

Quality Counts

Project Narrative (CFDA Number 84.282 A)

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Indiana is home to some of the most innovative and high quality charter schools in the country. Our charter school sector has aggressively embraced accountability and evidence based policy making, while keeping a laser like focus on home grown educational solutions for Indiana students navigating poverty. We believe we are well positioned within the absolute priorities of the 2017 CSP grant, meeting expectations of the Competitive Priorities, addressing Selection Criteria in ways that will lead to the expansion of high-quality charter schools, and evaluating the impact Indiana charter schools have for students and families, educators and communities.

Legislation establishing charter schools in Indiana was first passed in 2001 (Public Law 100-2001). In 2002, the first effective year of the law, twelve (12) schools were chartered, enrolling a total of 1,271 students, representing approximately .01% of the state's total public school population. By the 2016-2017 school year, these numbers had grown to ninety-three (93) charter schools, enrolling approximately 42,690 students, which represents 4.1% of Indiana's total public school population.

Indiana successfully applied for Charter School Program (CSP) grant funding in 2010. Since then, the state has allocated over \$31 million in start-up and implementation funding to provide financial assistance for the planning, program design, and initial implementation of dozens of new charter schools, many of which otherwise would not have been able to open their doors, or to keep their doors open in the initial critical years of operation.

Indiana benefits from being a state that has already moved forward with school choice policy and legislation and stands ready to fully implement all elements of this proposal. Our small number of diverse charter school authorizers provides the opportunity to support authorizers statewide with implementation of in-state best practices, while encouraging them to implement national standards of best practice. While CSP funding offers us intensified support

to adequately incubate new entities and improve existing charters (including our newly-emerging rural group of charters), our top performers (with significant waiting lists) also seek opportunities to expand. And, most critical to our proposal objectives, exceptional educational nonprofit organizations are poised and ready to partner with the Indiana Department of Education to support charter schools with resources and technical assistance, aligned to national standards for best practices, as they navigate incubation, replication, expansion, or improvement.

This proposal centers on enhancing stakeholders' capacity to expand opportunities for students to attend high quality charter schools and meet state academic standards. The explicit objectives of Indiana's *Quality Counts* proposal are to: (a) increase the number of high quality charter schools statewide via incubation, replication, expansion, or improvement, (b) leverage support specific to building the capacity necessary for the Indiana charter school sector to grow quality programs, (c) evaluate the impact of charter schools on student outcomes and (d) support the implementation of high quality charter school authorizing practices.

Competitive Preference Priority 1: Periodic Review & Evaluation

Periodic Review

Since 2016, Indiana has been recognized as having the strongest charter school law in the nation, balancing charter school autonomy in exchange for high levels of accountability from authorizers. Indiana Code (IC 20-24-4-1) requires charters granted by a public chartering agency (authorizer) to provide for a review by the authorizer of the school's progress in achieving the academic goals set forth in the charter at least one time in each five-year period the charter is in effect. Authorizers are required to hold charter schools accountable for *achieving the educational mission and goals of the charter school*, including: (1) evidence of improvement in: assessment measures, attendance rates, graduation rates (if applicable), increased numbers of regular and advanced high school diplomas and other college and career ready indicators including advanced

placement participation and passage, dual credit participation and passage, and International Baccalaureate participation and passage (if applicable), student academic growth, financial performance and stability, and governing board performance and stewardship, including compliance with applicable laws, rules and regulations, and charter terms; and (2) evidence of progress toward reaching educational goals set by the authorizer IC § 20-24-4-1(a)(8).

At each renewal point, or if a charter school is in violation of the minimum standards to operate a school, the public chartering agency can revoke, select not to renew the charter, or require alternative interventions. Charter schools that remain in the lowest category of school improvement (e.g., an **F** on the State's accountability system) for four (4) years may not be renewed unless the authorizer petitions the Indiana State Board of Education (SBOE) and SBOE determines that sufficient justification exists to allow the school to continue operating (IC 20-24-2.2-2 & 3).

The importance of constructive and critical reflection, most especially during a charter school's first five years, cannot be overemphasized. Indiana authorizers understand this, and from the earliest stages of development, require their start-up charter schools to develop multi-year implementation plans. Specifically tied to strategic planning efforts, curriculum development and delivery, staff evaluations and student achievement goals, these plans provide an initial framework for the charter and authorizer staff to routinely monitor implementation and evaluation efforts. During this initial phase, and certainly across time, authorizers encourage their charter schools to network with other regional schools to foster partnerships and collaborative efforts for improving practices.

Evaluation

Indiana public charter schools are required to participate in state testing programs, like

traditional public schools. Indiana Code (IC 20-24-9-9) requires each authorizer to submit an *annual* Performance Report to the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) detailing each charter school's: (1) assessment results; (2) student growth and improvement data; (3) attendance rates; (4) graduation rates (if applicable), including attainment of a regular or honors diploma; (5) student enrollment data, including expulsion data; (6) school status, including approved but not yet open, open and operating, closed or having a charter that was not renewed with the reason for the closure or nonrenewal; (7) names of the authorizer's board members or ultimate decision making body; (8) evidence that the authorizer has adopted standards of quality charter school authorizing; (9) total amount of administrative fees collected by the authorizer and how the fees were expended; (10) total amount of other fees or funds; and (11) the most recent audits for each authorized school submitted to the authorizer. Within these reports, historical data are tracked for each indicator, to better gauge long-term progress. Authorizers also report schools that closed or for which the charter was not renewed, including the reasons for the closure or nonrenewal. Under Indiana law, authorizers must notify schools of problems that lead to revocation and provide schools with opportunities to remedy such problems.

Under this statutory framework, Indiana authorizers are monitoring and evaluating their schools annually. While methods may differ, this often includes weekly, quarterly, monthly, and annual reporting of operational, financial and academic data; attendance at charter school board meetings; and regular communication and site visits. The IDOE currently is working with authorizers to streamline the exchange of data by creating a process for authorizers to access data from IDOE directly, which will both minimize the administrative burden on the schools and the authorizers, while ensuring that authorizers have access to the most accurate and up to date data.

Indiana statute further requires charters to meet generally-accepted government accounting principles, or face revocation. On an annual basis, charter schools also must contract with a Private Examiner (IC 5.11.1.7) to conduct a financial, compliance and (if applicable) federal OMB Circular A-133 audit, complying with expectations of the State Board of Accounts.

Authorizers hold the power, through their policies and practices, to significantly impact the quality of charter schools within their portfolio. Their analyses of annual report data, combined with ongoing onsite monitoring and observations, determine whether the charter school is adhering to the terms of the school's charter and meeting or exceeding the academic achievement and goals established under the school's charter and by State law.

Annual reviews include opportunities for individual authorizers to take appropriate action or impose meaningful consequences, ranging from requiring corrective action plans, additional technical assistance or professional development—to imposing probationary status (pending corrective action) or taking steps for revocation of the charter.

Finally, IC 20-24-2.2-8 requires the SBOE to conduct a formal evaluation of the overall state of charter school outcomes in Indiana every five (5) years, beginning in 2017, and post the results on SBOE's website. At the time of this application, the initial five year evaluation has not yet been completed. Indiana's SBOE is currently working on this report and expect it to be released later this year. The SBOE also has a review process for authorizers who have low performing schools in their portfolios (IC 10-24-2, 2-4).

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Charter School Oversight

2.a.i – Legally Binding Charter or Performance Contract

Having strong authorizers in place is only one step to strong charter oversight. Indiana's charter school law expressly defines a *charter* as a contract (IC 20-24-1-3), and specifies numerous requirements of charters (legally-binding contracts) to ensure that all charter schools

have strong oversight. Authorizers and charter schools must use written charter agreements that *confer certain rights, franchises, privileges, and obligations on a charter school*, (IC 20-24-4-1) and must explicitly confirm that each charter school is a public school. If a charter school organizer intends to contract with an education service provider (ESP), the contract must provide an assurance that the terms of the contract have been reached by the organizer and the ESP through arms-length negotiations in which the organizer is represented by separate legal counsel (IC 20-24-3-2.5(4)).

Created as a separate document from a charter's application, contracts (charter agreements) are executed by the governing board of the school and its authorizer. Within contracts, roles, powers, and responsibilities for the school and its authorizer are defined, including: academic, financial, and operational performance expectations by which the school will be judged based on a performance framework. In conjunction with the charter's authorizer, required annual performance targets are designed to help each school meet applicable federal, state and authorizer expectations.

2.a.2 Annual, timely and independent financial audits

Charter schools are required by IC 20-24-8-5(1) to participate in required financial audits by the Indiana State Board of Accounts (SBOA), the state agency holding the authority to audit public entities in Indiana (IC 20-24-8-5(1)). In 2012, SBOA issued an *Accounting and Uniform Compliance Guidelines Manual* specifically for charter schools requiring them to contract with an independent auditor to conduct annual audits that meet all state and federal audit requirements (including OMB Circular A-133 audits, as applicable) and comply with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. Failure to meet generally accepted fiscal management and government accounting principles is grounds for charter revocation, pursuant to IC 20-24-9-4(4). Once

completed, the audits must be submitted to, and approved by, SBOA and the charter school's authorizer. Many authorizers, including the three largest authorizers in the state, i.e., the Indianapolis Charter School Board operated by the Indianapolis Mayor's office (also known as the Indianapolis Office of Education Innovation or OEI); Ball State University's Office of Charter Schools (BSU); and the Indiana Charter School Board (ICSB) require quarterly or biannual financial reporting in addition to the formal State required audits. Collectively these three authorizers represent approximately 87% of the charter schools and 83% of the charter school enrollment in Indiana.

2.a.3 Improved student academic achievement

In addition to requiring financial oversight, Indiana law requires authorizers to annually report a variety of metrics related to student academic achievement (IC 20-24-9-2), including student proficiency and growth, graduation rates and quality of diplomas earned, as well as attendance rates. Each charter must include the methods by which the charter school will be held accountable for achieving its educational mission and goals, including state assessment measures, attendance rates, graduation rates (if applicable), student academic growth, financial performance and stability, governing body stewardship, and compliance with applicable laws, rules and regulations. IC § 20-24-4-1(a)(8). The charter must explicitly describe the method to be used to monitor the charter school's compliance with applicable law and performance in meeting targeted educational performance. In most cases, this is accomplished by directly incorporating, or incorporating by reference, the authorizer's Accountability or Performance Framework into the Charter Agreement. All charter renewal decisions must be based on upon evidence of the school's performance over the term of the charter contract in accordance with the performance framework set forth in the charter IC § 20-24-4-3(a)(1).

