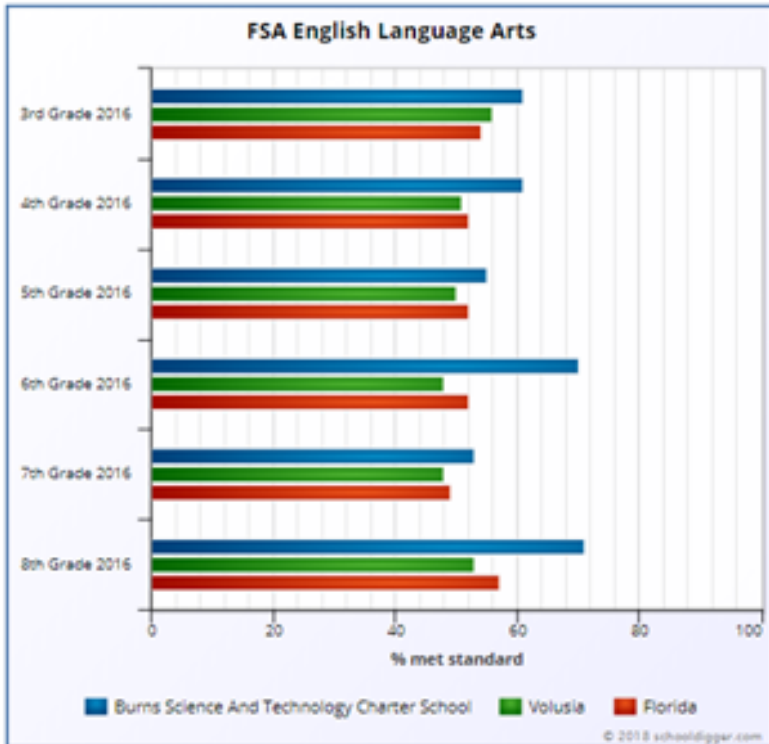
### **School Turnaround**

In SY 2015-2016 A3 Education partnered with EdFutures in its management of Ivy Hawn Charter School of the Arts and Burns Science and Technology Charter School. Ivy Hawn is a K-8th grade charter school that provides students with a college prep education with an Arts focus. Burns is a K-8th grade charter school that provides students with a STEM focused college prep education. Both schools were failing schools on the charter performance scale prior to the school turn-around efforts performed by A3 and EdFutures. Ivy Hawn is now an A rated school and ranks in the top 16% of elementary schools in the state of Florida. Burns is now a B rated school and ranks in the top 18% of elementary schools in the state of Florida. The demand for admission into Burns and Ivy Hawn has grown to the point that both schools now have an extensive waiting list.

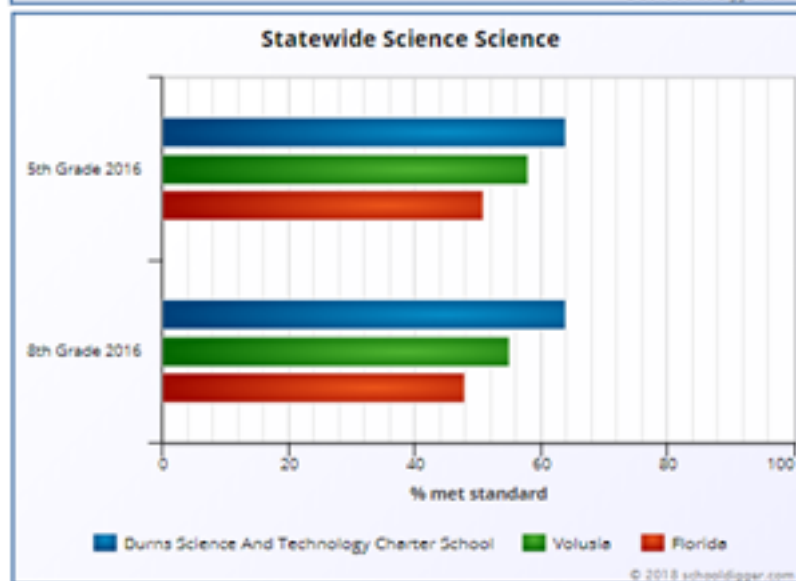
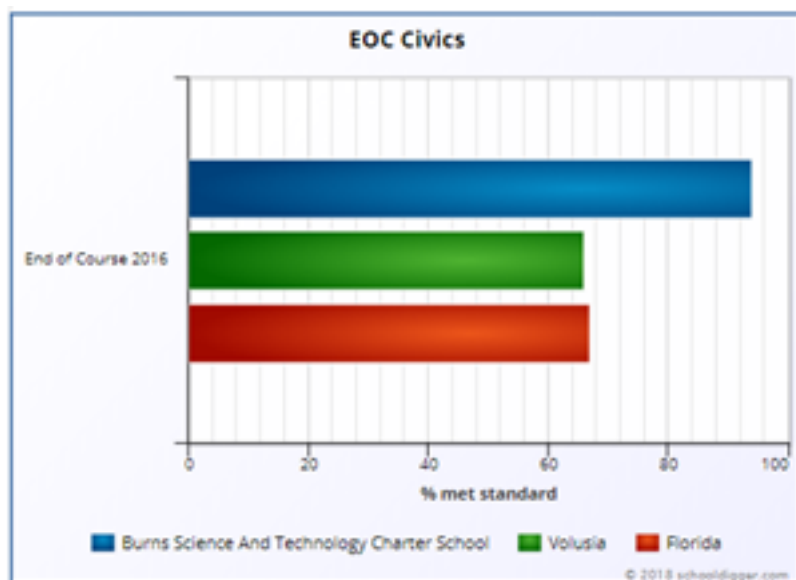
### Burns Science and Technology Charter School

Burns Science and Technology Charter School has outperformed the district and state average on the Florida Standards Assessment in every content area and every grade level for the past 2 years.

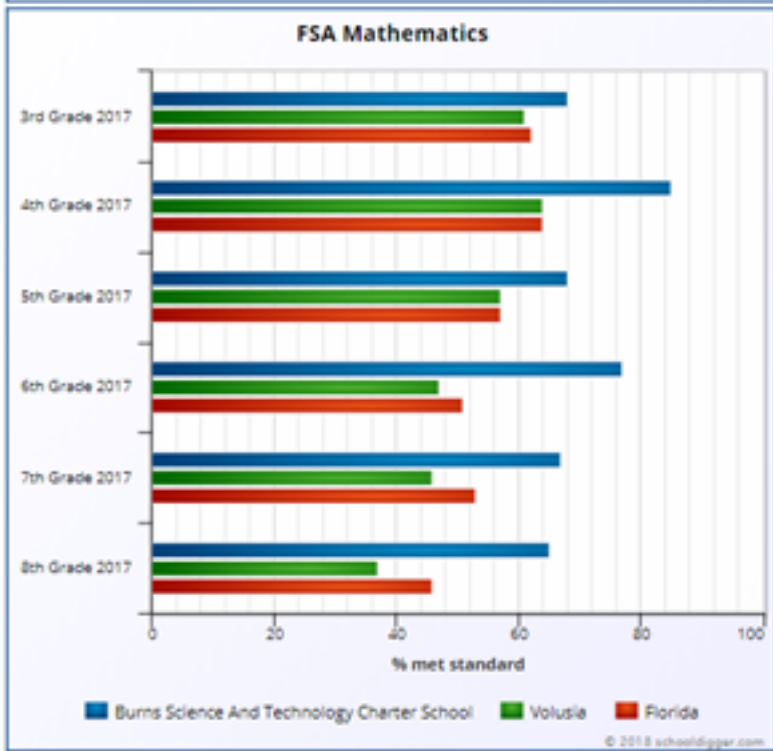
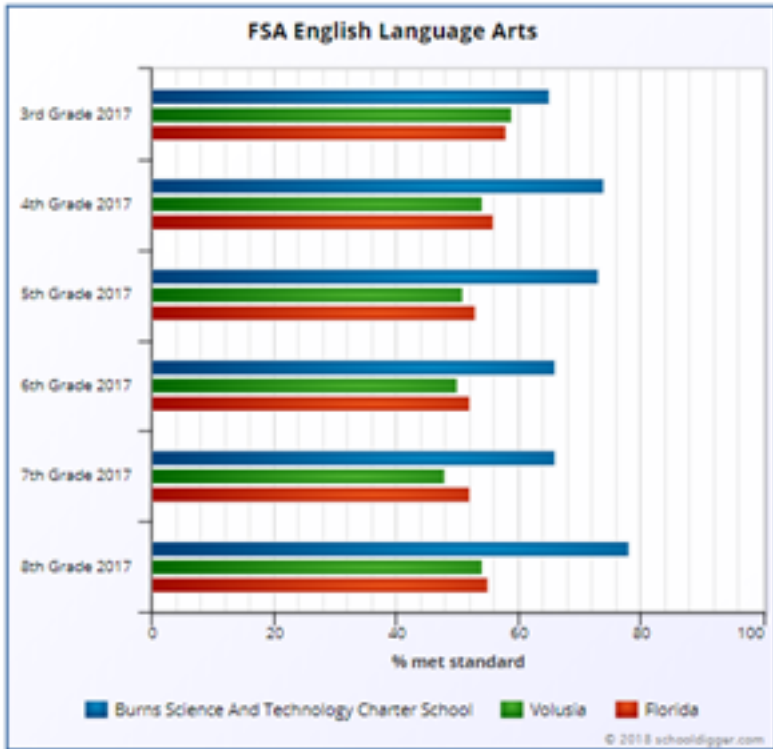
# FSA Results SY2015-2016

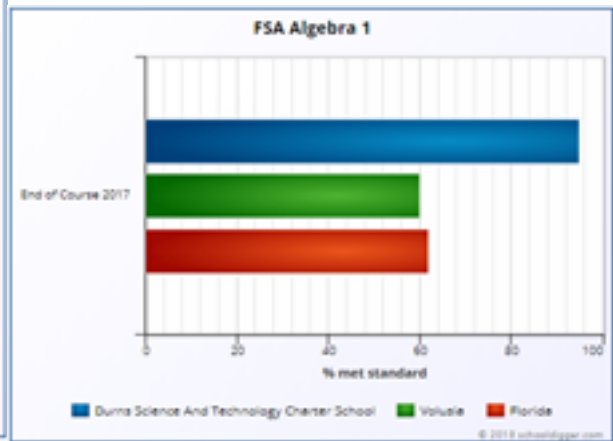
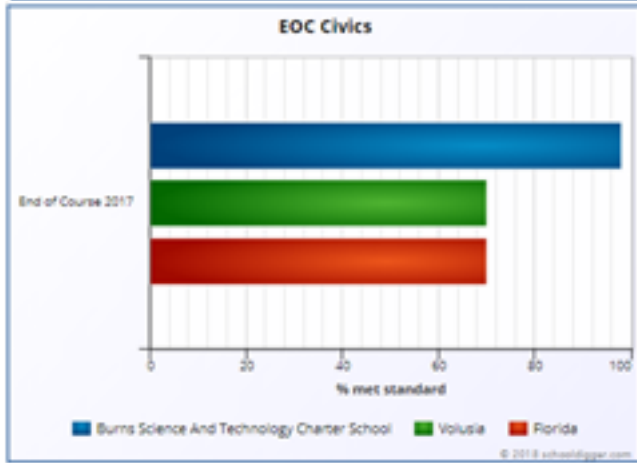
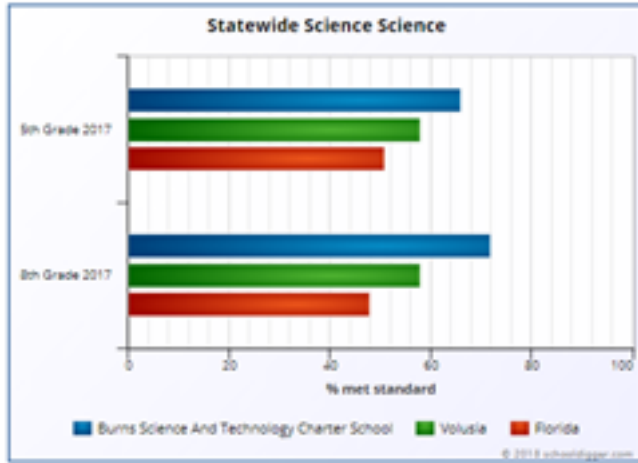






