



Executive Summary

Proposed Schools

Intrinsic Schools is applying to open its second campus, Intrinsic 2.

Mission and Vision

The core purpose of Intrinsic Schools is to create a revolutionary school model that prepares all students for postsecondary success and world-changing endeavors, and provides the education community with a roadmap to sustainable implementation.

The vital outcome of our work is a blended-personalized model that can be replicated at any school anywhere. We will have failed if we are dependent on a unique blend of specialized teacher qualification and ongoing outside financial support. We will have succeeded if we are able to create additional Intrinsic campuses that offer rich learning environments to all students regardless of circumstance, parental education level, English proficiency, and prior learning difficulties. We will also be successful if we are able to actively share our model, key lessons learned, best practices, etc., with the education community on a rolling basis as we grow. We are committed to collaborating with both district and charter schools and we have strong relationships at the principal-level in both. We will share all tools, curriculum and processes developed as part of our model with others at no cost.

To achieve our mission we will combine proven instructional practices, next-generation technologies, a unique classroom design, and innovative management systems to create optimal learning experiences and organizational efficiency. In order to validate that the model can be replicated we need to establish multiple proof points. Most immediately, our second Intrinsic charter school in Chicago will allow us to further test and develop our model, and begin to demonstrate that our results can be achieved across multiple school environments.

Educational Philosophy, Model and Culture

In order to prepare students from high-need communities for postsecondary success and guide them toward the passions that intrinsically motivate them to positively impact the world, we have to challenge traditional notions of high school education. Data show that our students span large ranges—in aptitude, levels of background knowledge, and personal experience—and this is where today's factory-model education system breaks down. Just because two children are the same age does not mean they learn at the same pace or should follow the same pathway. Each child has different learning needs at different times, and each student can and must be personally invested in their learning. At Intrinsic this personalization and independence is achieved via a holistic blending of technology to empower team-teaching in flexible, data-driven classrooms. Our educational philosophy is driven by five main beliefs about how students learn:

1. Education is a continuous process that addresses and meets students' intellectual, emotional, physical, and social needs.
2. Learning is a social process where students benefit from a mix of instruction where some is tailored to a student's instructional level, and some is learned collaboratively with peers at a common, rigorous level.
3. Learning Experiences at school should be framed around larger essential questions that are relevant to students' lives and interests.
4. If students are taught to set and monitor goals, they will gain awareness and control over their own learning and become more motivated to achieve.
5. Technology can improve the educational experience for students if paired with great teaching.



At the foundation of every great school is a strong, coherent culture based on mutual respect between students and adults. At Intrinsic, we envision a culture that inspires all students to strive for high levels of academic success and to pursue their interests in depth. We believe that a balanced focus on achievement and the pursuit of passions will promote a positive academic environment. We embrace a warm and strict culture that allows students to learn and teachers to teach. Accordingly, we view it as our responsibility to implement a culture of discipline, respect, and hard work every minute of every day, to ensure student safety and maximize time on task.

Core Values: Our core values were constructed with students at our first campus and will remain consistent across all schools. Students at Intrinsic Schools are guided by the desire to be EPIC, an acronym for Empathy, Perseverance, Independence and Curiosity.

Demonstrated Capacity to Open and Manage High Quality Schools

Over the last five years, we have come to believe that we need to have key systems, structures and practices in place prior to replication. While the Intrinsic model will continue to evolve and iterate, we have institutionalized core components of our model and have demonstrated success. In our first year of operations, we received a the second highest SQRP rating of 1. In all subsequent years, we received the highest possible SQRP rating of 1+. We firmly believe that we are prepared to open an additional school. We have refined our educational model, our co-teaching strategy, our data analysis processes, our hiring practices, our financial policies, our use of technology, and our approach to piloting innovation within the school.

We recognize that it is essential to have the right network office team in place to facilitate expansion and ensure the successful incubation, launch and ongoing operations of a new school. To this end, we have developed a seasoned and highly skilled network office team to lead these efforts. The caliber of the current network office team is unusual for a young network.

Our team has decades of educational leadership experience both at the district and school levels. Melissa Zaikos, Founder, CEO and current Principal of School 1, has direct experience leading first Intrinsic School as the principal and leading the Intrinsic organization as the CEO. Under Zaikos's leadership, Intrinsic has been highly successful. Prior to launching Intrinsic, Zaikos was the CPS Network Chief for the Pershing Network, a network of schools in the Southwest communities of Chicago. From 2005-2011, Zaikos was the Chief Area Officer for the AMP Schools, overseeing more than 100 schools within CPS. Zaikos has a strong track record of developing district leaders, with six of her direct reports having been promoted to Chief of Schools.

Our 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.

Targeted Community:

Our targeted community for the proposed school is the Chicago Loop bounded by Congress, Upper Wacker Drive, Racine, and the lake. We have selected the Loop in order to serve the entire city of Chicago. With the transportation options in the Loop, students across the city will have the opportunity to attend Intrinsic 2. We are also excited about this location as we believe that it will attract a diverse student body that mirrors the CPS demographics as a whole. The Loop also affords students tremendous opportunities for exposure to the arts and the business community.