Improved academic achievement is the cornerstone of all renewal and closure decisions. For example, ICSB's Accountability System (page 5) explicitly states that *[t]he single most important factor that the [ICSB] considers in assessing school performance and making charter renewal determinations is the school's record in generating successful student achievement outcomes*. ICSB uses twelve (12) academic indicators (sixteen (16) for high schools) designed to measure whether the school is demonstrating student academic achievement. BSU uses twelve (12) academic *quality indicators* and twenty-five (25) *informative indicators*, with the quality indicators used as the primary factors in monitoring and renewal decisions, and the informative indicators used to guide school improvement plans. OEI uses seven (7) academic indicators (six (6) for high schools) designed to measure schools on how well their students perform and grow on standardized testing measures, attendance, and school-specific measures that capture how well the school is meeting its individual mission. The default closure law, coupled with SBOE oversight over authorizers, discussed in more detail in Competitive Preference Priority 8, provides further evidence of Indiana's emphasis on improving student achievement, both by ensuring authorizers are using best practices and by holding authorizers accountable for the failure to close poorly performing schools.

Beginning in 2016, the law was further amended to require the State Board of Education to provide a formal evaluation of the overall state of charter school outcomes in Indiana, at least once every five years. Those evaluation results must be posted on the State Board's website. Through these reporting mechanisms, Indiana is able to ensure that each charter school is demonstrating improved student achievement.

2.b. Using increases in student academic achievement for all groups of students

Under IC 20-24-4-3, authorizers are required to make renewal decisions based upon evidence of the school's performance over the term of the charter contract in accordance with the performance framework set forth in the charter contract. All Indiana authorizers utilize performance frameworks that include a review of the school's performance disaggregated by student subgroups.

IC § 20-24-4-1(b) requires charter schools *to set annual performance targets in conjunction with the authorizer . . . that shall be designed to help each school meet applicable federal, state, and authorizer expectations.* Indiana applied for, and was awarded, a Charter School Program Grant in 2010. As a condition of the 2010 Grant, all existing authorizers, including OEI, ICSB and BSU, submitted a letter to IDOE agreeing to comply with the IDOE's *CSP Assurance 3B Policy*, attesting that the authorizer would use increases in student academic achievement for all groups of students described in Section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended, as the most important factor when determining to renew or revoke a school's charter.

IC § 20-24-4-3(a)(1) requires authorizers to make renewal decisions "based upon evidence of the school's performance over the term of the charter contract" which includes these annual performance targets. Many Indiana authorizers have either explicitly or implicitly incorporated this requirement into their revocation or renewal practices. For example, of the eleven (11) academic indicators used by ICSB to measure student achievement, six (6) are designed to measure whether economically disadvantaged students; students from major racial and ethnic groups; students with disabilities; and English language learners are achieving proficiency and growth, and BSU's performance framework include academic performance

indicators for special education students, as well as an achievement gap analysis for racial and socioeconomic groups.

Competitive Preference Priority 3: One Authorized Public Chartering Agency Other than a Local Education Agency

3.a. Allow at least one entity that is not an LEA to be an authorizer

In addition to Local Educational Agencies (school districts), Indiana Code statutorily allows the following entities to apply for chartering authority: a state educational institution that offers a four-year baccalaureate degree; the executive of a consolidated city (e.g., the Indianapolis Mayor’s Office); the state charter board; and a governing board of a nonprofit college or university that provides a four-year baccalaureate or advanced degree (IC 20-24-1-2.5)

When applying for chartering authority, LEAs, colleges, and universities must provide the following information to the State Board of Education: a written notification; a strategic vision for chartering; a description of the entity’s budget and capacity to authorize; a description of the charter application process; a performance framework for charter school accountability; a draft of renewal, revocation, and nonrenewal processes; and a statement of assurances (IC 20-24-2.2-1.2).

Currently, Indiana is home to eight different authorizers. These entities include two school corporations (Evansville-Vanderburgh School Corporation in Evansville, Indiana and Daleville Community Schools in Daleville, Indiana), one public university (BSU), three private universities (Trine University, Grace College, and Calumet College of St. Joseph) and two government bodies, one local and one state (OEI and ICSB). Of the eight, five may authorize statewide. Organizers who have a proposal rejected by an authorizer are explicitly permitted to amend and resubmit their proposal to that authorizer, or to submit a proposal to another

authorizer. There is no limit on the number of times an organizer may submit a charter proposal, as per IC 20-24-3-11.

Competitive Preference Priority 4: Equitable Financing

Funding for Indiana's public schools comes from two sources. The first is *state tuition support* which is provided through appropriations by the General Assembly from the State's General Fund. The second is *local* funding, which includes property taxes, referenda levy, and other miscellaneous sources. State tuition support funds are allocated to each school corporation (district), including charter schools (for state funding purposes, a charter school is considered a *school corporation*), using a foundation funding formula. Indiana funds all public schools (including charter schools) using the same funding formula at the state level. A foundation grant is determined for all students in the state, regardless of location or need. In FY2017, the per pupil foundation grant was \$5,088 per student. The foundation funding amount addresses horizontal equity. The base amount of funding a school corporation receives reflects the *foundation funding amount* multiplied by the *average daily membership* of each school. This amount is referred to as *basic tuition support*.

Total state tuition support is basic tuition support plus the State's *categorical* grants, including the Honors Grant, Special Education Grant, Career & Technical Education Grant, and Complexity Grant. State tuition support represents the total state funding provided to school corporations (including charter schools) for educational purposes.

Local funding, on the other hand, is generally not available to charter schools. The largest source of local funding comes from property tax levies. The amount of property tax available for each school corporation is based on an assessment of the value of all real property, utilities and personal property located within the school corporation's boundaries as determined by the

Indiana Department of Local Government and Finance (“DLGF”). As charter schools must be open to any student who resides in Indiana (IC § 20-24-5-1), charter schools do not have a defined taxing district from which to calculate an assessed value, and therefore do not receive property tax dollars. This can result in a significant difference in total funding. For example, an analysis of the DLGF Certified Levy for 2015 -2017 estimates a statewide average funding disparity between traditional school corporations and charter schools of approximately \$2,230, \$2,252, and \$2,559, respectively, per pupil per year, due to property tax levies for bus replacement, debt service, capital projects, and transportation.

In 2005, the General Assembly directed IDOE to identify, and apply for, all federal funds for which a charter is eligible, including federal funding requiring matching funds for charter school facilities. In 2009, Indiana, applied for, and received a \$14 million Charter School Facilities Incentive Grant. As a result, the General Assembly created the Charter School Facilities Assistance Program (IC § 20-24-12) to make grants and loans available to charter schools for the purpose of constructing, purchasing, renovating and maintaining facilities. The State awarded IFF (a nonprofit community development financial institution with charter school experience located in Illinois) \$3.4 million to leverage into over \$12 million in loans to support charter school facilities. Seven million dollars of the remaining appropriation was used as the state match for the Facilities Incentive Grant. The combined \$32.5 million of State and Federal funding provided loans and grants to over fifty (50) charter schools. Although the original funds for the Facilities Assistance Program have run out, money returning to the fund- such as the repayment proceeds of loans made to charter schools from the fund, gifts and grants made to the fund or other money required by law to be deposited in the fund, and any federal grants received

to capitalize or supplement the fund- do not revert to the State's general fund at the end of any fiscal year and are used to fund additional loans.

In 2015, the General Assembly created two additional programs to provide funding to charter schools. The first is the Charter and Innovation School Advance Program (IC § 20-49-9), which provided up to \$50 million in loans from Indiana's Common School Loan Fund to eligible charter schools to be used for educational purposes (including the refinancing of existing debt). In 2016 and 2017, thirty-eight (38) charter schools received almost \$42 million under the Advance Program. The second program is the Charter and Innovation School Grant Program (IC § 20-24-13), created to address the funding gap caused by charter schools' lack of access to local funding, which provides a \$500 per-pupil grant for eligible charter schools to be used for capital projects, technology, and transportation. In 2016, fifty-three (53) charter schools received a total of \$11.5 million and in 2017, fifty-five (55) charter schools received a total of \$12.5 million. The Grant Program, but not the Advance Program, was continued in the most recent State Budget approved in 2017.

Aside from special education, the state's second largest grant fund is its complexity grant, designed to provide additional money to districts/schools at greater risk (based on poverty, special populations). The state determines a complexity index for each corporation (or LEA) and then calculates funding for each entity. While this grant amount is unique to each school, in FY2017, the statewide per pupil amount for the complexity grant was \$3,539. The Complexity Grant is based on the number of low-income students enrolled in each school. Low-income students are defined as students who receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits, or foster care services (direct certification) as of October 1 in the school year ending in the later of 2017 or the

first year of operation of the school corporation. The Complexity Grant is designed to address vertical equity in Indiana's school funding formula. Additionally, corporations are eligible to receive additional funding based on graduates receiving honors diplomas, career and technical education, and special education. Charter schools and traditional public schools are equally eligible for all state grant funds described above, and receive such funding within the same time frames.

State tuition support is distributed in the same manner and at the same time to both charter and traditional school corporations. For charter schools, tuition support payments are sent directly to the charter school, for which the organizer of the school is the fiscal agent.

One exception to the state funding mechanism described above is for charter schools that enroll a majority of students that belong to a cohort that has already graduated or who are over eighteen. These schools are considered *adult high schools*, and are funded by a separate biennial appropriation (Adult Learner Grant) at a flat per-pupil rate (\$6,750 beginning in FY2018).