# FSA Results SY2016-2017

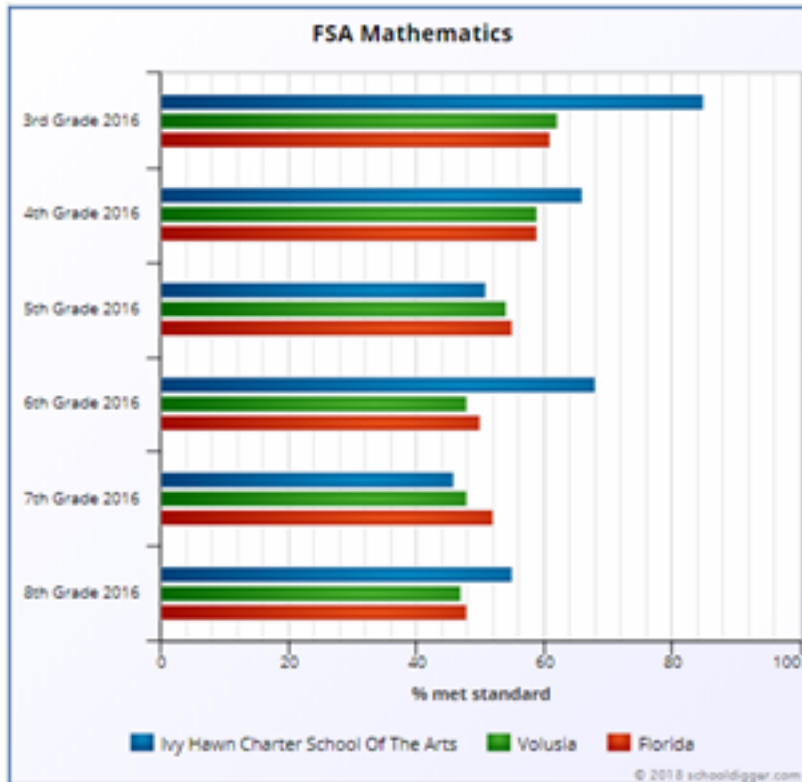
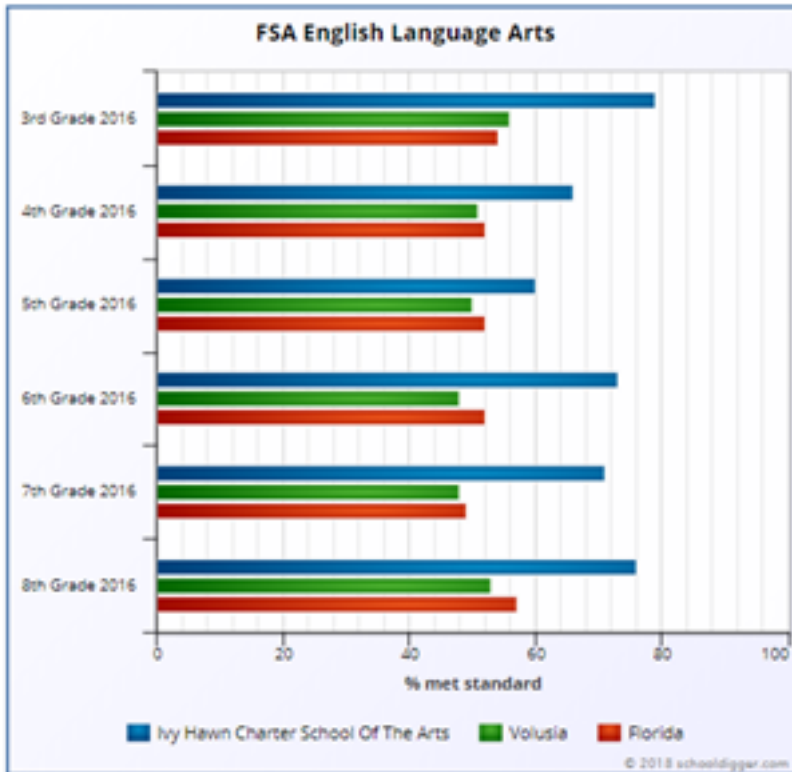


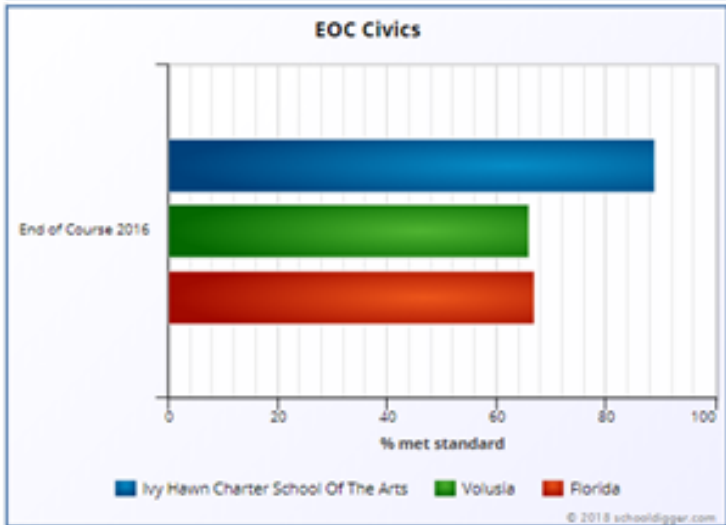
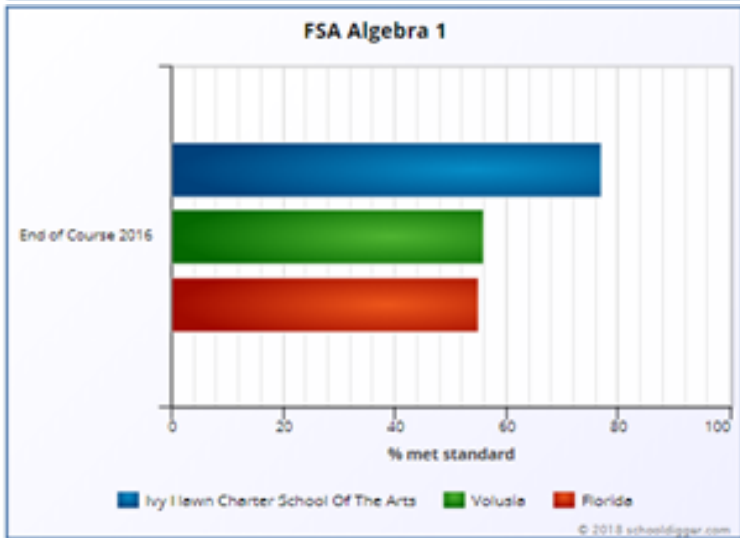
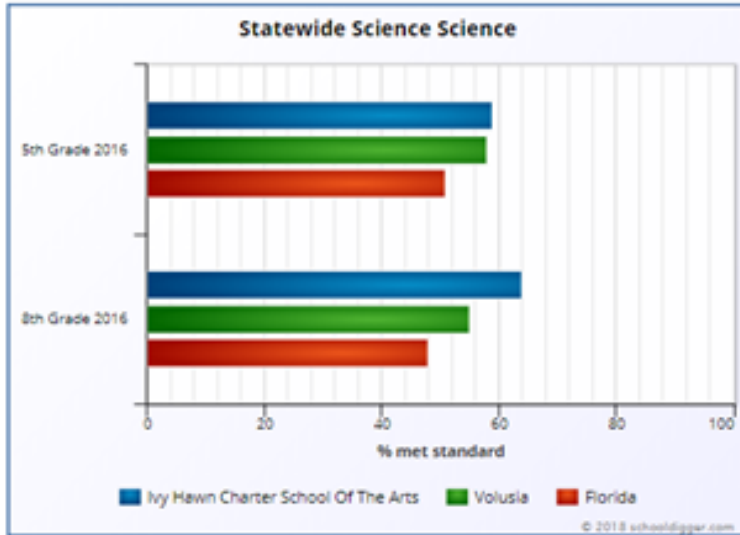


### Ivy Hawn Charter School of the Arts

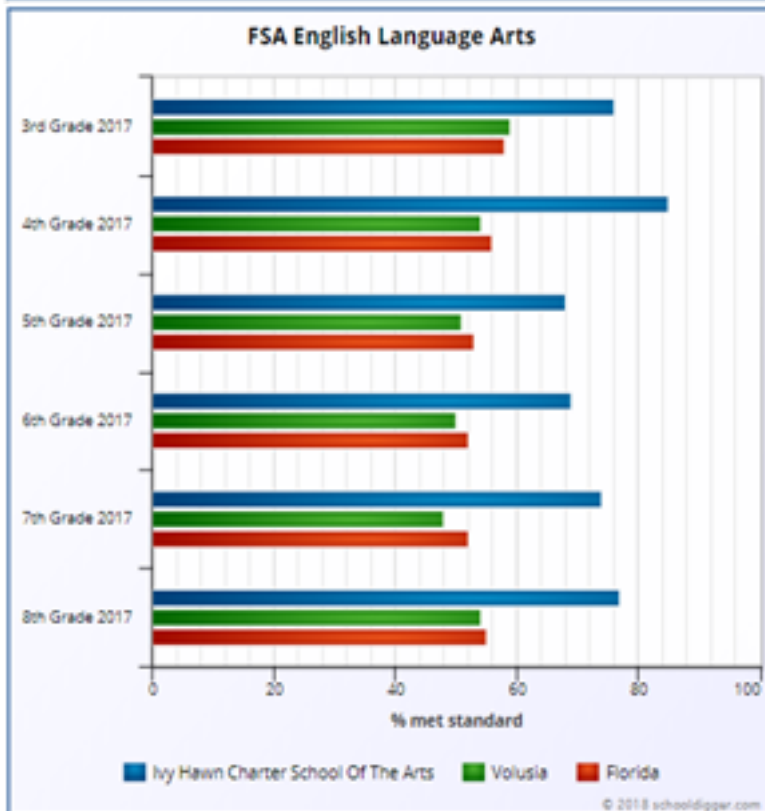
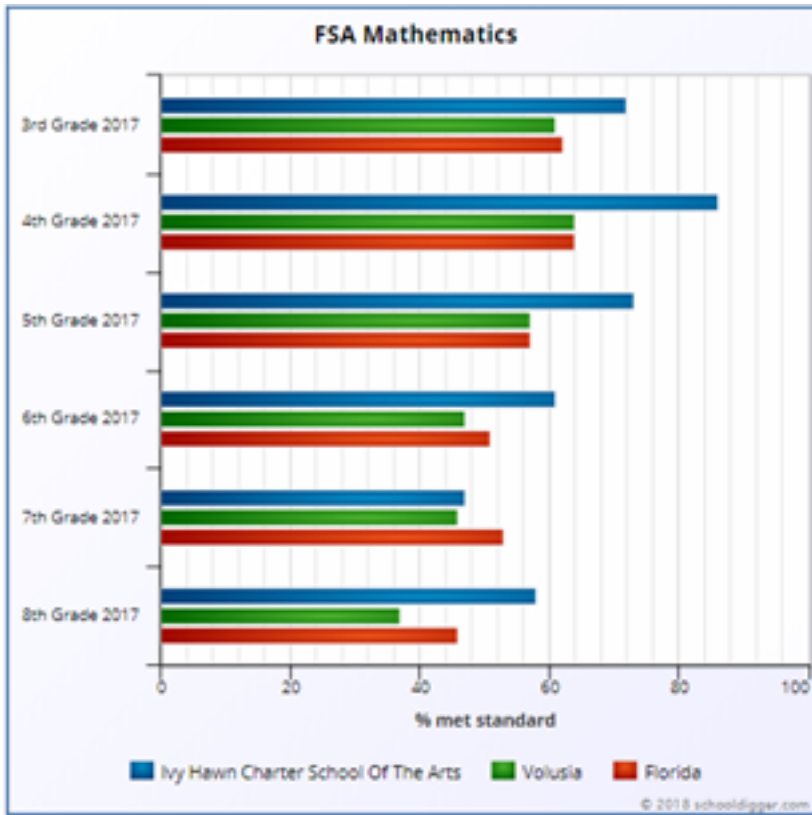
Ivy Hawn Charter School of the Arts has outperformed the district and state average on the Florida Standards Assessment in every content area and every grade level for the past 2 years.