However, charter schools in Indiana do not have access to local funding sources which provide approximately one-third of the public funding for traditional public schools. Local funding can be used to pay for a limited number of expenses, including capital costs, transportation, and debt service. To counter this inequity, the state provides a \$500 per pupil grant fund for charter schools to offset facilities, transportation, and other capital costs. Indiana has also addressed inequity in the complexity calculations. In FY 2016 & 2017, the complexity calculation related to ELL explicitly excluded charter schools. This step has been corrected for FY 2018 to specifically include charter schools access to the ELL adjustment (IC 20-43-13-3).

Finally, the General Assembly passed two laws in 2016 to further ensure that traditional and charter public schools are treated equally when it comes to state and federal funding.

Indiana Code 20-24-7-15 provides that *a charter school is considered a school corporation for purposes of any state or federal funding opportunities administered by the department or any other state agency that are otherwise available to a [traditional] school corporation*; and IC 20-19-3-2.1(d) requires IDOE to apply for any federal funds made available for school corporations (including charter schools), and requires that such funds be distributed fairly, equitably, and in a timely manner.

Competitive Preference Priority 5: School Facilities

5.a. Funding for facilities

Indiana provides each charter school that meets the criteria outlined in IC 20-24-13-4 a \$500 per pupil grant to offset facilities, transportation, and other capital costs. To meet this criteria, a charter school must be in its first or second year of operation, be placed in the top three categories of school performance (i.e., receive an **A**, **B**, or **C** under the state accountability system), not have received a category designation the prior year, or serve a majority of students with developmental, intellectual or behavioral challenges.

5.b. Assistance with facilities acquisition

In addition to the provided funding for facilities, independent non-government entities, such as the Illinois Facilities Fund (IFF) and Charter School Development Corporation (CSDC), directly support charter school facilities acquisition in Indiana. A copy of IFF's progress against their Indiana Charter School Facilities Loan Fund from 2012-April 2017 has been included as additional evidence of support with school facilities in the Appendices section of this proposal, along with letters of support from both organizations.

5.c. Access to public facilities

Indiana statute offers charter schools access to unused public school facilities. See below under section 5.e for more information.

5.d. The ability to share in bonds or mill levies

Indiana charter schools are eligible to access the Indiana Bond Bank under IC 5-1.5. Additionally, under IC 20-24-7-6, charter schools may explicitly receive proportionate distributions of a school corporation's capital project fund with the approval of a majority of the members of the school corporation's governing body. Capital project funds are generated by local property taxes.

5.e. The right of first refusal to purchase public school buildings

Under IC 20-26-7-1, a governing body of a school corporation (*district*) must determine which real or personal property is no longer needed for school purposes or should, in the interests of the school corporation, be exchanged for other property. Such property should be first listed on a website maintained by the Indiana Department of Education for prospective charter school organizers to view. The Department is required to post this list on the IDOE's website, updating it each year in August. Charter school organizers have first right to purchase or lease public school buildings under IC-20-26-7-1. Following the protocol outlined in IC 20-26-7-1, when selling or leasing to a charter school, the corporation (*district*) cannot sell the building for more than \$1 or lease the building for more than \$1 per year for as long as the charter school uses the building for classroom instruction. During the term of a lease, the charter school is responsible for the direct expenses relating to the leased or purchased building, including utilities, insurance, maintenance, repairs, and remodeling. The school corporation is responsible for any debt associated with the building before the charter school either leased or purchased the building.

5.f Low- or no-cost leasing privileges

See section 5.d above for a description of no-cost leases of unused public school facilities.

Competitive Preference Priority 6: Best Practices to Improve Struggling Schools and Local Education Agencies

The General Assembly enacted IC 20-25.7 (Innovation Network Schools) in 2015, which notes that *[t]he general assembly recognizes that to further the goals of high quality public education throughout Indiana, each school corporation and public school should have the freedom to create the optimal learning environment. The general assembly finds that this can be accomplished by allowing for greater flexibility, innovation, and efficiency.* The law permits a group of teachers and/or administrators or the governing board of a traditional school corporation to establish an innovation network school or innovation network charter school, or to reconstitute an eligible school as an innovation network school, which gives the school's operator (either the school corporation or a *management company*) full *operational autonomy* as well as charter-like flexibility. As statutorily defined, Innovation Network Schools shed many district rules and hand over management to third-party groups, either charter operators or nonprofits. The groups make decisions on everything from curriculum to schedules – and often employ the schools' teachers directly, thus removing onerous burdens from collective bargaining agreements. Innovation Network Schools are held accountable by the school district for agreed upon student outcomes. The purpose of Innovation Network Schools is to allow districts, and schools within the district—the additional flexibility to make organizational and programmatic decisions based on the specific needs of a school's student body (e.g., dual language programming). An *innovation school grant fund*, designed specifically to provide funding for the planning and implementation of innovation network schools, was created in 2017, but has not yet been funded.

Indianapolis Public Schools' (IPS) early adoption of this practice (creating Innovation Network Schools) has shown several leading indicators of student success, including increases in enrollment and student attendance rates. In IPS, there are four pathways a school may take to become an innovation school:

- launch as a new innovation school
- launch as an innovation charter school
- restart an existing chronically underperforming school as an innovation school
- convert an existing high-performing school as an innovation school

Innovation Network Schools are an important part of ensuring an excellent school in every neighborhood, and represent innovative best practices for improving struggling schools and districts in Indiana. Two new and promising IPS Innovation Network Charter Schools are Global Prep Academy at Riverside School #44 (GPA) and Purdue Polytechnic High School (PPHS).

Global Prep Academy is a high quality dual language charter elementary school that utilizes a two teacher model (1 English + 1 Spanish) to offer a literacy-focused two-way immersion model employing high expectations for learning. Global Prep has recently replaced a school that was ranked as an **F** in Indiana's accountability system for more than four consecutive years.

In partnership with Purdue University, PPHS is Indiana's first polytechnic STEM-focused charter high school. PPHS utilizes an innovative project based secondary approach to create a pipeline for underrepresented students' access to a rigorous curriculum that will prepare them for success in college level STEM coursework. Both innovation network charter schools were oversubscribed and had public lotteries for enrollment. Global Prep Academy opened its doors at

full capacity, with a wait list. PPHS held its first lottery in the fall and will open in July 2017 with a full roster and wait list. IPS, GPA, and PPHS have all submitted letters of support.

IPS has also supported other schools to utilize charter like flexibility via their innovation network school option. Schools like Thomas Gregg #15 (Thomas Gregg) and Cold Spring School (Cold Spring), two IPS schools have both chosen to convert to Innovation Network Schools. Both schools have full building level autonomy, while remaining in the district. More than 250 community members came together and pledged their support for Thomas Gregg to become an innovation school. Thomas Gregg has chosen to run its own annual calendar, daily schedule, completely new curriculum, and hire staff outside of IPS' existing collective bargaining agreements.

Cold Spring has chosen to partner with Marian University (Marian), a private Catholic university, for support with its curriculum and operations outside of IPS as well. Cold Spring is located next to Marian's campus and is an example of a public school and private institution of higher education coming together to provide a high quality public option for families living in the neighborhood. Cold Spring now has access to Marian's Educator's College, liberal arts and science resources, as well as their school of business. Marian has submitted a letter of support.

Competitive Preference Priority 7: Serving At-Risk Students

Indiana has developed numerous models for dropout recovery schools. Goodwill Education Initiatives has created its popular network of Excel Centers with nine locations across the state. Christel House Academy has developed Christel House DORS with two locations in Indianapolis, and Gary Middle College serves the impoverished northern part of our state by providing adults a pathway to a CORE 40 high school diploma. Each of these models is considered adult high schools per Indiana Code. By law, adult high schools must offer flexible

scheduling, dual credit or industry certification course work, and provide a plan to support successful program completion and assist the transition of graduates to the workforce or postsecondary education IC 20-24-4-1(16).

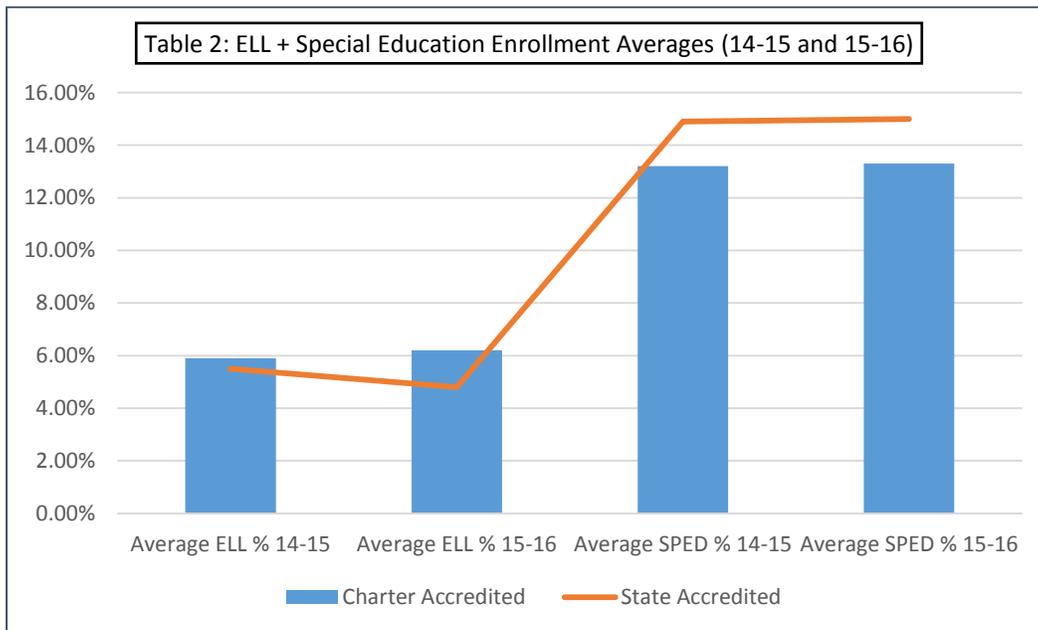
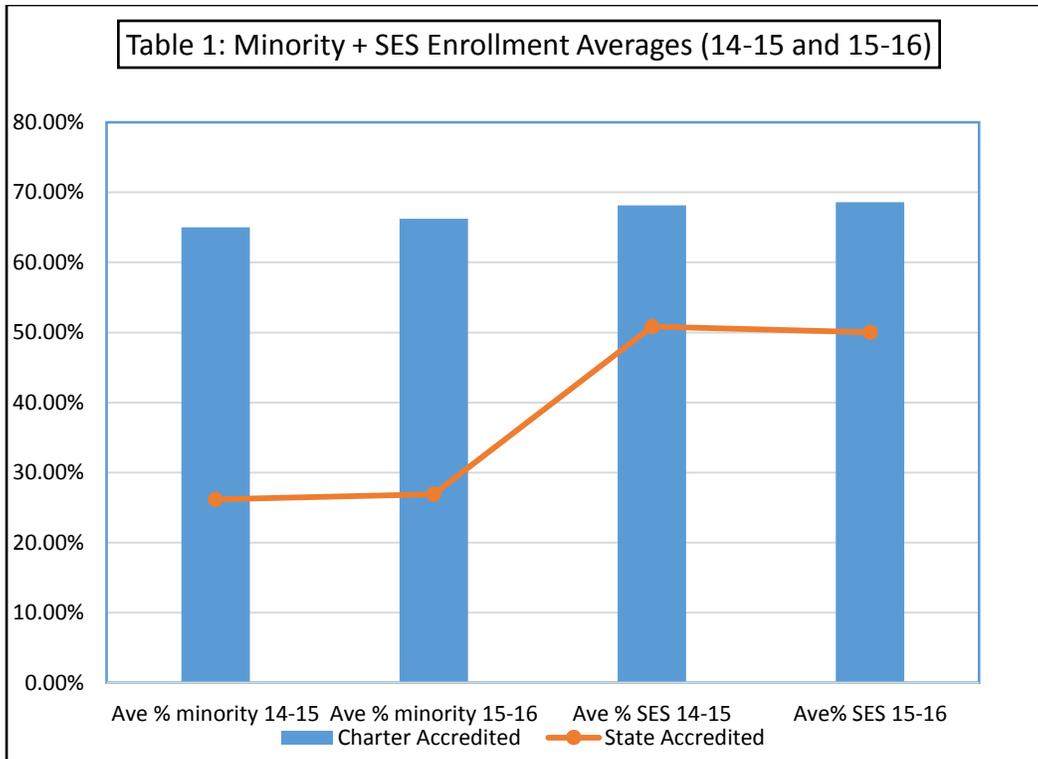
Recognizing that these schools serve a unique population that did not fit the State's traditional accountability model, the General Assembly also directed SBOE to establish an alternative accountability system to assess their performance. The adult accountability rule, promulgated in December of 2015, focuses on a graduation calculation specific to students who are out of cohort and on college and career readiness indicators (e.g., passing an AP or IB exam, earning college credit or obtaining an industry certification) rather than on performance on the state's standardized tests. In the 2015-16 school year, nine of the ten adult high schools receiving grades under the new accountability system were high-quality (receiving an **A** or **B**), with an average graduation to enrollment in the 90th percentile and with an average of almost 75% of graduating students passing an AP or IB exam, earning college credit or attaining an industry certification. As an SEA, the Indiana Department of Education has supported these schools through an alternative accountability rule that holds them accountable to their unique model. As of the 2016-17 school year, Indiana is home to a dozen adult high schools supporting students, statewide, from traditional and charter public schools.

Additionally, Indiana has charter schools serving almost exclusively at-risk populations. Damar Charter Academy serves almost 98% students with identified disabilities, while Hope Academy serves high school students in recovery from substance abuse and addiction. Both schools feature innovative partnerships with community partners. Hope Academy is run in collaboration with an Alcohol & Drug Addiction Treatment Center within a local hospital, where students are held as accountable for their sobriety as they are for their academics, ensuring that

Hope graduates are able to control their addiction early in life and be successful in adulthood.

Damar Charter Academy partners with Damar Residential Services to support students who may need a residential placement, as well as a public school that is specially designed for the specific needs of students with IEPs and/or residential needs.

Aside from these innovative models targeted directly to at-risk populations, Indiana charter schools provide supports necessary to ensure all at-risk students are successful. Indiana's charter schools have historically demonstrated a commitment to serving diverse populations. As shown in *Tables 1 & 2* for the 2015-16 school year, an average of 66% (all values have been rounded) of the students enrolled in charter schools in Indiana were minorities, exceeding the average minority enrollment of 27% in traditional public schools; 69% were students from low socioeconomic status (SES), compared to 62% served by traditional public schools; 6.2% were English language learners (ELL), compared to 4.8% in traditional public schools; and 13.3% were students with special needs, compared to 15% in traditional public schools. Christel House Academy (CHA) is an award winning network of home grown charter schools that have served the impoverished Southside & Westside of Indianapolis since 2002. Their students are routinely top performers and CHA has been the recipients of multiple Title 1 awards for their work in closing the achievement gap for students of color. CHA submitted a letter of support.



Competitive Preference Priority 8: Best Practices for Charter School Authorizing

The National Association of Charter School Authorizers’ (NACSA) annual surveys reveal that authorizers vary tremendously in type and the number of schools they oversee. This dynamic holds true for Indiana authorizers as well. Their portfolios range in size and type from

school districts authorizing one charter school to the Indianapolis Mayor's Office authorizing nearly forty charter schools.

From 2005 to 2013, Indiana has worked to include all of NACSA's best practice recommendations to establish authorizer standards, require annual reports on school performance, and provide sanctions for failing authorizers in its charter school law. In 2011, Indiana expanded the number of eligible authorizing entities and established a statewide charter school authorizer employing recommended best practices through the Indiana Charter School Board.

By 2013, recognizing the need to ensure that all authorizers implemented best practices, Indiana required all authorizers to *adopt standard of quality charter school authorizing, as defined by a nationally recognized organization with expertise in charter school authorizing*, under IC 20-24-2.2-1.5. Additionally, in 2015, the General Assembly enacted IC 20-24-2.2-1.2 which requires any new proposed authorizer (other than a public university or traditional school corporation) to apply to SBOE for authorizing authority. Authorizers now must submit annual reports on school performance that include evidence that the authorizer is in compliance with the requirement to adopt these standards of quality authorizing, as well as information on how an authorizer utilized funds from any authorizing fee collected.

Finally, charter schools that remain in the lowest category of school improvement (e.g., an **F** on the State's accountability system) for four (4) consecutive years may not be renewed unless the authorizer petitions the SBOE, and SBOE determines that sufficient justification exists to allow the school to continue operating IC § 20-24-2.2-2 & -3. If an authorizer fails to close or renews a school that does not these meet minimum standards, SBOE may suspend the authorizer's ability to authorize and, if the deficiency is not corrected, may revoke the authorizer's authority entirely IC § 20-24-2.2-

4 and -6.

Each authorizer has a rigorous authorizing process, which must include, at a minimum, submission of an application, a capacity interview, and a public hearing in the school corporation where the school proposes to locate.

Applicants are required to demonstrate: 1) evidence of capacity, 2) a curriculum and instructional design that has a sound evidence base and reflects the needs of the targeted population, 3) rigorous standards, 4) a demonstrated understanding of and capacity to fulfill state and federal requirements pertaining to students with disabilities and English Language Learners, 5) parental and community engagement, and 6) a sound implementation plan, including governance and management structures, a personnel plan, a realistic and viable budget, and a facilities plan. IC § 20-24-3-4. Applicants who currently operate one or more charter schools, in Indiana or elsewhere, must also provide evidence of past performance and current capacity for growth. Finally, applicants must identify any other applications submitted to an authorizer in the previous five (5) years. As part of the review process, authorizers generally employ evaluators with authorizing, charter school operation, and school finance experience, in addition to the internal reviews conducted by authorizing staff. Barring extenuating circumstances, applicants that do not *meet* or *Exceed Standard* in each category are not recommended for approval.

Furthermore, once a school is approved, each authorizer has a rigorous pre-opening process that must be completed prior to the school opening its doors to provide instruction to students. As discussed in Competitive Preference Priority 1, authorizers are required to publish an annual report on the performance of its portfolio of charter schools, further ensuring authorizer accountability for performance. Finally, IC § 20-24-2.2-8 requires SBOE to conduct a formal evaluation of the overall state of charter school outcomes in Indiana every five years

beginning in 2017 and post the results on SBOE's website. At the time of this application, the initial five year evaluation has not yet been completed.

Selection Criteria

a. Flexibility

In a 2017 ranking of ranking of state charter laws, the Center for Education Reform recently rated Indiana's charter law an **A**, one of only three (3) states to earn the top mark. The National Alliance of Public Charter Schools (National Alliance) echoed those findings several months ago in its ratings of 44 states when Indiana—for the second year—achieved the distinction of having the nation's top charter school law. The National Alliance report cited Indiana's new Charter Facilities grant, lack of charter growth caps, multiple authorizers, and fair autonomy and accountability for schools as major factors contributing to our strong standing.