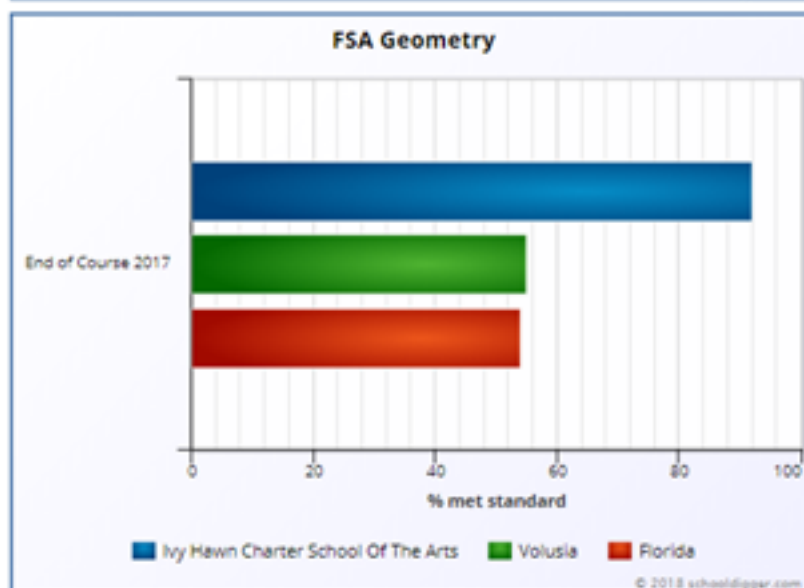
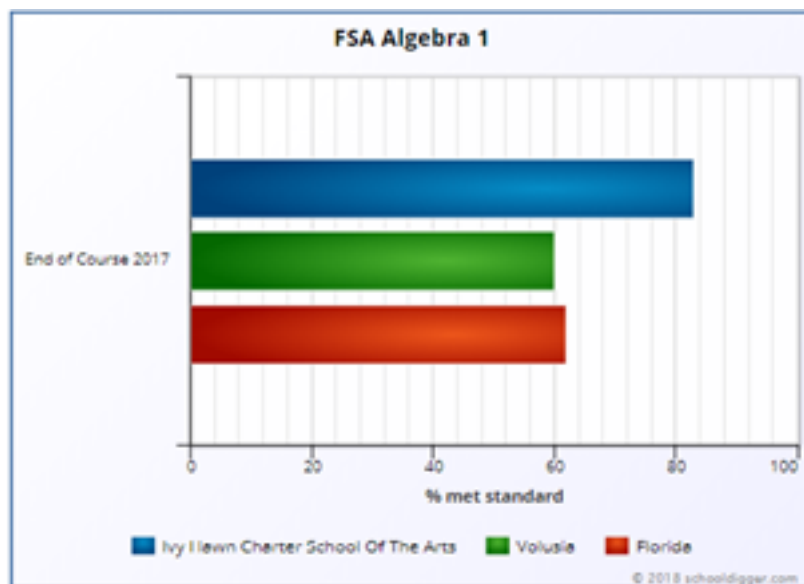
## FSA Results SY2015-2016

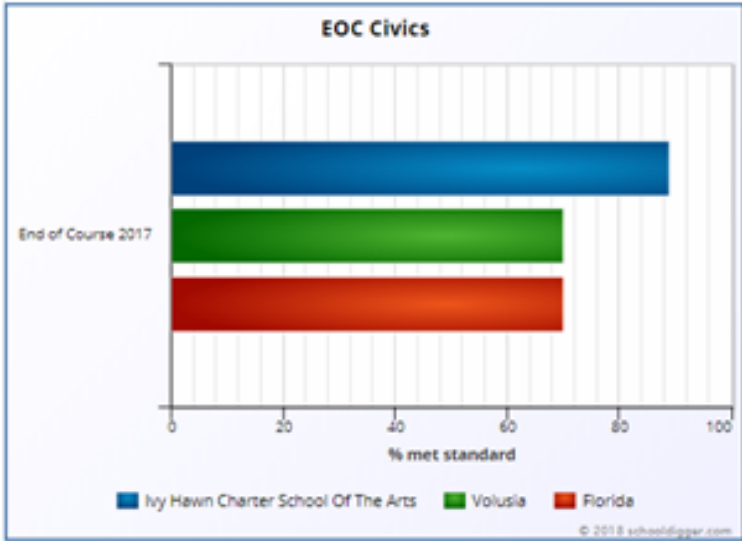
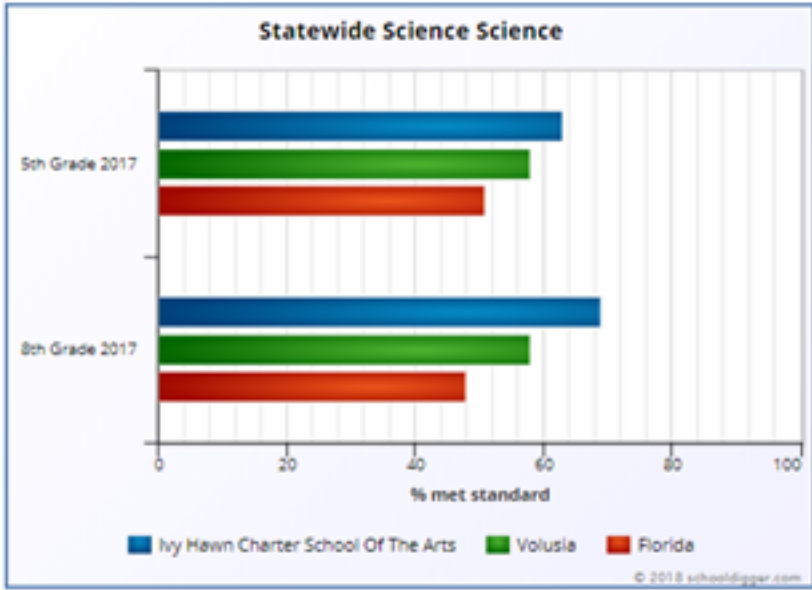




## FSA Results SY2016-2017









## Domain 3: Financial Plan

**Domain 3: Financial Plan** assesses whether the proposal and budget present a sound fiscal plan and policies to ensure responsible management of public funds.

### Section 3.1: School Budget

**Complete the budget workbook (available in February 2018 on [www.cps.edu/2018RFP](http://www.cps.edu/2018RFP)). Instructions are provided in the workbook. Include a budget narrative that summarizes the budget and explains how the budget reflects the mission and philosophy of the school. Detail key assumptions and revenue and cost estimates. Discuss programming contingencies for circumstances where revenues are lower or costs are higher than anticipated.**

#### *Appendix 3.1*

*In Appendix 3.1, applicants **must** provide an Excel version of the complete budget workbook that aligns with the proposed school board calendar.*

*If the applicant is a national operator and/or intends to contract with an MO, it must also provide:*

- The organization's three most recent audited financial statements and latest interim financial statements; and*
- The organization's (or MO's) most recently filed IRS Form 990, Form 1120S, or other federal tax return.*

The school budget is included as Appendix 3.1.

### Section 3.2: Financial Controls and Monitoring

**Describe the policies and procedures that the proposed school and board will use for financial planning, accounting, purchasing, and payroll. Explain how these plans will sustain financial health of the organization and ensure legal compliance with any requirements and restrictions for the use of public funds. Include the following information in your response:**

- Identify how the board will monitor the school's financial position.**
- Identify who is responsible for directly managing and overseeing the school's budget and a description of how they will do so.**
- Describe the school's plan to comply with the Illinois Charter Schools Law's (105 ILCS 5/27A-5(f)) requirement that charter schools submit an annual audit of school finances conducted by an outside, independent auditor.**

3.2

*In Appendix 3.2, applicants must provide:*

- *A list or table of all financial reports to be provided to the board, including how frequently they will be provided, and the party to be responsible for generating them; and*
- *Fiscal policies for the organization.*

Illinois Prep will have adequate internal controls and our Board will ensure these controls are followed consistently. There will be many controls surrounding our financial processes, including that:

- Supervisors must approve and release entries into the payroll system before payroll is generated.
- Any requested changes require the approval of both the school principal and an official at A3.
- Regular comparisons are done to staff rosters and payroll ledgers.
- An integrated computerized system manages all purchasing, general ledger, grant accounting, fixed assets accounting, and cash disbursements activities.

A3 also has formal written policies for purchasing, accounts payable, the use of corporate credit cards, board discretionary funds, principal discretionary funds, school money handling, deposits, and security policy.

The Board will review all of these policies, revise them as deemed necessary, and then adopt them.

The Board's services agreement with A3 calls for A3 to provide the school with all necessary back-office functions, including purchasing, accounting, business services, informational technology, data reporting, data warehousing, human resources, and payroll.

A3 uses a standardized human resource, purchasing, and payroll software system to internally manage all transactions related to the personnel, purchasing, and payroll function. This administrative infrastructure supports full compliance with generally accepted accounting principles. A3 effectively manages compensation, payroll, licensure, and compliance for approximately 3,000 school-based employees across the US. On behalf of our school, A3 will follow applicable Illinois and federal law with respect to the selection of contractors and large purchases on behalf of the school, including competitive bidding or sole-source documentation as applicable.

In compliance with Illinois Charter Schools Law's 105 ILCS 5/27A-5(f), the Board will contract with an independent auditor each year to perform a financial audit of the school. The audit fieldwork will be conducted in a timely manner to ensure that the report will be completed by the specified deadline. The audit expense will be included in the school's Board-approved budget.

A3 and the principal will be responsible for preparing all reports for Board review and state authorization compliance. The school will prepare Financial Statements monthly

which include a Statement of Financial Condition, Statement of Activities with Ratio of Budgeted to Actual Performance, Statement of Cash Flows, Footnotes, and an analysis of Liquidity, Financial Leverage, and Profitability Ratios.

## Domain 4: Operational Plan

**Domain 4: Operational Plan assesses whether the applicant has the operational and governance systems in place to ensure responsible planning, spending, and oversight decisions and prioritize student success.**

### Section 4.1: Operations

#### 4.1.1: Operational Management and Leadership

- **Describe how the school will manage its non-academic services once it opens and who will be responsible for overseeing which operational aspects of the school, including, but not limited to, transportation, food service, building operation, purchasing processes, student records, and school safety.**
- **Explain the school's plan to define roles and responsibilities for operational priorities and decision-making, including developing its personnel policy.**

Non-academic services will be primarily handled by A3 and will be detailed in the management agreement between the Board of Directors and A3. A3 will manage HR processes and will develop policies and procedures for the Board to approve regarding all hiring and termination. A3 will be responsible for handling the financial processes for Illinois Prep to include but not limited to:

- Payroll services
- Benefits administration
- AP/AR
- Audit administration
- Purchase requisitions & processes
- Advertising, marketing and support administration
- Facility operations, leases, & legal support

In addition, the Board will work with A3 to define additional roles and responsibilities for Illinois Prep leadership and support staff.

**Principal:** The principal will be responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of the school. He or she will implement the policies approved by the board of directors and will, at the direction of the board, supervise the school staff and ensure the school's compliance with all applicable laws, CPS policies, and testing procedures.

Administrative Assistant: The administrative assistant will manage front office activities, correspondence and support the secretary of the Board. He or she will have an Associates degree and/or experience as a school secretary or office manager.