A major contributor to Indiana's recognition lies in the way its flexibility is structured for charter schools. Except as specifically provided in IC 20-24-8-4 and 20-24-8-5, Indiana charter schools are exempt from Indiana statutes that apply to a school corporation, rules or guidelines adopted by the state board of education, and local policies adopted by a school corporation that are not specifically incorporated into the charter agreement. Preserved flexibilities include:

- A variety of public charter school authorizers are allowed, including: school districts; state educational institutions that offers 4-year baccalaureate degrees; governing board of a nonprofit college or university that provides 4-year program for which it awards a baccalaureate or more advanced degree; executives of a consolidated city (e.g., Indianapolis Mayor's Office); and the Indiana Charter School Board (IC 20-24-1-2.5)
- Charters are fiscally and legally autonomous schools with independent charter school boards (IC 20-24-1-7);

- Teachers in charter schools are employees of the charter school or of the entity that provides services to the school (IC 20-24-6-1), yet retain access to relevant state employee retirement systems (IC 20-24-6-7);
- A charter school may sue or be sued, acquire property, convey property and enter into contracts in its own name, including contracts for services (IC 20-24-8-1);
- Charter schools may not be required to purchase services from its authorizer as a condition of charter approval or of executing a charter contract, nor may any such condition be implied (20-27-7-4(h));
- Virtual charter schools are allowed (IC 20-24-7-13);
- Management contracts with Educational Service Providers are not restricted, additional paperwork is required between the charter school and the provider (IC 20-24-3-2.5);

With this strong legislative framework in place, the Indiana Department of Education commits to upholding the protections for charter school autonomy in its own policies and practices. For example, where charter schools are able to use the charter agreement or authorizer approval to meet statutory requirements (e.g., teacher evaluation plans), IDOE will defer to authorizer oversight. While all technical assistance available to school corporations will also be made available to charter schools, IDOE will not require participation in any training that is not required by state or federal law. Furthermore, IDOE will ensure that no new policies, practices or initiatives infringe on charter school autonomy and flexibility.

b. Objectives

1. *Increase the number of high quality charter schools statewide via incubation, replication, expansion, or improvement:* Award up to 60 sub grants over 5 years, to high quality charter schools for replication and expansion efforts, to incubate and grow innovative

charter school models with high potential for success, and to support traditional public schools that may want to include a charter in their existing district configurations.

2. *Leverage support specific to building the capacity necessary for the Indiana charter school sector to grow quality programs.* Provide high quality support to charter schools and traditional public school corporations choosing to start a charter within their district via partnerships with fiscally-sound Indiana-based nonprofit organizations with a record of success in supporting charter school capacity and national standards of best practice in the charter school sector. Supports provided will be focused on capacity building, incubation support, teacher recruitment & retention, supporting all students, facilities, transportation, financial services, evidence based best instructional practices as defined by ESSA, special education, English Language Learners, securing facilities, pre-opening activities, consistency of high quality authorizing practices, and long term fiscal sustainability.
3. *Evaluate the impact of charter schools on student outcomes:* The IDOE will utilize our robust and comprehensive longitudinal school choice data set to evaluate the impact of charter schools on student achievement, families and communities, and share best practices between charter schools and traditional public schools. Given the diverse innovative practices taking place within our charter school sector, Indiana is fertile ground for exploring how high quality educational options are impacting student achievement under the new evidence based definitions of ESSA.
4. *Support the implementation of high quality charter school authorizing practices:* Work with a professional organization to provide both statewide and individualized support to all eight of Indiana's charter school authorizers in order to ensure capacity to support

charter school growth. To inform statewide technical assistance efforts, IDOE will work collaboratively with authorizers to identify common issues of implementation related to standards of quality charter school authorizing required under IC 20-24-2.2-1.5.

Individualized technical assistance will focus on building and sharing best practices currently used by Indiana authorizers as well as supporting voluntary efforts to improve in areas of growth related to standards of quality charter school authorizing.

c. Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants

Charter school growth in Indiana has been steady since the passage of the charter law in 2001, with approximately eight charter schools opening every year (rising to nine a year during Indiana’s previous CSP grant period).

<u>Year</u>	<u>Charter Schools Opened</u>
2002	12
2003	5
2004	4
2005	8
2006	8
2007	5
2008	8
2009	5
2010	8
2011	5
2012	10
2013	11
2014	5
2015	13
2016	6
Total:	116

Twenty-six charter schools have been closed during the same time period, leaving a total of 90 operating charter schools as of the 2015-2016 School Year.

Eight charter schools have already been approved to begin operation in the 2017-2018 school year, and it is estimated that another 12 will open in the 2018-2019 school year. In

addition, Indiana has seen the number of schools opening in areas outside of the largest cities increase. During the initial years of the law, the majority of charters were located in Indianapolis and Gary. However, since that time, charter schools have opened in all corners of the state and throughout. Currently, there are charter schools in **21** out of **92** counties, including a new pool of charter schools located in what would be considered *rural* areas.

Indiana's rigorous RFP (application) and Peer Review process for selecting exemplary applicants for CSP funding opportunities will constitute the first step in identifying quality eligible applicants who have the capacity to meet those objectives. As described below in section d.3.i of the State Plan, IDOE will offer technical assistance to ensure that all eligible subgrant applicants with capacity to improve educational results for students are able to submit a quality application.

In addition to technical assistance to ensure new schools are able to become eligible applicants, Indiana has several charter schools poised to serve as quality subgrantees through replication. The following examples illustrate IDOE's ability to select subgrant recipients for replication that meet our objectives to improve education results for students.

As evidenced by their letters of support, highly successful home grown urban charter schools like Herron High School (Herron) and Paramount School of Excellence (Paramount) are navigating unimaginable market demand. Due to their consistent ranking as one of the best public high schools in the nation by U.S. News & World Reports, Herron annually faces a daunting waitlist of hundreds of students hoping for a seat at their classical-based college preparatory high school. Paramount is an integrated and research based K-8 charter school that consistently earns an **A** from the IDOE based on 85% of the student body passing both English and Math ISTEP. According to Paramount's recent impact report, 93% of Paramount students

reenroll annually and they boast a 97% attendance rate. These statistics are impressive for any school, but given that Paramount has more than doubled its student population since 2010, serves a population with 90% of students coming from households at or below the poverty level, 19% of them qualifying for special education services, and 7% being English language learners, this type of achievement is significant. As shared in their letters of support, both Paramount and Herron believe that CSP grant funding will be necessary for them to *responsibly replicate*, in order to ensure that they generate more high quality charter school seats at a fiscally responsible and sustainable rate. Herron and Paramount have submitted letters of support.

While our urban charter schools garner lots of attention, Indiana's emerging rural charter school sector is also experiencing rapid growth. Rural communities, like Dugger Union, chose to charter their school as a way to avoid consolidation due to loss of revenue. According to their principal, Dugger Union Community School Corporation had struggled for years to keep their doors open and their traditions alive. Becoming a charter was a community endeavor that put an end to struggles and concerns about consolidation.

Mays Community Academy in Mays, Indiana (a new rural charter school) has more than doubled its student population in two school years and is struggling to keep up with the growing demand in their area. According to their school leader, CSP funding could help them meet their current demands, support transportation, and also begin to offer both pre-school and middle school options in northern Rush County, where rural families have very few choices in early childhood and secondary education. Dugger and Mays have submitted letters of support.

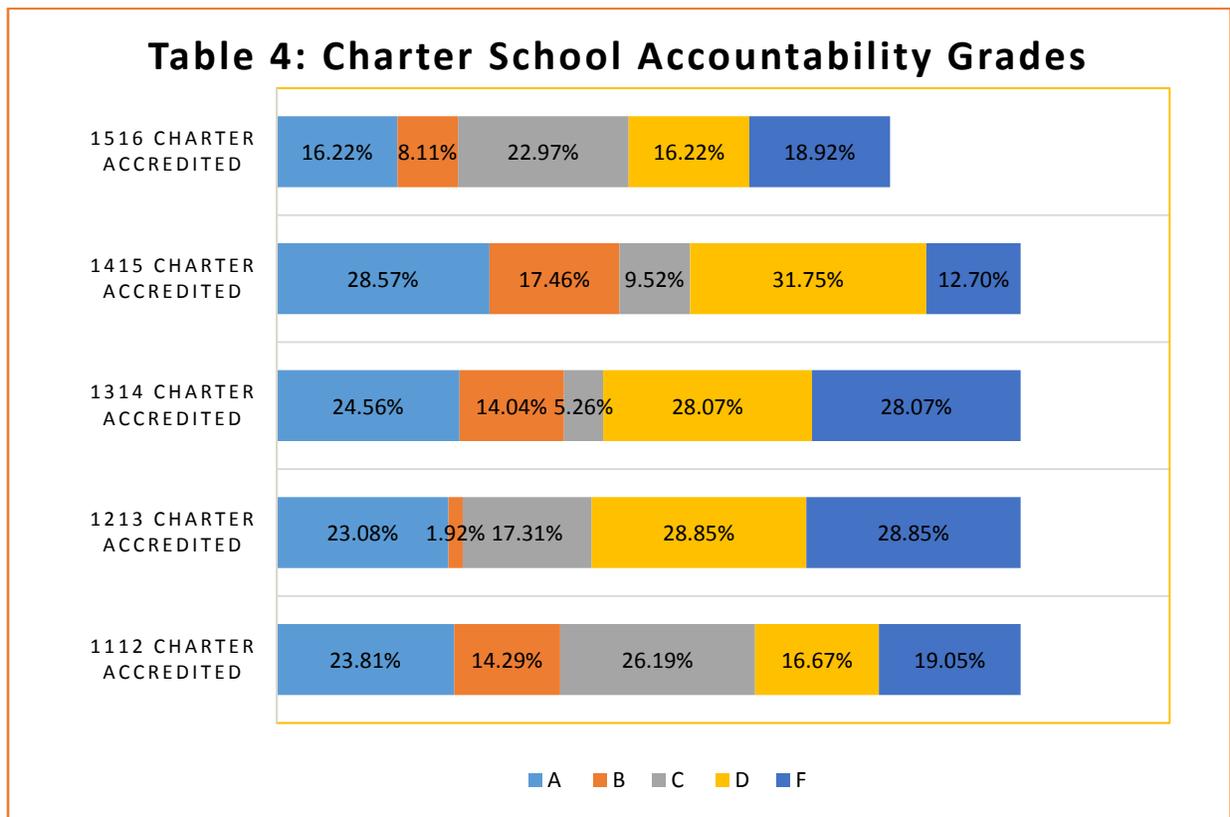
For purposes of this Application, Indiana uses the definition of *high-quality* used in the Federal Register. Indiana's accountability system (511 Indiana Administrative Code (IAC) 6.2-10-1) assigns letter grades to schools based on a complicated formula measuring academic

proficiency and growth on the State assessment, graduation rate and college and career readiness factors (where applicable), and the reduction of achievement gaps (by showing improvement in growth or performance) for each of the subgroups of students, as defined in section 1111(c)(2) of ESEA. Under this system, Indiana considers schools awarded a grade of **A** or **B** to be high-quality.