#### **4.1.2: Start-up Plan**

**Describe the activities that the design team will undertake in the planning year(s). Explain who will work on a full-time or part-time basis between approval and school opening and how the school/network will compensate these individuals during this period.**

**In an attachment, provide a timeline for completing the array of activities required to successfully open a new school, including:**

- **Defined tasks with identified owners, start dates, and deadlines;**
- **The hiring process and schedule;**
- **The creation of non-academic documents and policies; and**
- **Procuring supplemental services such as food service, insurance, technology support, etc. Please see the Resource Guide for a sample start-up timeline.**

#### *Appendix 4.1*

*In Appendix 4.1, applicants must provide a start-up plan.*

The Illinois Prep Board of Directors will engage the Design Team to provide start-up and planning services. The Board will employ the Principal full-time and contract with the Head of School to ensure the following start-up plan is implemented:

#### **Pre-Operations/Incubation: Getting Ready to Open (8–12 months)**

- Finalize charter agreement with the authorizer, including, for local districts, identification of services the district will provide and the terms under which they will be provided
- Recruit and hire staff
- Recruit any necessary additional board members
- Recruit and admit students
- Orient staff and bring them into the planning process
- Provide board governance training
- Formalize the instructional program
  - Refine detailed curriculum, instruction and assessment plans
  - Finalize choice of and purchase instructional materials
  - Finalize detailed school calendar and daily schedule
  - Create detailed professional development schedule based on overall plans
- Arrange for facility and support services (contract with blended learning support sites)

- Fiscal support (accounting, budget, payroll, banking, auditing, purchasing)
- Transportation (N/A) - review student IEP requirements and individual student needs for transportation to blended learning support sites.

Illinois Prep has prepared the following Planning Year Checklist for the Head of School, Principal and Design Team to follow:

### **Planning Year Checklist**

1. Enrollment is sufficient to allow for financial viability and programmatic integrity.
2. Required Documentation on file.
3. Governing Board is competent and compliant with law.
  - a. Evidence of regular board meetings and minutes indicating the understanding of key laws (e.g., Open Meeting Law) and use of best practices.
  - b. Mandated preliminary planning training (webinar series) has been completed including assigned governance strengthening exercises.
  - c. Board policies (including grievance and criminal background checks) and bylaws have been formally approved by the local board and the authorizer has a new clean electronic copy of the document.
4. Facility has been acquired and the contract signed. (Agreements with two (2) blended learning support sites are in place.)
5. Funding is prepared to flow from the state to the school.
  - a. Establish accounting services – Prepare for approved accounting software.
  - b. Establish a bank account.\*
  - c. Complete Projected Enrollment Form from Allotments (Due in June)\*
  - d. Obtain Liability Insurance.
  - e. Develop and approve amended budget
  - f. Criminal background checks policies formally adopted
  - g. Contract with approved CPA firm to perform annual audit.
  - h. Finance policies adopted and formally approved
6. Student Accountability Plans are approved and ready to be carried out by assigned staff.
  - a. Testing/accountability coordinator job description developed.
  - b. Develop draft of testing plan including calendar developed and sent to appropriate authorities.
  - c. Policies in place regarding student enrollment and accountability.
  - d. School has a policy and proposed location regarding the mandatory locking up of ALL testing materials.
7. Key staff and majority of teachers have been hired.
  - a. Employee and Hiring policies are developed and adopted.
  - b. Employee handbook is drafted.
  - c. Official employee contract is formally approved by the Board.
  - d. The school leader and at least 75% of staff members have been identified for hire.

- e. The school has recruited and hired a highly qualified and licensed special education director.
  - f. A strategic plan is in place to hire any remaining staff before the start of the year.
  - g. Beginning Teacher Support Plan (if applicable) and Licensure Renewal Plan are drafted.
8. Federal Programming (i.e. Exceptional Children, Title I, ESL) policies have been developed and formally approved and ready to be carried out.
- a. Board approved policies and contingency plans are in place regarding day one of instruction and meeting the needs of all present children (i.e. Homebound, Separate Setting).
  - b. Investigate process for Exceptional Children special funding
9. Instructional program components are in place for meeting the mission of the school.
- a. Professional development plan is outlined and scheduled to occur prior to the first day of school.
  - b. The curriculum scope and sequence for ALL grades to be served in the school's first year are completed.
  - c. The board formally adopts a school calendar representing the academic year.
  - d. All necessary materials (e.g. books, programs, technology, etc.) as identified in the approved charter application have been purchased and will be on-site prior to opening.
  - e. Learning environments are suitable for the mission-specific learning program.
10. Transportation plan is in place (if required).
11. Lunch service policies are adopted (not applicable)
12. School Safety policies are adopted and meet the requirements under Illinois Safe Schools Act.
13. Policy Manuals have been developed and formally adopted to include:
- 1. Instructional Programming
    - a. Calendar and length of school day
    - b. Classroom policies (e.g., grading scales, report cards)
    - c. Promotion and Retention
    - d. Accountability
    - e. Student Behavior
  - 2. Operations
    - a. Hiring and Termination
    - b. Criminal Background (staff and volunteers)
    - c. Teacher Evaluations
    - d. Student Health and Safety
    - e. Admissions and Enrollment
    - f. Student Records
    - g. Insurance
    - h. After-school programs (if applicable)
    - i. Family and School Communication
  - 3. Governance

- a. Board policies
  - b. Committees
  - c. Third party agreements (including parent organizations)
  - d. Grievance
  - e. Employee Contracts
4. Finances
- a. Budget Approval
  - b. Third-party contracts
  - c. Access to funding
  - d. Audits
  - e. Purchasing

14. Handbooks (Drafts or Final)

- a. Student Parent Handbook (including academic calendar)
- b. Employee Handbook

Category	Task	Responsible Part(ies)	Date	Cost
Staff Hiring	Launch full hiring process	Principal & A3	1/2019	
Staff Hiring	Conduct full hiring process	Principal, Head of School	1/2019-5/2019	\$10,000
Staff Hiring	Target for all hiring to be completed	Principal, Head of School	5/2019	NA
Student Recruitment	Launch student recruitment campaign	Principal, Head of School & A3	09/2019	NA
Student Recruitment	Attend high school fairs and student recruitment events	Principal, Head of School & A3	9/2018-6/2019	Negligible

Student Recruitment	Make presentations to elementary school students and counselors	Principal, Head of School & A3	9/2018-3/2019	NA
Student Recruitment	Hold information sessions for 8 <sup>th</sup> grade counselors	Principal, Head of School & A3	9/2018-3/2019	NA
Student Recruitment	Hold open houses	Principal, Head of School & A3	9/2018-3/2019	NA
Student Recruitment	Hold student lottery	Principal, Head of School & A3	3/2019	NA
Student Recruitment	Notify parents of admission status	Principal and CMO Staff	3/2019	NA
Student Recruitment	Register students	Principal and CMO Staff	4/2019-8/2019	NA
Secure Non-educational Services	All necessary non-educational services will be provided by A3 to include, payroll, accounting, procurement, insurance, personnel policies, school policies and procedures, etc.			
Board Development	The existing board will remain in place as described in response to section 3.2. As such no board development activities are planned for the launch of our second school.			



## Section 4.2: Student Recruitment and Enrollment

### 4.2.1: Student Enrollment

- Complete this enrollment projection chart for the first five years of the proposed school and the year it reaches full capacity, citing the enrollment capacity for each grade. Discuss attrition assumptions, grade configurations, and other considerations as needed for the chart.

Grade	Number of Students					At Capacity 2023
	Year 1 2019	Year 2 2020	Year 3 2021	Year 4 2022	Year 5 2023	
K	60	90	120	150	180	180
1	60	90	120	150	180	180
2	60	90	120	150	180	180
3	60	90	120	150	180	180
4	60	90	120	150	180	180
5	60	90	120	150	180	180
6	90	120	150	180	210	210
7	90	120	150	180	210	210
8	90	120	150	180	210	210
9	120	150	180	210	240	240
10	120	150	180	210	240	240
11	120	150	180	210	240	240
12	120	150	180	210	240	240
<b>Total</b>	<b>1110</b>	<b>1500</b>	<b>1890</b>	<b>2280</b>	<b>2670</b>	<b>2670</b>

### 4.2.2: Student Recruitment

- Describe the strategy to recruit the targeted student population. Who will be responsible for student recruitment in the start-up and ongoing years?
- Explain how the school will attract and retain all students, including those with disabilities, students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), English Learners (ELs), and students in temporary living situations (STLS).
- Describe the process, timeline, and requirements for parents and students to apply to the proposed school. Note that application forms should only request contact information and age/grade level, and should not request social security numbers.
- Develop and describe a lottery policy consistent with the Illinois Charter School Law. Explain how the proposed school will conduct its lottery if over-subscribed. Explain policies and procedures for waiting lists, withdrawals, re-enrollment, and transfers.

- **Describe the process for enrolling and registering students. Note: post-lottery forms may request information on special education status, English language proficiency, academic aptitude, and proof of immunization. However, such information may not operate as a barrier to registration or enrollment at the school.**

*Appendix 4.2*

*In Appendix 4.2, applicants must provide copies of application forms, registration forms, and enrollment forms, and their lottery policy.*

Illinois Prep will market the school in a variety of ways with the intention of allowing as many people as possible the opportunity to apply for enrollment in the school.

Parent Interest Meetings: Illinois Prep will hold multiple parent interest meetings from the time the school is approved through the fall of the first year. The school plans to team up with regional businesses to host these public meetings. The school plans to have meetings throughout the Chicago area as well as strategic areas across the state of Illinois. Meetings will be advertised through social media, local media outlets, fliers, distributed to day care centers, houses of worship, community centers, and athletic venues.

Community Events: Representatives from the school will attend statewide events to promote the opening of the school. At these events, the board and volunteers will hand out flyers and letters of intent. This will help the school get an estimate of enrollment numbers and seek out business partners for the school. Illinois Prep has been collecting the emails of interested community members, business owners, parents, and teachers to start building a communications list. This list will be used to notify those interested of upcoming events.

Advertising: Illinois Prep will advertise its open enrollment period in statewide media, including newspapers, and online to give as many people as possible an opportunity to apply before the lottery is held.

## Section 4.3: Operational Compliance

### 4.3.1: Transportation

**Describe how the school will meet the transportation needs of all of its students, including low-income and at-risk students, students with disabilities, and students who are in temporary living situations. Specify which staff members will be responsible for overseeing transportation services and supports. Include transportation costs in the five-year budget.**

Illinois Prep will provide students with access to site-based blended learning support structures that will be located at the following two sites:

Daley College: 7500 South Pulaski Rd, Chicago, IL 60652

Arturo Velasquez Institute (a satellite campus of Daley College): 2800 S Western Ave, Chicago, IL 60608

Illinois Prep, while not providing transportation services to students, will work diligently to ensure that the site-based centers are accessible to all students and that transportation needs are not a barrier to any child attending the school. Since Illinois Prep will operate as a virtual school, we do not anticipate the need to provide bus transportation to the general student population, either directly or through contract with CPS. However, we will offer parents and guardians resources and support to coordinate their transportation needs to the support centers as needed, and we will provide transportation as required by an individual student's IEP or other applicable law.

#### **4.3.2: ADA Compliance**

**Describe the processes that the school will implement to ensure ADA compliance. The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability and require accessibility in all aspects of school operations, including employment, buildings, programs and activities, communications, and information technology.**

Illinois Prep will adhere to all policies and procedures to be in full compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability and require accessibility in all aspects of school operations, including employment, buildings, programs and activities, communications, and information technology. This process will be overseen by the Principal and informed by legal counsel. The ADA Policies and Procedures will be in place prior to enrollment of any students. The table below shows different compliance components and the responsible staff.

**Illinois Prep  
ADA Compliance**

ADA Compliance Activity	Description	Staff Member Responsible
<p><b><i>Employment Practices</i></b>, including addressing accommodations in hiring and employment</p>	<p>Illinois Prep will adopt employment policies that forbid employment-related discrimination on the basis of disability. The school will consider all candidates, regardless of disability, that are qualified and can perform the job with or without accommodations.</p>	<p>Head of School, Principal &amp; Board</p>
<p><b><i>Policies, Practices &amp; Procedures</i></b>, including making reasonable modifications if necessary to accommodate persons with disabilities</p>	<p>Accommodations will be provided to employees in order to perform their position duties. Activities and meetings will be scheduled in locations that ensure that all invited employees have accessibility to participate.</p>	<p>Principal, Onsite staff and outside support when required</p>
<p><b><i>Buildings &amp; Activities</i></b>, including ensuring relocation of activities from any inaccessible room or space identified on the ADA report and obtaining accommodations for parents or visitors to school events who have hearing or visual impairments</p>	<p>Illinois Prep will ensure that any learning centers meet the accommodation requirements.</p>	<p>Principal, Staff</p>

<p><b>Communications &amp; IT,</b> including insuring that the proposed school website and all information technology in the proposed school, including hardware, software, and web-based applications are accessible to persons with disabilities</p>	<p>Illinois Prep will document the need for assistive technologies in each student's IEP and will report it to CPS Department of Diverse Learners. The school will accommodate employees requiring special technology to perform duties accommodations.</p>	<p>Head of School, Principal, Onsite Staff and IT Program Coordinator</p>
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Illinois Prep's curriculum and instructional process will meet the iNACOL standards for ADA compliance:

**Accessibility**

Course materials and activities will be designed to provide appropriate access to all students. The course, developed with universal design principles in mind, conforms to the U.S. Section 504 and Section 508 provisions for electronic and information technology, as well as the W3C's Web Content Accessibility guidelines (WCAG 2.0).

**Teacher Knowledge and Understanding**

The online teacher will know and understand legal mandates stipulated by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Assistive Technology Act, and Section 508 {of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973}, or other similar guidelines/requirements for accessibility.

**Equity and Access**

The school's online program's policies and practices will support students' ability to access the program. Accommodations are available to meet a variety of student needs.

- Policies will clearly state eligibility requirements for the program.
- Policies and practices that provide accommodations for students with disabilities will be in place.
- Policies will ensure that students have equitable access to the program consistent with its mission and purposes.

**4.3.3: Safety Plan**

**Provide a school plan to protect the safety of students, the facility, and the property. Describe any safety policies and plans to employ security personnel, technology, or equipment.**

Illinois Prep will develop a written safety plan and policies to be shared with staff, parents and students and be available upon inspection from Chicago Public Schools and state and local Health Departments. **Our safety plan will follow the CPS Safety and Security**

Office Template coupled with coordination between CPS, City Colleges of Chicago and our local staff.

# Safety and Compliance Plans



## Policy Handbook

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SEARCH FOR POLICIES

### Recently Adopted Policies

	INDEX TO POLICIES: CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS	
17-1206-PO1	FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)	
17-1206-PO2	PARENTAL AND SUPPLEMENTAL LEAVE	
17-1206-PO3	COMPENSATION AND PAY	
17-1206-PO4	PAID TIME OFF	
17-1206-PO5	VICTIMS ECONOMIC SECURITY AND SAFETY ACT	

### Welcome to the CPS Policy Handbook Online

The Chicago Board of Education policies on this web site are presented as a convenience and are available to the public.

The Policies have been reformatted to PDF for use on the Internet; physical appearance may differ from that of the certified versions thereof on file in the Office of the Board.

All Policies will be enforced in accordance with the certified versions of the Policies. In the event of a discrepancy or a perceived discrepancy, individuals should refer to the certified Policies, which are available from the Secretary of the Board. The Secretary of the Board can be contacted at the Chicago Board of Education, 1 North Dearborn Street, Suite 950, Chicago, IL 60602 (773) 553-1600.

The Policies are presented as adopted by the Board, and the Board believes that they accurately reflect all Board Policies in existence as of **January 24, 2018**.

Users of this website should be aware that Policies

# Safety and Compliance Plans

TITLE	DUTIES	REPORTS TO	SUGGESTED PERSONNEL
<b>INCIDENT COMMANDER</b>	Overall responsibility for managing incident by planning strategies and implementing tactics - often based on the info and suggestions being provided from other members of the emergency management team.		Principal
<b>PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER (PIO)</b>	Serves as conduit for information to parents, media, and Office of Communications. Also ensures that media does not gain access to student or faculty during the incident. The PIO will also serve as the staff liaison by providing information to staff members about the incident. The PIO should also make sure the various school offices receive notification and updates about the event and that any needed resources are requested.	Incident Commander	Journalism Teacher, Assistant Principal, Trusted Staff Member
<b>SAFETY OFFICER</b>	Responds to scene of incident; monitors conditions and develops measures for assuring safety of response personnel. Takes steps to quickly secure the school from outside intruders; locates and turns off utilities as needed; notifying responding agencies of fire/Hazmat threat.	Incident Commander	Engineer, Custodian, Assistant Principal, Shop Teacher, Chemistry Teacher
<b>LIAISON OFFICER</b>	Primary contact for supporting/responding agencies; reports to main entrance of school to awaits emergency responders and direct them; informs responders of what the school has implemented to ensure the safety of the students.	Incident Commander	Security Guard, Engineer, Custodian, Staff With No Student Responsibility

In accordance with 105 ILCS 5/Art. 27A-5, A charter school shall comply with all non-curricular health and safety requirements applicable to public schools under the laws of the State of Illinois.

Illinois Prep's Board of Directors will establish policies and procedures as required by the statute. The following policies and procedures will include but are not limited to:

1. Technology Acceptable Use Policies (AUP) for both staff and students
2. Cyberbullying Policy
3. Ethical Use of Public Resources Policy
4. School Emergency Response Policy/Plan

The Illinois Prep Board of Directors will develop a Charter School Safety Plan.

The Charter School Safety Plan will be directly linked to the development of a School Emergency Response Plan. Protocols reflected in the Charter School Safety Plan will guide the development and implementation of the School Emergency Response Plan.

The methodology used to develop the charter school safety plan, involves the formation of the school safety plan development team. Team members will use the Illinois

Compilation of School Discipline Laws and Regulations for the plan's structure then developed the key elements of the plan based upon the involvement of the community and student behavioral incidence data.

In the event of an emergency or violent incident, the initial response to all emergencies at the charter school will be by the Principal, who will activate the School Emergency Response Team. Upon the activation of the Charter School Emergency Response Team, the Principal or her/his designee will notify, when appropriate, local emergency officials. City, County and State resources providers may be called to provide additional services.

#### **4.3.4: Insurance Plan**

**Provide an attachment that lists the types of insurance coverage the school will secure and describes the levels of coverage. Include workers' compensation, liability, property, indemnity, and any other anticipated insurance.**

Illinois Prep shall obtain and maintain insurance at a minimum in the following amounts:

1. Errors and omissions: one million dollars (\$1,000,000) per claim;
2. General liability: one million dollars (\$1,000,000) per occurrence;
3. Boiler and machinery: the replacement cost of the building;
4. Real and personal property: the appraised value of the building and contents;
5. Fidelity bonds: no less than two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) to cover employee dishonesty;
6. Automobile liability: one million dollars (\$1,000,000) per occurrence; and
7. Workers' compensation: as specified by The State of Illinois General Statutes.

#### **4.3.5: Asset Inventory Plan**

**Describe the process that the school will implement to ensure proper documentation, monitoring, and disposal of all assets purchased for the school, including the process to document and maintain records of assets purchased with public funds.**

The Illinois Prep Board of Directors will approve an Asset Management Plan that will ensure the administration and preparation for:

#### **Disaster Planning**

- Ensure accurate records for business continuity and proper insurance plans.
- Plan to replace assets and equipment for the educational facility based on complete and accurate inventory records.

#### **Grant & Regulatory Compliance**



- Conduct an independent, professional fixed asset inventory for audit and regulatory compliance.

### **School Capital Budgeting**

- Plan for future capital purchases based on accurate records of existing assets.
- Reduce tax and insurance premiums.
- Raise capital through the identification and sale of unused equipment.

### **Public Accountability**

- Maintain good stewardship with local taxpayers.
- Ensure that taxpayer money is being spent wisely, and be able to provide a status of all fixed assets.

### **Expansion, Construction and Relocation**

- Develop an accurate baseline inventory prior to moves to ensure that all equipment makes it to the new location.
- Validate that all equipment and assets are accounted for after a transition or relocation to a new facility.
- Confirm and update the location of all assets after renovation, expansion or move.

The Principal and his/her designee will assign a team that will apply a barcode property tag to every fixed asset. All appropriate data pertaining to each asset will be recorded using state-of-the-art barcode data collection terminals. Information includes: location, room, description, manufacturer, serial number, and funding source.

The Principal, or his/her designee is responsible for:

- the monthly transfer of account activity to the fixed asset system and reconciliation.
- the supervision and coordination of the initial inventory.
- the fulfillment of the property record input function for all expenditures classified as land, buildings, equipment, and vehicles for both acquisitions and retirements.
- the timely creation of all asset reports.

All items of equipment which exceed the capitalization level or are considered to be sensitive items as defined in the Asset Management Plan, including those purchased through school activity funds or donated by school support organizations or other benefactors, must be entered into the fixed asset inventory accounting system. For each asset that is acquired, an individual must be assigned the responsibility to:

1. Receive and inspect the asset.
2. Return any damaged merchandise.
3. Apply a property tag(s) to the asset.
4. Enter the equipment into the asset system.
5. Safeguard the asset.
6. Inventory the asset periodically and reconcile differences with the asset records.
7. Delete from the asset record any equipment that is being disposed.

#### **4.3.6: Student Records**

**Describe the processes that the school will implement to ensure that it will properly maintain its students' permanent and temporary records, including how the school will ensure that it will properly transfer such records as needed.**

In accordance with the Illinois School Student Records Act **105 ILCS 10/**, Illinois Prep's principal and/or his/her designee will be responsible for maintaining the confidentiality and security of all student records. All student records will be maintained with confidentiality and safety in mind. Records will be kept in secure, designated, locked records rooms, in fireproof file cabinets. Student records may be examined on site only by approved personnel and should never be taken off site. A staff member will be designated by the principal to oversee the student records and ensure compliance with all applicable laws. Records will be requested from the student's previous school only after a complete enrollment packet has been received. Upon receipt, student records will be securely stored and treated with strict confidentiality.

### [Section 4.4: Governance](#)

#### **4.4.1 Governance Start-up**

- **Identify (at minimum) the board chair, vice chair, and treasurer. Summarize the experience and diversity of the governing board, and explain why the members of the governing board are qualified to serve on a public charter school board (or, as applicable, a contract school board), highlighting any educational, financial, legal, fundraising, governance, or other special experience or skill sets for unique school models. Note whether any board members have close ties to the proposed community.**
- **Describe recruiting plans to build a diverse and qualified board, including the timeline and procedures for selecting new board members, and how you will ensure the board's ability to provide proper oversight and governance throughout its growth from year 1 through year 5, including a description of board training.**

#### BOARD MEMBERS

Dr. Eduardo Garza - Chairman

Dr. Garza serves as the Dean of Student Services for Daley College in Chicago. Dr. Garza is a results-oriented leader with extensive experience in student services and educational policy. He has a proven track record of collaboration and consensus building to achieve high standard educational objectives. In addition, he brings excellent leadership including interpersonal, decision-making and communication skills with the ability to create strategic partnerships. His expertise is also recognized in effective negotiation skills and diplomacy within political charged environments. Dr. Garza advocates on behalf of

Chicago's college students, ensuring access to high quality post-secondary education for individuals and families seeking to participate more fully in our communities and society.

Rafael Ramirez, Bank First Volusia County (FL) - Treasurer

Mr. Ramirez has an MBA from Loyola University in Louisiana. He is highly respected and regarded in the banking and finance industry and by State and Federal regulators. His financial expertise along with an extensive community service repertoire will be vital to the success of Illinois Prep. Mr. Ramirez also serves on the board of the successful Ivy Hawk High School of the Arts and Sciences that is managed by A3 Education.