As discussed in Competitive Preference Priority 8, Indiana authorizers have a rigorous application process that requires applicants to establish that the proposed charter school meets authorizer expectations in key areas, including the components necessary to achieve academic success in the target area, financial stability and sustainability, and operational competence, both at the board and school level. Once approved, applicants must complete a checklist of pre-opening tasks under specific timelines, ranging from completing all necessary background checks for staff members, to ensuring that all necessary health and safety permits and inspections have been completed, to ensuring that necessary curriculum materials have been delivered. During the charter term, schools are subject to regular monitoring and evaluation. Indiana's charter law is constantly evolving (more than sixteen (16) bills were enacted between 2011 and 2016 increasing charter school and authorizer accountability) to reflect national best practices in authorizing while maintaining charter school autonomy. Indiana's authorizers have worked diligently, through rigorous application, monitoring and evaluation processes to increase the number of highly performing charter schools and to decrease the number of poorly performing charter schools.

Recent changes mandated by the General Assembly to the State standards and the State summative assessment make it difficult to accurately compare public school performance over the last several years. Since 2010, Indiana has had three sets of academic standards, substantive

changes to the State assessment, often at the last minute, and a complete overhaul of the State’s accountability system calculation. As a result of these rapid changes, and the resulting impact on schools, the General Assembly passed emergency legislation to designate the 2014-15 school year a *hold harmless* year. Nevertheless, as shown in *Table 4*, the percentage of charter schools receiving an **A** or **B** on the State’s accountability system increased each year from 2012-13 (the school year immediately following the first major update to the charter law in 2011) to 2014-15. At the same time, the percentage of charter schools receiving a **D** or **F** on the State’s accountability system decreased.

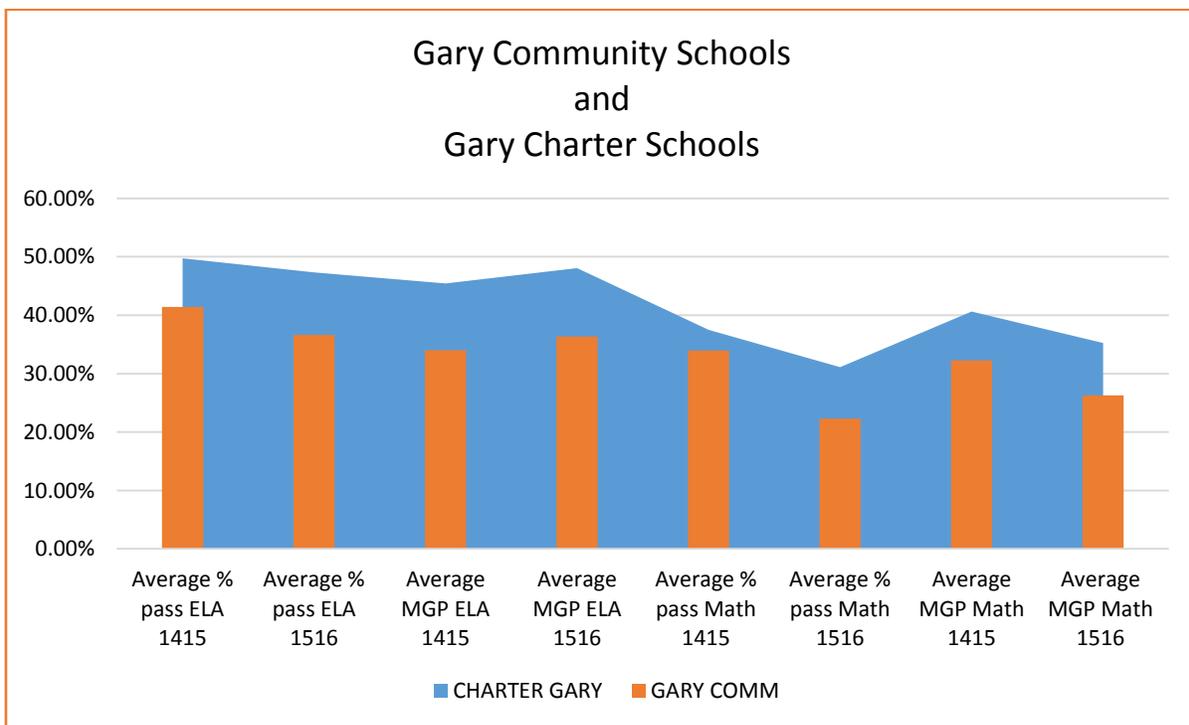
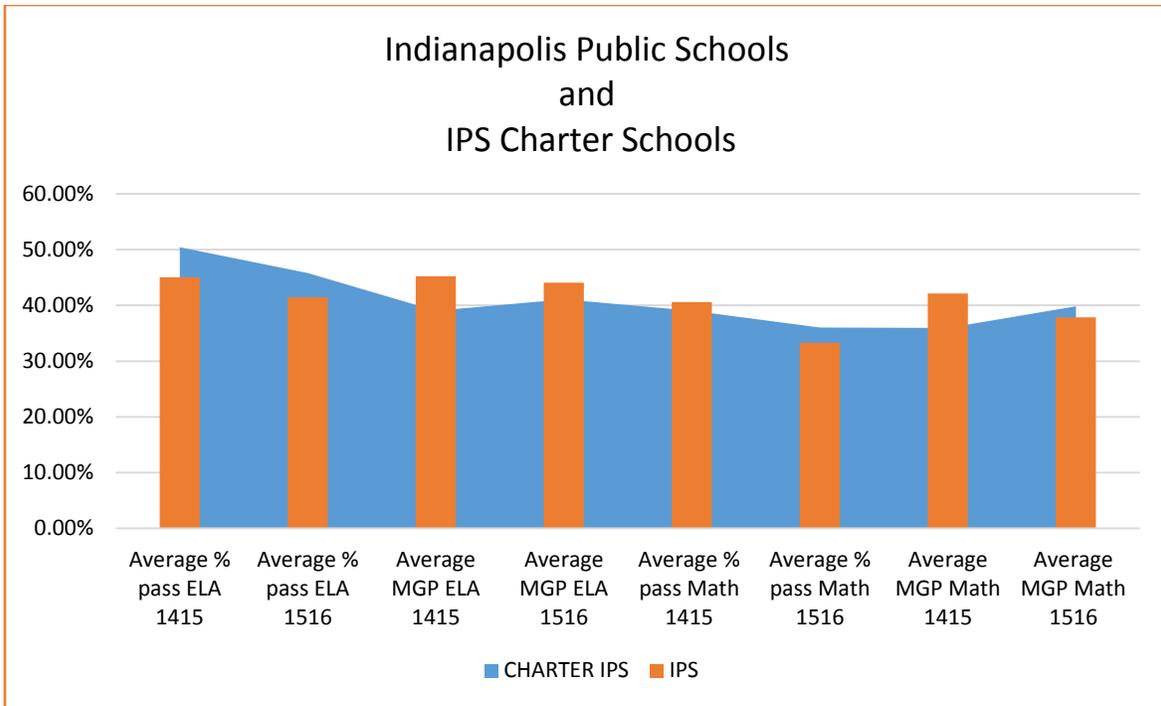


The 2015-16 school year was the first time the State assessment was given on the new State academic standards and measured using the new State accountability system. The decline in charter school performance reflects a statewide decline for all public schools- the percentage

of all public schools receiving an **A** or **B** decreased from 75% to 59% while the percentage of schools receiving a **D** or **F** rose from eleven percent 11% to fifteen percent 15%.

State-wide comparisons of performance are somewhat misleading, as a significant majority of charter schools are located in urban areas with a high number of historically underserved student populations (in 2015-16 there were fifty-two (52) charter schools located in Indianapolis and Gary, representing 77% of the total charter school enrollment in the State for that year). Here, charter schools often perform as well as, or better than, their traditional public school counterparts. In the 2014-15 and 2015-16 school years, charter public schools in the Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS) system had a higher percentage of students passing the ELA portion of the state test than traditional IPS schools and a higher percentage of students passing Math in 2015-2016, while IPS was 1.5% higher in Math in 2014-2015.

Clearly, Indianapolis has benefited overall from being a city that is home to a thriving educationally focused nonprofit community, with ample philanthropic organizations who focus on school choice. The support IPS and charters in IPS have both received has resulted in all schools doing better, charters and traditional IPS buildings. In areas around the state outside of Indianapolis, there is a much more prominent difference in assessment scores between charter schools and traditional public schools. In Gary, charter public schools significantly outperform the traditional public schools in both Math and ELA by almost 8 – 10%.



Indiana recognizes that performing “better than” a poorly performing traditional public school is not synonymous with high-quality. These data demonstrate that cities need support to grow healthy educational landscapes; places where best practices can be shared across differing

types of school structures. Additionally, it is important to note that the growth rates in the largest urban school districts are too low for both charter and traditional public schools. The strengthening of Indiana's charter law, the high number of charter school closures (26 in the last five years), the positive trend in the number of high-quality charter schools, including the increasing replication of existing high-quality schools (such as the innovation network schools discussed in Competitive Preference Priority 6), demonstrates Indiana's commitment to increasing the overall quality of Indiana's charter schools.

As discussed in Subsection (f), IDOE will work with authorizers to identify those subgrant applicants, both new and existing, that have demonstrated, either through the charter application process, or through a consistent ability to Meet or Exceed Standard on an authorizer's performance framework, that are most likely to meet Program objectives. As discussed in Subsection (d), IDOE will coordinate with authorizers to monitor each subgrantee, both to determine the necessary level of technical assistance and support and to ensure that the subgrantee is on a clear trajectory of academic success, with a priority on educationally disadvantaged students.

In addition to a consistent track record of high quality and diverse charter school growth in the absence of CSP funding, IDOE has also chosen to engage the Indiana educational nonprofit community as partners in supporting growth of high quality charter schools. Indiana is home to one statewide charter school support organization and several nationally recognized nonprofit organizations whose missions focus on supporting charter schools with the on the ground support necessary to successfully navigate the incubation, expansion, replication, or improvement phases.