#### **4.4.2: Governance Structure and Ongoing Oversight**

- **Describe the size, structure, powers, and duties of the proposed governing board. Identify board officer positions and clearly state the roles and responsibilities for each member. Describe any committees, school advisory bodies, or parent/teacher councils (if applicable) and their roles and responsibilities, and how your proposed structure will ensure that there will be active representation of key school stakeholders. Note that charter schools are required to describe the nature and extent of parent, professional educator, and community involvement on the board (105 ILCS 5/27A-7(a)(10)).**
- **Outline the relationship and reporting authority among the school leadership, management organization (if applicable), and any school advisory bodies or parent/teacher councils (if applicable) to the governing board. Explain the rationale for the proposed structure.**
- **Outline formalized procedures for the board to run effective, outcomes-focused meetings that consistently monitor the school's progress.**
- **Explain how the board will monitor academic, financial, operational, and organizational progress of the proposed school.**
- **Describe how the board will ensure that it provides effective oversight of itself. What would trigger a member's removal from the board and what process would guide removal?**
- **Describe the role of the board in evaluating the school leader(s) and holding them accountable for school performance.**

**(If applicant is an existing non-profit organization):**

- **Will the existing non-profit board govern the new school, or has the school formed a new non-profit corporation governed by a separate board? Note: If you are using an existing non-profit board to oversee the school, that organization will be required to submit all financial performance documents requested in Domain 3: Financial Plan.**
- **If the existing non-profit's current board will govern the charter school, what steps have you taken to transform its membership, mission, and bylaws to**

**assume its new duties? Describe your plan and timeline for completing the transition and orienting the board to its new duties.**

- **If you have formed a new board, describe its ongoing relationship to the existing non-profit's board, if any.**

The Illinois Prep Board of Directors holds ultimately responsible for the operation, fiscal health and academic achievement of all of the Illinois Prep. The Board is composed of a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 8 voting directors. In addition, the Illinois Prep Head of School serves as an ex officio, non-voting Board member. Board members demonstrate a personal connection with and commitment to the mission, values and culture of the Illinois Prep, and represent diverse expertise and skill sets of high value to the organization, including strategic planning, education, finance, law, fundraising/development, human resources, technology, operations and community engagement. Directors are elected for staggered three-year terms with approximately one third of the Directors up for election each year, with the exception of the Head of School who will serve as a non-voting Board member for the duration of his/her employment as the Head of School.

The Board has the power to appoint committees and to delegate to such committees authority generally reserved to the Board, provided such authority is not in violation of the bylaws or other applicable laws. A committee with corporate authority must have two or more directors and a majority of its membership must be directors. The Board may also appoint committees without corporate authority, whose purpose will generally be investigating, reporting and advising the Board on certain activities and programs as well as making recommendations to the Board or officers for approval. A committee without corporate authority need not include directors or officers of the corporation.

The Illinois Prep Board will implement the following working committees over the upcoming school year. The work described below is conducted by the board as a whole during the school's start-up phase.

- **Governance – The Governance Committee will be responsible for membership, continuity and effectiveness of the Board. Specific responsibilities will include identifying skill sets and other criteria needed on the Board, identifying, screening and nominating new Board members, orienting new Board members, annually assessing and evaluating both the Board as a whole as well as individual Board members and succession planning at the Board level. Additionally, the Governance Committee will create a process for selecting, supervising and evaluating the Illinois Prep Head of School and Principal.**
- **Education – The Education Committee will work with the Head of School, Principal and the instructional staff to assess and monitor the performance of all school programs, both curricular and extra-curricular, to ensure alignment with state standards and the charter. This information will be presented to the Board at each meeting to assist the Board in its academic oversight of the Illinois Prep. The Education Committee will also support and advise staff regarding proposed programs and policies and facilitate their implementation. Finally, the Education Committee will work with staff to identify the**

technological needs of the organization and work with the Facility Committee, as appropriate, to ensure that the proper infrastructure is built and maintained.

- Finance – The Finance Committee will assist the Board in its financial oversight duty by recommending financial policies and monitoring their implementation. The Finance Committee will oversee the organization’s annual financial audit. While ultimate responsibility for review of monthly financial statements and approval of the annual budgets and audits as well as investments and indebtedness will lie with the full Board, the Finance Committee will monitor the organization’s financial records, oversee the creation of the financial statements for presentation to the Board, work with staff to refine proposed budgets for presentation to the full Board, monitor budget implementation and financial procedures, monitor compliance with reporting requirements, recommend the auditor to the full Board and review the audit.
- Development – The full Board will set the annual fundraising agenda with clear strategies and goals. The Development Committee will work with other staff to plan and implement the fundraising program, and to get the Board involved in fundraising, educate and support the Board on fundraising techniques, and keep the Board informed on the organization’s fundraising activities. The Development Committee will also be integrally involved in identifying, cultivating and approaching major donors. Additionally, the Development Committee will plan special events to raise funds for and awareness of the Illinois Prep and our mission. Finally the Development Committee will assist in the development of strategic partnerships with community and other organizations with overlapping values as Illinois Prep.
- Academic Oversight – The Board, working with the Head of School, Principal and school staff will set academic goals for each year. The Head of School and school staff will design curriculum, implement programs, allocate resources and collect data. The Education Committee, a Board committee, will support the Head of School and school staff in their work. At each Board meeting real-time data on student performance will be presented to the Board, and adjustments to academic programs and/or resource allocation will be considered on a frequent basis in line with the Illinois Prep value of continuous improvement.
- Operational Oversight – Prior to the beginning of each fiscal year, the Principal will present an annual budget to the Board for approval. The Board will review and approve the annual budget for each school and for the organization as a whole, and any material changes to the budget will require the Board to approve an amended budget. At each Board meeting, the Board will be presented and will review the financial statements of each school and the organization. The Board will hire an auditor and review and approve the annual audit of the organization. At each meeting the Board will also receive updates regarding each facility and its operations. The Board will also approve all financial policies that set the processes and controls for contracts, expenditures, and internal control.
- HR Oversight – The Board will hire, set the salary and benefits for, and evaluate the Head of School. Through the Governance Committee the Board will work with the Head of

School and Principal to set annual goals and periodically provide feedback on progress toward those goals. The Head of School, in turn, will hire and propose the salary for each school Principal and each other employee reporting to the Head of School. The Board will, based on recommendations from the Head of School and school staff, approve salary schedules during the budget process. The Board will also set major policies and procedures for school operations and HR matters.

- Outreach and fundraising – The Board will set the schools’ mission, monitor the performance of the schools and take necessary actions to ensure that the schools remain true to their mission and charter. Board members will make a personally meaningful financial contribution to the organization each year and will support all major fundraising campaigns. Board members will raise public awareness regarding and fundraise for the organization – including making introductions to their personal networks. Finally, Board members will use their expertise and skills to assist the organization as appropriate.

Illinois Prep’s board of directors has extensive leadership and oversight experience in both the corporate and non-profit sectors. They have demonstrated a strong commitment to the school in both time and resources and have contributed their expertise in key areas such as strategic planning, education, finance, law, fundraising/development, human resources, technology, and operations. Brief bios for each board member will be provided upon acceptance of the Tier 1 application.

As described above, Illinois Prep has a robust board with extensive experience across a wide range of professions. They possess a skill set that will serve Illinois Prep well during its first year of operation and we are confident that they have the skills, resources, and networks to continue strong oversight and governance of our growing organization. We do, however, recognize that our board does not have the ethnic diversity that we desire. As such we are actively recruiting one or two minority board members. The board includes a professional educator but does not include a parent or community member.

The Board of Directors provided high-level guidance to the design team in the creation of this proposal. As we are an existing school, our board has already transitioned from the founding board to the working board.

In line with the Zia Learning model of personalized learning across all levels, the Board will also keep an eye toward education and growth for itself. During the introductory phase, potential new Board members will receive information regarding Illinois Prep and its model, mission, goals and structure, along with details regarding Board member expectations and commitments. New Board members will receive information and materials regarding the financial state of the organization (budget, recent financial statements, development goals, etc.), academic measures and current performance data and governance materials (Bylaws and Minutes). New Board members will be expected to complete Open Meetings Act training and any other training required by law or by the organization. From time to time, the Board may request school management or an outside party to provide training to the Board on various topics that would be beneficial. Some potential areas for training are education and virtual and personalized learning models and

strategies, charter law and trends, development strategies and nuances in financial accounting that might affect the organization, etc.

Throughout the year and at Board meetings, the Board will receive information and updates that reflect on its effectiveness, including academic, financial, and operational and development reports on the organization and individual schools. Additionally the Board intends to formally reflect on its effectiveness, both collectively and individually, on an annual basis. The Board will measure its performance on many levels, including the academic, operational and financial performance of the organization and schools, as well as the extent to which Board members: (1) possess and can articulate knowledge of the schools and their mission, (2) attend Board and committee meetings and actively participate in discussion and decision-making, (3) make financial decisions that support organizational and school viability and long-term success, (4) set policies and procedures that promote effective school operations and student achievement, (5) understand and evaluate the metrics and performance data regarding student achievement, (6) spend their time on strategic and forward-looking matters rather than reacting to emergencies, (7) work well with the Head of School and effectively and appropriately execute their role of oversight (versus management), (8) assist the organization and management in outreach on behalf of and fundraising for the organization, (9) utilize their expertise and make introductions to their networks, where appropriate, on behalf of the organization, and (10) contribute financially to the organization.

#### **4.4.3: Board Legal, Compliance, and Ethics Policies**

- **Specify where and how frequently the board plans to meet. Describe the procedures that will be in place to ensure compliance with the Open Meetings Act and the Freedom of Information Act.**
- **Provide a draft Ethics Policy for the proposed school's board members, directors, officers, and employees.**
- **Please identify any existing actual or perceived conflicts of interest among the proposed founding board members and explain how the design team/founding board plans to address them.**

#### *Appendix 4.4*

*In Appendix 4.4, applicants must provide:*

- *Each board member's Board Member Application Form and Board Member Conflict of Interest Form (both can be found at [cps.edu/2018RFP](http://cps.edu/2018RFP));*
- *A board calendar;*
- *An Ethics Policy;*
- *A formal Conflict of Interest policy;*
- *A copy of the board bylaws;*
- *Board member resumes (board member addresses and phone numbers need not be included);*
- *Proof of (or proof of filing for) 501(c)(3) status and federal tax-exempt status (Note: applicants must have applied for 501(c)(3) status by the Application deadline); and*
- *A Charter School Application Assurance Statement for each board member.*

The Board will meet six times per year at the administrative offices of Illinois Prep.

All board members will be required to participate in the board's Orientation Plan. Key points of the plan include a primer on Robert's Rules of Order parliamentary procedures, the school's charter contract, recent board minutes, pertinent Illinois statutory matters regarding the board's authority to oversee a chartered public school and its funds, roles and responsibilities, including the school's principal, board policies, budget, open meetings law, charter law, and public records law.

#### **SAMPLE BOARD ETHICS POLICY**

The Board of Trustees recognizes its role as overseers of public education commit to the following code of ethics.

Board members will:

- Recognize that the Board's function is the provision of education and strive to maintain a balance between fiscal responsibility and a accountability for results,
- Uphold applicable federal and state laws and local ordinances,
- Uphold and promote policies of the Board,
- Preserve and protect the civil and human rights of all members of the school community,
- Respect the confidentiality of information that is privileged, including all non-public session discussions,
- Avoid being placed in a position of conflict of interest,
- Respect and encourage the expression of opinion by all Board members; hear fairly individual opinions and work in a spirit of harmony despite differences.
- Remember that each members is one of a team; strive for teamwork and respect five aspects of this role:
  1. That Board decisions can only be transacted at official Board meetings,
  2. That no member of the Board has individual authority and, therefore, cannot make unauthorized commitments on behalf of the Illinois Prep Board of Directors,
  3. That each Board member should freely ask questions and give opinions and know that this involvement is valued and important,
  4. That once the majority of the Board makes a decision in good faith, it is the decision of the Board, and
  5. That Board members should support cohesiveness in the school's culture and not speak against any final decision that was reached in good faith.