Technical assistance funds, via a competitive RFP process, will be provided to fiscally

stable Indiana nonprofit organizations specifically for supporting CSP subgrant applicants and awardees. By providing Indiana CSP subgrant applicants with support from local organizations; ambitious applicants will be surrounded by high quality organizations poised to serve their needs and support them over the course of their subgrant award period. In addition to local support, national organizations like Illinois Facilities Fund (IFF), Walton Family Foundation (Walton), and Charter School Development Corporation (CSDC) have also pledged their support of Indiana's CSP grant efforts and provided letters of support for the *Quality Counts* proposal.

CSDC currently has federal grant funding from the Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities program that have been used to support more than 20 Indiana charter schools access and leverage financing to cover 100% of the cost of leasing, owning, or renovating safe and affordable educational facilities. Additionally, since 2012, IFF has worked with Indiana charter schools to select school sites, acquire facilities, and provide low interest loans for facility renovations, furnishings, and equipment. Providing Indiana CSP applicants and subgrant awardees support from organizations like IFF and CSDC, throughout their application and award period, adds another layer of support necessary for charter schools to thrive in Indiana's already school choice friendly landscape. Finally, Walton has also been highly engaged in Indiana by offering grant dollars to charter schools during their start-up process. Having the ability to secure Walton start-up funds, in addition to CSP sub grants will be a recipe for success for charter schools that wish to start new schools or expand to additional sites. These types of statewide, tangible, and comprehensive approaches to supporting CSP applicants and subgrant awardees will enhance charter schools' likelihood of meeting their outlined CSP grant objectives and ultimately result in high quality charter schools meeting their state approved performance goals.

d. State Plan

IDOE will leverage several partners to carry out a robust quality charter school program, including a rigorous application and review process, differentiated monitoring, and high quality technical assistance. IDOE will retain direct management of 100% of funds, including the 90% reserved for direct sub grants to eligible applicants. IDOE will utilize the 3% administrative set aside to support the Charter School Specialist role that will be directly responsible for administering the sub grant application process and coordinating other partners to provide technical assistance to both authorizers and support organizations. The remaining 7% of funds will support technical assistance to both eligible applicants receiving subgrants under the State entity's program and quality authorizing efforts in the state.

Personnel charges of 3.55 FTE reflect an initial amount of \$174,850 including an annual 2% salary increase to equal \$909,929 .05 FTE Director of Title Grants and Support (\$4,850). Nathan Williamson will serve as the project director and dedicate 5% of his time to overseeing the effective administration and implementation of this project. See job description in Appendix B. 1.0 FTE Assistant Director- CSP (\$75,000 annual salary). This individual will oversee the daily operations of the CSP grant, with direction from the Director of Title Grants and Support. The Assistant Director will direct the training activities, contractual agreements with the technical assistance partners, implement of the project application, effective oversight of the grant and monitoring of subgrantees, and provide project evaluation. This individual will supervise the activities of the 1.5 FTE charter school specialists. See job description in Appendix B. 1.0 FTE Charter School Specialist (\$65,000 annual salary). This represents 2-3 individuals that will support CSP grant oversight and technical assistance. The Specialists will manage the appropriate grants, participate in onsite monitoring, coordinate monitoring reports, and deliver technical assistance. See job description in Appendix B. 0.5 FTE Charter School

Controller/Auditor (\$30,000). This individual will provide internal fiscal support to IDOE to process grant contracts, provide fiscal guidance to subgrantees, and conduct ongoing audits. See job description in Appendix B This will allow for the same individual to support the charter school's initial needs through CSP funding while also providing technical assistance for other federal programs in charter schools, such as Title I, Part A and Title II. The charter schools receiving CSP funding will need comprehensive technical assistance across all federal funding streams, and the assigned specialist can support the layering and braiding of several funding streams to support the school's objectives.

Nathan Williamson, Director of Title Grants and Support, will serve as the project director with the main responsibility for executing the state plan. In addition to the in kind support personnel listed in the budget narrative, the Office of Title Grants and Support will employ a charter school specialist, with specific experience in the charter school sector to ensure timely and effective communication with applicants and subgrant awardees, in addition to effective federal monitoring and technical assistance. The IDOE's staffing structure ensures that the project director and staff familiar with implementing formula and competitive federal grants, such as Title I Part A, 1003(g) School Improvement Grants, and 21st Century Community Learning Centers oversee the effective implementation of this project.

d.1 Monitoring

IDOE will ensure that each eligible applicant that receives a subgrant under Indiana's *Quality Counts* grant will implement with fidelity the activities described in the subgrantee's application. IDOE has developed a robust solicitation, screening and evaluation process to implement the program to promote sustained charter school quality, both within the time period of this grant and when funds are no longer available. See section f. *Quality of the Project Design*

for a detailed description of the application and peer review process, along with the application and rubric in Appendix F.

Once an eligible applicant is funded, the IDOE will utilize a risk assessment to determine the scope of the ongoing SEA programmatic and fiscal monitoring throughout the project period. The risk assessment will utilize periodic benchmarks to evaluate progress and determine the need for additional monitoring and technical assistance. The risk assessment will utilize the following criteria from *no apparent risk* to *low*, *moderate* or *significant* risk to determine the level of SEA monitoring needed to ensure that implemented activities were approved through the subgrant:

- 1) Experience of the charter school project director
- 2) Award amounts
- 3) Length of time between monitoring reviews
- 4) Severity of findings from past IDOE monitoring and charter authorizer reviews
- 5) Severity of findings from past fiscal responsibility
- 6) Audit finding resolutions
- 7) Drawdown performance
- 8) Emergent issues identified by charter authorizers

All subgrantees will receive an on-site technical assistance and monitoring visit within the first 12 months of school operation to ensure activities occur as approved within the grant and for SEA staff to gather information regarding future technical assistance. Additionally, prior to each subsequent fiscal year, the subgrantee will submit an annual progress report to the IDOE delineating its progress against stated outcomes and if necessary, will explain adjustments to its plan to ensure all outcomes and goals are met.

d.2. Working with authorizing agencies to avoid duplication of work

To ensure all monitoring is conducted efficiently, IDOE will partner with authorizers where at all possible to streamline reporting. For example, if a school's progress against stated outcomes is fully evaluated by an authorizer's annual report, IDOE will utilize the authorizer's report in lieu of a duplicate report from the school. Upon receiving the CSP grant award, IDOE will use its next quarterly meeting with authorizers to review authorizers' reporting requirements of schools and will make every effort to utilize existing reporting structures to gain information for subgrant reports. Additionally, IDOE will continue their efforts to work closely with authorizers on enhancing data sharing efforts to support collaborative efforts and reduce redundancies.

As discussed in Competitive Preference Priority 8, Indiana authorizers have rigorous application, pre-opening, monitoring, evaluation, and renewal processes in place that have only strengthened in the last five (5) years as a result of changes to the charter law and efforts by the authorizers themselves. The end result has been an increase in the percentage of charter schools receiving an **A** or **B** on the State's accountability system, and a decrease in the percentage of charter schools receiving a **D** or **F**. IDOE will leverage the work and experience of authorizers as an important component of the subgranting process, both in identifying promising new schools, and in identifying existing high-quality schools for possible expansion and replication. For existing schools, IDOE will use the robust data included in authorizers performance frameworks (along with performance on the State's accountability system) to determine whether a school seeking a grant for replication of expansion meets the NIA's definition of *high-quality*. For new schools, IDOE will integrate the authorizer's application process, including a school's score on the authorizer's application rubric, into its CSP Grant Application in order to avoid duplicating the due diligence undertaken by the authorizer during the application process.

The *Quality Counts* application process will remain separate, however; no school will be guaranteed a grant for the mere fact that it has been authorized, nor will an existing high-quality school be awarded a grant if its expansion or replication plans do not satisfy the Grant Application requirements.

Finally, as described in Subsection (d)(1), IDOE will work in partnership with authorizers to monitor not only the use of grant funds, but also to measure academic and performance outcomes of subgrantees.

d.3.i Provide technical assistance to eligible applicants receiving subgrants

Technical assistance will begin prior to eligible applicants receiving subgrants. After receiving the CSP award, Indiana will offer a bidder's conference to ensure that quality charter school developers and charter support networks are able to learn of the opportunity to apply for funding through this project. Participants will receive immediate technical assistance regarding the below activities to ensure that initial applications are of the highest quality. Indiana will leverage its partnership with charter support networks to highlight high-quality charter schools that have proven track records of improving student achievement for authentic and realistic examples for charter school developers to learn from successful past practices. Examples of information that can be gleaned from successful schools and shared with sub-grantees includes:

- 1) Develop staffing plans that include clearly defined hiring timelines and staff roles and responsibilities as well as early identification of staff needed for the planning phase;
- 2) Design professional development plans that address the attendance, behavioral, and academic needs of students during the opening, replication, or expansion phases;
- 3) Acquire supplies, training, equipment, and materials that align to the charter school's developed curriculum to advance student achievement;

- 4) Carry out necessary minor renovations to comply with statute and regulations along with providing one-time startup costs associated with providing transportation to students;
- 5) Engage parents, community, and potential staff members, including the cost of student and staff recruitment; and
- 6) Address other appropriate, non-sustained costs needed in the opening, replication, or expansion of the charter school.

Each eligible applicant's submitted budget, which shall include no more than 18 months of planning or a total length of five years, includes a subsequent "sustainability year" for the eligible applicant to demonstrate how it will continue to carry out activities once the funding period expires. The sustainability budget and accompanying narrative demonstrate the drawdown of funding through the increased capacity of existing staff or the lack of need for further initial start-up costs. Furthermore, the sustainability budget demonstrates how other eligible local, state, and federal funding will be used to support the ongoing needs of the school to ensure a commitment to quality beyond the funding provided through this project. Appendix F of this proposal contains copies of Indiana's sub grantee RFP and Peer Review Rubrics.

Once an eligible applicant receives a subgrant, IDOE will work with external organizations that have staff capacity and expertise in providing effective, direct technical assistance to schools. IDOE's identified technical assistance partner(s) will be responsible for providing direct support to eligible applicants resulting in a successful CSP application to IDOE. Selected technical assistance providers will have a role in IDOE's comprehensive statewide systems of support, and sharing of best practices and supporting consistent best practices among Indiana authorizers.