## Domain 5: Business Plan

**Domain 5: Business Plan** assesses whether the organization has a strategic growth plan and the academic, financial, and operational capacity to successfully open, operate, and oversee the proposed new school(s).

*Note: Existing national operators or applicants proposing to partner with an existing MO must respond to the questions in this Domain. New operators (who do not currently operate any schools) that are not proposing to partner with an existing MO are not required to complete this Domain.*

### Section 5.1: Growth Plan

#### 5.1.1: Background Information

Indicate whether the proposed new school(s) will adopt the same policies and practices as existing schools in the network concerning the topics below. If the proposed new school model will differ from existing schools, highlight the key distinctions from the areas listed below. If specific policies or practices still need to be developed for the new school(s), include a timeline with clear tasks, owners, and deliverables for that topic. (Responses should be no more than 1-3 paragraphs per topic. If the new school will follow the same practice or policy, simply state that there will be no change.)

- Calendar and schedule
- School culture
- Discipline policy
- Promotion and graduation policy
- Programs to address the needs of:
  - At-risk students;
  - Students who require remediation (including multi-tiered systems of support);
  - Diverse learners;
  - English learners;
  - Advanced students;
  - Professional development;
  - Instructional leadership roles;
  - Teacher and school leader evaluation policies;
  - Hiring processes (including qualifications and responsibilities for instructional and administrative staff);
  - Personnel policies;
  - Food services; and
  - Financial controls.

A3 and Zia Learning understand that student engagement is crucial to student success in online education. A3 Education (and its partner Zia Learning) have invested heavily in strategies that are designed to maximize student support in order to maximize student engagement, and ultimately student success. Students who are not engaged are rarely successful. Here are some examples of the strategies A3 uses to generate high levels of student engagement:

#### Instructional services

- All courses are taught by teachers who are certified and highly qualified in their content areas.
- Live sessions are delivered via webinar for large group, small group, and 1 on 1 instruction.
- A3 schools are committed to maintaining low student to teacher ratios in order to maximize the amount of time teachers have available to them to provide outreach and support to the students in their classes.

#### Support Services

- Upon enrollment in an A3 school students are assigned an Orientation Specialist whose primary responsibility is to ensure that students are supported from enrollment through the first few weeks of enrollment. Many students who struggle in the online setting struggle because they first fall behind when they are brand new students trying to acclimate to their new school and its systems.
- All students are assigned a student mentor whose role it is to come alongside students and provide them with ongoing support throughout the school year. The mentor is a student's initial contact for all things that are not specifically related to a particular course. The mentor's primary responsibility is to develop rapport with students and families and make sure they stay engaged and do not fall through the cracks.

Guidance counselors are responsible for the Individual Career and Academic Plan of all students. They provide programming to students about college and career readiness, including - financial aid, college fairs, career fairs, college applications, scholarship applications, community resources, and etc.

#### 5.1.2: Proposed Growth

- **Describe the organization's proposed scope of growth in any locations outside of Chicago. List any other proposals that are pending with or have recently been approved by other authorizers. Cite the number of school(s) requested in each proposal.**
- **What is the rationale for the proposed growth strategy in Chicago and elsewhere (if applicable)? In addition to having the opportunity to reach and educate more students, what does the organization hope to gain by adding new school(s)? Describe the organization's strategic vision and desired impact of its growth plan.**

- **How did the organization determine the proposed pace and scope of growth? What academic, financial, and organizational metrics does the board consider when assessing the organization’s capacity to grow? Explain any “green lighting” procedures and discuss how the network currently performs against key benchmarks for expansion.**

A3 Education opened its first school in California the fall of 2015 and it has seen some exceptional growth in the short time since, both in the number of schools it now manages and in the number of students currently enrolled across all schools. During the 2015-2016 school year A3 managed 3 schools in 2 states with a total enrollment of less than 2,000 students. During the 2016-2017 school year A3 managed 10 charter schools in 2 states with a total enrollment of 6,816 students. A3 Education currently manages 19 schools in 6 states with a total enrollment of 23,602 students.

### **5.1.3: Implementation of Growth Plans**

- **As the network continues to grow, how will the organization ensure that it continues to provide the same quality of services? How will the model or operations change as the proposed number of students and school(s) are added (if applicable)?**
- **Discuss the risks associated with implementing the proposed growth plan (e.g. identifying facilities, fundraising, identifying high-quality school leaders and teachers, meeting enrollment targets, sustaining high levels of academic performance). What contingency plans have been developed to help mitigate these risks?**

A3 reviews the operational outcomes of all of their schools on an ongoing basis. While certain information such as the budget variance will be tracked monthly, most of the operational goals will be measured annually. As soon as information on each goal is available, it is reported to the school leadership, the MO leadership and the Board of Directors.

Collectively the leadership and board utilize the reports to determine whether or not the school is operationally on track. In any area where the schools fail to meet its operational goals, the leadership prepares a corrective action plan to present to the Board of Directors for their review and approval.

The Board then monitors the school’s progress on the corrective action plan on a monthly basis or until such time that the operational goal in question is met.

A3 already has many of the systems in place that one would normally expect to see in the start-up plan for a new school. For example, they have already developed tools such as the student handbook and have secured employee benefits. This allows for not only quick start-up, but also the ability to scale effectively.

#### **5.1.4: Continuous Improvement**

**What are the areas in which the network is currently focusing its improvement efforts? What specific challenges is the network experiencing in these areas (special needs students, internal/interim assessment, calendar and schedules, school culture, discipline, parent and community engagement, staff observation and support, etc.)?**

- **Explain how these priority areas were determined.**
- **Briefly share the activities and initiatives that the school/network is undertaking to improve these components of the school model.**
- **Describe who is leading the effort and why.**
- **Describe the desired outcomes and progress to date.**
- **How might the addition of new school(s) impact these existing challenges?**

After many years in the k-12 digital space, Zia learning has come to recognize that distance learning, blended learning, digital learning and face-to-face learning all have their place when meeting individual student need. Our school model has focused on improving the overall student experience by creating a school where students receive the level of support for their individual needs. We identified a problem of practice with traditional virtual school models and our improvement efforts were focused on how to make the experience better for students and teachers.

There have been many noted challenges with the full time virtual schools models. Many full time virtual schools struggle to support traditional students and have even more difficulty supporting special needs populations. ELL students have never found a strong home online due to the language barrier and translation software that is not robust.

Our school is different because we are combining the best of brick and mortar schools with the efficiencies and best practice inherent in both distance learning and virtual learning. Students have 24/7 access to their digital content and to get questions answered. Online environs frequently allow for formerly shy students or students who were uncomfortable sharing in class to respond. Data analytics embedded within the content allow teachers to view student progress and work quality in real-time. This up-to-the-minute data allows teachers to know if a student needs additional supports BEFORE they fail. But what if the efficiencies and rigorous, aligned content are still not enough? We have a landing site for students to come in any day Monday-Friday between 8-6 to receive face-to-face supports with THEIR teacher. Sometimes having the teacher right there to guide a student is just what was needed. Additional supports include daily check-ins with every student and opportunities for meet-ups (both social and academic), virtual field trips and video conferences with acclaimed professionals in their topic (Example NASA astronauts).

The desired outcomes for our school include a virtual school that graduates students who are college and career ready. Additionally, we want a school culture that maintains the student as the driver for all educational decisions. We will personalize every aspect of their learning to ensure their success. Additionally, we want to create a school with high teacher

retention and to do so we must create a culture that is joyful, driven, curious and actively engaged in their work.

As a constant in our school's culture we use a continuous improvement model. "Continuous school improvement requires careful, honest, self-assessment along with disciplined, thoughtful, planning and attention to an array of legal and programmatic requirements." (AdvancEd, 2010) A culture of continuous improvement requires teachers to regularly monitor data. Data collection will lead to reflecting and sharing results across grades and content areas to better understand what works and what needs improvement. (Jenkins, Williams, Moyer, George, & Foster, 2017) Continuous improvement is valuable for schools, districts, and other education stakeholders. Illinois Prep will use school-wide data to drive decisions and create opportunities for accepting and implementing feedback. When teachers value continuous improvement, they support students' growth mindset; students find solutions to mistakes using temporary failure as an opportunity to make improvements (Jenkins, Williams, Moyer, George, & Foster, 2017).

Our process will include a 5-step plan to monitor the school and its students.

Step 1: Identify Needs: Consult many sources to determine needs for improvement.

- Plan and prepare for the process
- Collect and analyze data
- Identify needs and conduct a root cause analysis

Step 2: Select Interventions: Research many sources to determine the solutions that have a good chance of meeting the identified needs.

- Consider all the evidence for needed improvements
- Research possible interventions
- Determine if staff has the capacity to implement possible interventions

Step 3: Plan Implementation: Develop a team to implement the solutions that are most promising that will not overtax staff.

- Identify roles and responsibilities of those implementing the intervention
- Develop a team that will deeply understand best practice in implementing the interventions
- Develop the implementation timeline
- Identify resources and supports needed
- Develop a set of information to track progress

Step 4: Implement Plan: Carry out the plan making real-time adjustments where/when needed.

- Collect information to monitor the quality of supports being provided
- Consider what additional information is needed to determine if intervention is working
- Assess the degree to which the implementation plan is being followed
- Identify barriers and ways to break down any barriers
- Build capacity of others to facilitate the improvement process

Step 5: Examine Progress: Determine whether the implementation is meeting identified needs.

- Monitor implementation and progress against defined goals
- Define reasonable expectations for success
  - Determine what will be done if program is successful
  - Determine what will be done if program is not successful
- Identify and track progress and performance
- Develop a plan for how knowledge about the intervention will be shared
- Use the evidence to determine whether the intervention should continue as is, be modified, or be discontinued
  - Determine what will be done if program is successful
- Determine what will be done if program is not successful

## Section 5.2: Academic Capacity

### 5.2.1: Implementation of Educational Model

**Describe the process for ensuring that each new school implements the non-negotiable, fundamental features of the educational model as described in the overview from Section 5.1.1. Discuss any aspects of the implementation process for which the new school(s) will be autonomous.**

The school's model is based on the nationally adopted Framework for Facilitated Personalized Learning. This model emphasizes the whole child and provides:

- An onsite facilitator model that leverages online courses to allow for onsite teachers to work more directly with learners and support their social emotional needs
- A competency based model that allows overage under-credited youth to get back on track
- The use of adaptive digital curriculum that identifies learning gaps and allows teachers to focus on remediation of those gaps
- An authentically engaging program that goes beyond “clicking through digital content” and leverages the flexible nature of personalized models to allow for project based and career focused hands-on learning
- Partnerships with community and corporate partners that give students training, certifications and job opportunities

To accomplish this goal we have partnered with local organizations that provide local support within our national model.

A3 Education is a national blended and online school management organization that provides:

- Program management and oversight that emphasizes student success and support and highest quality learning options
- National corporate partnerships that serve to provide students training and employment opportunities

- Access to the highest quality, interactive digital curriculum and a learning and data management system that provides real-time reporting on student progress coupled with formative and adaptive assessment engines that generate personalized learning paths based on individual student learning needs.
- Program oversight, support and financial backing

Daley College is our local post-secondary and dual credit partner who also agreed to serve as the host site of our school at their Pulaski Ave Daley campus. Through this partnership students will have access to:

- The new STEM and robotics lab for intensive hands-on project based learning
- Counseling and support programs
- Access to tutoring programs
- Access to child care programs
- Access to wellness programs

In addition, A3 reviews the educational outcomes of all of their schools on an ongoing basis in partnership with the school's board of directors. While certain information such as the budget variance will be tracked monthly, most of the operational and curriculum goals will be measured annually. As soon as information on each goal is available, it is reported to the school leadership, the MO leadership and the Board of Directors.

Collectively the leadership and board utilize the reports to determine whether or not the school is operationally on track. In any area where the schools fail to meet its operational goals, the leadership will prepare a corrective action plan to present to the Board of Directors for their review and approval. The Board then monitors the school's progress on the corrective action plan on a monthly basis or until such time that the operational goal in question is met.

#### **5.2.2: Deviations from Existing Educational Model**

- **If the educational model proposed in the new school(s) differs from the existing schools by educational philosophy, instructional strategies, curriculum, or student learning supports, highlight the key distinctions and the rationale for the changes. If aspects of the educational model have not been finalized, provide a timeline for finalizing the educational plan prior to school opening, citing specific tasks, deadlines, and responsible parties.**

There are no deviations from the existing educational model and will operate as a full time virtual school with blended support services.

#### **5.2.3: Oversight of Academic Performance**

**Describe the organization's approach to academic performance oversight at the network and school levels. What performance management systems and**

**benchmarks does the organization use currently, and will the organization use here, to formally assess academic progress?**

- **Interventions: How do network leadership, the board, school leaders, and the MO (if applicable) monitor and diagnose underperformance of individual school(s)? How do they identify underperformance and determine and implement appropriate intervention(s)?**
- **(If the MO or national operator has an existing school that is not meeting academic standards): Low Academic Performance: Why is the organization applying to add school(s) at the same time that existing school(s) are on academic probation? How does the organization plan to significantly improve the academic performance of these existing school(s) while simultaneously opening new school(s)?**

The Board, working with the Head of School, Principal, administration and school staff will set academic goals for each year. The school administration and school staff will design curriculum, implement programs, allocate resources and collect data. The Education Committee, a Board committee, will support the administration and school staff in their work. At each Board meeting real-time data on student performance will be presented to the Board, and adjustments to academic programs and/or resource allocation will be considered on a frequent basis in line with the school value of continuous improvement. Academic performance will be measured via:

The Board will follow the CPS School Quality Ratings Policy and closely and regularly monitor and examine:

- student test score performance
- student academic growth
- closing of achievement gaps
- school culture and climate
- attendance, graduation, and preparation for post-graduation success.

Should needs or deficits be identified, immediate intervention steps will occur where the Head of School and administration will work to address issues via a school improvement plan that may include

- Close examination and identification of specific needs
- A reliance on MTSS across the school
- Requisite staff training and PD on any identified areas of need
- Real-time supports for students, staff and administration to address identified needs

## Section 5.3: Operational Capacity

### 5.3.1: Network Supports

- **Designate school-level, network-level, and MO-level (if applicable) decision-making authority for key functions by completing the table available on the**



**RFP website ([www.cps.edu/2018RFP](http://www.cps.edu/2018RFP)). Note: If proposing to partner with a MO, the information provided in this table should align with the description of roles and responsibilities in the draft MO contract.**

- **What role does the network play in supporting expansion and the incubation of new school(s)?**
- **Explain the role of any national, state-wide, or regional offices in supporting the proposed school(s) once in operation (if applicable). Describe any services, goods, or resources that these offices will provide to support the academic, financial, or organizational operation of the school(s).**

Illinois Prep is partnering with A3 Education, a charter school management organization that provides both management and supports through a network of charter schools across the US. They play a critical role in the incubation of new schools and the expansion of models that work. Those supports include:

- HR Services
- Back Office Support
- Purchasing
- Technology Services
- Financial Oversight and Accounting
- Auditing
- Compliance and Regulation
- Facility Management
- Capital Expenditure Support

In addition, Illinois Prep will work with the CPS Office of Innovation and Incubation and Network Offices to ensure ongoing communication and engagement with the community, coordination of services and trainings, sharing of findings and successes to support other CPS schools, transparency of reporting for oversight by CPS of academic, operational and fiscal accountability, compliance and evaluation, data and reporting, structuring of supports and identification and sharing of best practices to support charters and schools across CPS.

### **5.3.2: Human Capital**

- **Growth: How many new employees (teachers, network staff, and other key school support staff) will the organization hire each year of growth if approved to open the proposed school(s)? Discuss the organization's current capacity to meet these demands. Consider previous hiring patterns, current retention rates, and human resources capacity at the network level.**
- **Recruitment and Hiring: Discuss the organization's capacity and strategy to ensure that these positions and the positions at existing schools will be filled by quality candidates. If partnering with an MO, please specify the role of the MO in the selection process.**

Illinois Prep will hire a core cadre of teachers to service the K-5, 6-8 and 9-12 sections with highly qualified and certified subject specific staff members from 6-12 (ELA, Math, Science, Social Science, CTE, World Language) and other requisite staff along with certified staff for K-5 instruction. Through our strong relationships with Illinois Virtual School we have identified highly trained teachers who are highly skilled in both online teaching practices and authentic personalized and applied learning theories. Zia Learning and its key employees have over a 15 years of deep experience in online education with local, state and national relationships with major organizations that train online educators. The Head of School, principal and school administration will undertake an extensive recruitment and interview process to ensure that the selected staff is innovative and energized to enact this new vision for virtual education.

All selected staff will be required to have both traditional and online teaching experience. A core group of master teachers will be selected to serve as department chairs who will have at least five years of teaching experience with demonstrated exemplary performance.

In addition to their classroom duties, master teachers will also be responsible for coaching other teaching staff and conducting and facilitating staff professional development as well as overseeing the implementation and continued development of the Illinois Prep model. To identify and recruit master teachers Illinois Prep will work with:

iNACOL

The International Society of Technology Educators (ISTE)

Illinois Virtual School

The Broad Foundation

Apple Distinguished Educators

The Chan Zuckerberg Foundation

The University of Illinois at Chicago

Teach for America (Alumni Educators)

All staff, including administration and support staff will be required to have or receive in-depth training in the unique combination of personalized learning, online learning and distance learning which combined result in the unique Illinois Prep virtual school 2.0 model.

While the management organization will provide HR and onboarding services for staff, they will not oversee or have direct involvement in recruitment or hiring. The Head of School will coordinate with the principal, administration and staff to conduct hiring of staff. Our rationale for this decision is that while a national management organization provides critical support services, local understanding and oversight of the implementation of a model specific to CPS needs, including hiring, training and oversight of staff is a function suited to a Chicago-based organization that has deep understanding of CPS, it's students and it's teachers.

## Section 5.4: Past Organizational and Financial Performance

- **Specify whether any of the organization's schools are currently on financial probation or have been on financial probation over the past three years. Describe the circumstances leading to being placed on financial probation.**
- **List any current or past litigation, including arbitration proceedings, that has involved the organization. Discuss the outcomes and/or any demands identified as part of the arbitration or litigation.**
- **Cite any instances in which the organization's schools have had their contract terminated, voluntarily closed, or have not been renewed by their authorizer. In addition, describe all instances in which the MO has exited a contract or partnership with a school, including instances where a school has terminated its agreement with the MO. Please explain the circumstance surrounding these incidents.**
- **Discuss any non-openings that the organization has experienced (i.e., a school received approval but did not successfully open). Describe the circumstances surrounding these incidents.**

A3 education has no pending litigations or financial irregularities based on 100% clear audit from all schools.

## Domain 6: Management Organizations (MOs)

*Applicants proposing to enter into a contract with an MO must respond to the questions in this section.*

**Domain 6: Management Organizations (MOs) assesses whether the proposal provide a plan and evidence for how the MO will contribute to the overall success of the school with appropriate oversight structures in place.**

### Section 6.1: MO Contract

- **Explain why the applicant decided to hire an MO.**
- **Explain the criteria and process for selecting the MO. What due diligence (academic, financial, operational, and legal) has the applicant conducted on the MO prior to submitting this application?**
- **How will the services that the MO is proposing to provide further the mission, vision, and goals of the school and/or network? Describe the scope of services that the MO will provide.**
- **Clearly specify the decisions and services for which the MO will be responsible.**
- **Specify whether the MO has a role in selecting the school leader; who employs the school leader; and whether the school leader reports to the MO.**

- **Explain the compensation structure and fees that the proposed school will pay to the MO.**

*Note: Illinois law restricts charter schools from employing any staff person who is simultaneously employed by an MO (105 ILCS 5/27A-10.5(c)).*

*Appendix 6.1*

*In Appendix 6.1, the applicants must provide a draft MO contract that includes all of the terms listed in the evaluation form and outlines terms for termination of the contract with the MO.*

Illinois Prep decided to contract with A3 Education to provide certain management services related to fiscal oversight, compliance, HR services and legal/auditing. A3 has a suite of services and expertise that are vital to the start-up phase and eventual success of Illinois Prep.

A3 Education opened its first school in California the fall of 2015 and it has seen some exceptional growth in the short time since, both in the number of schools it now manages and in the number of students currently enrolled across all schools. During the 2015-2016 school year A3 managed 3 schools in 2 states with a total enrollment of less than 2,000 students. During the 2016-2017 school year A3 managed 10 charter schools in 2 states with a total enrollment of 6,816 students. A3 Education currently manages 19 schools in 6 states with a total enrollment of 23,602 students.

All services provide by A3 are detailed in the sample management agreement in Appendix 6.1.

## Section 6.2: MO Oversight

**Describe how the proposed board will monitor and evaluate the performance of the MO to ensure quality service. Include the following in your answer:**

- **What academic, operational, and/or financial performance metrics will the board use to evaluate MO performance?**
- **How frequently will the board monitor MO performance?**
- **What benchmarks will define successful MO performance?**
- **What are the consequences if these benchmarks are not met?**
- **What are the conditions for renewal and termination of the contract?**
- **Discuss the proposed board's qualifications to hold the MO accountable to the educational, operational, and financial goals outlined in your application.**

Illinois Prep's Board of Directors will implement strong financial management and compliance policies, procedures and practices to ensure fiscal soundness and legal compliance. The Board of Directors provides financial oversight of the organization and engages directly with the MO in the following activities:

- Approve annual budgets

- Approve salary schedules
- Review five-year budget projections
- Review monthly financial statements
- Hire the auditor
- Review and approve the annual audit
- Review and approve all fiscal management policies and procedures
- Ensure that strong financial internal controls are in place to reduce the possibility of errors, fraud and mismanagement.

A subset of the members of the Board of Directors will serve on the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee will be composed of individuals who have experience in finance, accounting, auditing, and business management. The Finance Committee will meet on a monthly basis to review the organization's financial position and outlook with the MO, school leadership and legal team. The MO will prepare a monthly reporting package for review by the Finance Committee and the Head of School/Principal which will include:

- Balance sheet
- Income statement
- Cash flow statement
- Budget variance report
- Year-end projections

The Board of Directors will monitor fiscal fidelity monthly as described above, and in addition, will set the following student recruitment benchmarks:

- Must meet 95% enrollment targets as projected in student enrollment figures
- Must have no greater than 5% attrition per year

The Board of Directors will hold the Management Organization accountable through a series of checks and balances documented in a monthly fiscal, enrollment and operational report provided by the Head of School, MO and Principal. The management agreement provides opportunities for the MO to correct any concerns expressed in these reports, however, the Board may terminate the management agreement within 60 days due to non-compliance and lack of performance.

The Governing Board terminates for the following reasons:

- If A3 fails to meet the requirements of the Charter Application. The Governing Board has advised A3 of the deficiency and has allowed a reasonable period in which to remedy such failure (120 school days).
- If A3 fails to meet accepted standards of fiscal management;
- If A3 violates any provision of law on the operation of the Charter School from which the Charter School was not specifically exempted.

### Section 6.3: MO's Past Organizational and Financial Performance

- **Specify whether any of the organization's schools are currently on fiscal probation or have been on fiscal probation over the past three years. Describe the circumstances leading to being placed on fiscal probation.**
- **List any current or past litigation, including arbitration proceedings, that has involved the organization. Discuss the outcomes and/or any demands identified as part of the arbitration or litigation.**
- **Cite any instances in which the organization's schools have had their contract terminated, voluntarily closed, or have not been renewed by their authorizer. Also cite any instances in which the MO has voluntarily exited a contract or partnership with a school (if applicable). Please explain the circumstance surrounding these incidents.**
- **Discuss any non-openings that the organization has experienced (i.e. a school received approval but did not successfully open). Describe the circumstances surrounding these incidents.**

A3 does not have any schools that are on fiscal probation or are involved in any litigation.