Furthermore, the administrative location of this project ensures that staff responsible for implementation also have strong knowledge of other federal programs in order to provide technical assistance to eligible applicants' receiving subgrants to ensure the full utilization of all federal funding available to charter schools. The key personnel listed within this project, which includes Chiefs, Directors, and Specialists allows for an internal workgroup that meets regularly to develop comprehensive support for charter schools to address their talent, data, funding, accountability, assessment, and academic needs. This internal workgroup serves as a consultancy across all IDOE offices to identify potential issues with charter school support and implementation. The results of this internal consultancy are then shared with the charter school authorizers on a quarterly basis so that IDOE and the authorizers serve as partners in monitoring and supporting the charter schools.

The IDOE also offers annual spring training for new and returning federal program directors at traditional public schools and charter schools to receive ongoing professional development, technical assistance, and opportunities to collaborate alongside other LEAs across the state. (These training occur prior to federal program application due dates.) Additionally, each fall the IDOE offers training specifically for charter schools to support the effective implementation of CSP funds and federal programs, such as the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) Part B, Title I Part A, Title II, and Title III.

d.3.ii Technical assistance and support for quality authorizing efforts

In addition to providing technical assistance and support for eligible applicants, IDOE will also leverage partners to support quality authorizing efforts.

Currently, the IDOE supports the quality authorizing elements described in ESSA section 4303(f) (2) (E) through a cooperative data sharing relationship required under Indiana Code (IC

20-24-2.2-5). As part of this relationship, IDOE provides authorizers with accountability data necessary to complete their annual reviews of charter school performance, including student performance and growth data, graduation rates and student enrollment data for the purposes of calculating student attrition. The IDOE also shares authorizers' accountability reports, proposals and renewal applications in one clearinghouse on its website, as required by IC 20-24-9(b).

Upon receiving CSP funds, IDOE will survey authorizers to collaboratively identify barriers and challenges authorizers are facing in adopting or implementing standards of quality charter school authorizing required under IC 20-24-2.2-1.5. The IDOE will also ask each individual authorizer to voluntarily identify areas of growth. After gathering input on both individual and common challenges statewide, IDOE will solicit a professional organization with expertise in quality charter school authorizing to provide technical assistance to authorizers in the identified areas. IDOE will make this technical assistance available to all authorizers, but will not require unnecessary or unrequired support.

e. Parent and Community Involvement

In Indiana, we understand that partnering with families is a fundamental component of every charter school initiative. And it is through genuine opportunities for collaboration that we ensure parental and community buy-in and ongoing support for their children's high quality educational options. Just as charter school leaders and their authorizers involve parents in planning and implementation decision-making, the Indiana Department of Education commits to monitoring the effectiveness of such opportunities.

As part of the research and evaluation process, the IDOE will solicit and review comments from families and community members in areas where CSP applicants and subgrant awardees open and operate charter schools. Through this feedback, IDOE will be able to better

evaluate the degree to which parents and community members believe they have had genuine opportunities to influence the implementation and operation of charter schools. Findings will be used to inform grant-supported trainings relevant to best practices for authorizers and targeted technical assistance for charter schools. In instances where substantial concerns are raised, the IDOE will ascertain the need for parent/community focus group meetings or other direct strategies to improve practices.

As part of the evaluation and research efforts, the IDOE will intentionally solicit and review stakeholder comments specific to their experiences with CSP applicants and subgrantees about the services provided to them by nonprofit organizations, professional organizations, and authorizers specific to the purpose of CSP grant dollars. Here, too, key stakeholder input (including parental feedback) will be important in evaluating the effectiveness of CPS-funded training and technical assistance services intended to extend understanding and build capacity for planning and operating high quality charter schools.

Authorizers are required by law to conduct a public hearing as a part of every charter school application to allow the public to comment on the proposed school. These comments are transcribed and become part of the applicant's file. In addition, most authorizers include a community engagement component as part of their application and application rubric. Most importantly, authorizers are in frequent contact, both with each other, and with school districts with a high population of charter schools to ensure that charter school authorization is strategic, taking into account existing and planned schools, as well as actual community need.

As part of its *Quality Counts* project, IDOE will work with authorizers to develop a neutral survey designed to solicit meaningful comment from families and community members in areas where subgrantees open and operate charter schools. This statewide survey will go

beyond simply gauging public support for charter schools in an attempt to determine, in more detail, the reasons parents do or don't send their children to charter schools, how satisfied they are with their choice, what charter schools do well, what areas can be improved, and how charter schools fit into their specific education landscape. Additionally, the IDOE will work with authorizers to develop a survey to solicit comments from subgrantees and other charter schools about their successes, challenges, and relationships with the community that they serve.

The results of both surveys will be made public in order to facilitate a broader discussion about where charter schools fit into Indiana's education landscape, how and why certain schools are succeeding or not succeeding, and how best to ensure that charter schools are given the tools and support necessary to meet the needs of their community.

f. Quality of the Project Design

As mentioned above in section d. State Plan, Indiana's robust quality charter school program will begin with a rigorous application and review process (outlined in Appendix F), and IDOE will begin by ensuring that the application opportunity is broadly advertised.

Indiana's state superintendent of public instruction, Dr. Jennifer McCormick, will announce the CSP funding opportunity in her weekly Friday update, reaching thousands of Indiana educators and community members in traditional public schools, charter schools and nonpublic schools. In addition to posting all information, trainings and tools relevant to the CSP subgrant application process on IDOE's Charter School website, all authorizers, charter school developers, and charter support networks will receive direct notification of this funding opportunity.

f.1 Eligible Applicant Subgrant Application and peer review process

The quality of eligible sub grantees begins with Indiana's rigorous RFP (application) and

Peer Review process for selecting exemplary applicants for CSP funding opportunities. Our RFP draft is included in Appendix F of this proposal and also referenced in Part C: *State Plan*.

Following the bidder's conference referenced above, entities electing to submit RFPs will receive technical assistance through an Introductory Webinar (posted on the IDOE Charter School website) and have the opportunity to participate in regional Charter School Grant Sessions, hosted by the IDOE, prior to their proposal submission.

Once an eligible applicant has received the above technical assistance and been notified of approval of its charter school proposal from an Indiana authorizer, the school may request the application for a CSP subgrant from IDOE. The charter school specialist will share the application materials along with the training webinar. In order to demonstrate its capacity to create a high-quality charter school, the eligible applicant will submit its approved charter application, and will provide any supplemental information necessary to demonstrate completion of the requirements outlined in IDOE's rigorous RFP (application).

To ensure subgrants are awarded to the most capable entities, each application for a CSP subgrant will be reviewed and rated by an external Peer Review panel (selected through an application process, with those serving as reviewers participating in training for their effective use of a Peer Review Rubric to rate potential sub grant proposals). Individuals selected as peer reviewers must be well-informed regarding education strategy, policy, evaluation, and development of charter schools. A diverse group of reviewers is anticipated, comprised of district education leaders; charter school funders and charter management organization leaders; educators with expertise in: special education, English learners, early childhood, post-secondary opportunities, or rural issues; program evaluators; and public policy professionals knowledgeable about ESSA, education reform, or education policy. Each selected peer reviewer must sign an

assurance regarding conflict of interest to ensure that all applications are reviewed in a bias-free manner from someone with previous interaction with the charter school authorizer, developer, management organization, or education policy. Each selected peer reviewer must sign an assurance regarding conflict of interest to ensure that all application reviews are unbiased.

Each application will be reviewed by a minimum of two peer reviewers, using criteria listed within the rubric (and included in the RFP/application) that measures the charter school's: vision & expected outcomes; expertise of the charter school developers; charter school goals; use of CSP funding; school governance plan & administrative relationships; student recruitment & admissions process; meeting needs of educationally disadvantaged students; community outreach activities; fiscal management plan; and facilities. Subgrant applications will also include:

- Signed assurances that the charter school developer, staff, and management organizations will fully comply with the stated activities within the sub grant and employ appropriate internal controls to manage the grant;
- Demonstration of the charter staff, board, educational or charter management organization, and authorizer's capacity to implement the charter school's proposal;
- Alignment of funded activities with the charter school proposal with the authorizer;
- Stated long-term goals and interim benchmarks, developed on no less than an annual basis, to measure the school's progress in attendance, behavior, and academics;
- Consultation and communication with parents, community, and staff regarding the planning and implementation of the grant;
- Clear description of the internal controls that explain how expenditures are approved, including the role of the charter management organization and board;

- Demonstration of fiscal compliance with Uniform Grants Guidance to determine long-term sustainability and that sound fiscal practices are in place upon inception;
- Clear and explicit budgets that demonstrate long-term sustainability after the project funds expire.

The Indiana *Quality Counts* grant is competitive; therefore, high scores from Peer Reviews increase an application’s likelihood of approval and receipt of funding at the requested levels. IDOE staff will conduct the final review of all applications to ensure that applications comply with all requirements, and will determine the final budget for each subgrant recipient after determining whether proposed activities are reasonable, allocable, and necessary. Additionally, applications that address early childhood programs and secondary education, as well as rural area locations will receive preference points when applications are scored.

Tentative Timeline for RFP (sub grant application) and Peer Review Process

Date	Description
July 14, 2017	Quarterly charter school authorizer collaboration meeting
August 1, 2017	Release of RFP for CSP proposals; introductory technical assistance webinar
September 13-14, 2017	Charter school fall training (Indianapolis), technical assistance grant session
September 20-21, 2017	Charter school fall training (Merrillville), technical assistance grant session
October 1, 2017	Application to serve as peer reviewer due
October 13, 2017	Quarterly charter school authorizer collaboration meeting: <i>Pitch Fest</i> <i>During this meeting subgrantees will come to the meeting and do mini presentations about their proposals as a way to provide feedback to applicants and narrow the pool of applicants prior to the peer review process.</i>
October 16, 2017	Proposal due date (4:30 p.m. EST)
October 20, 2017	Peer reviewer training; start of peer review period
October 31, 2017	Notification of initial awards
January 12, 2018	Quarterly charter school authorizer collaboration meeting
April 13, 2018	Quarterly charter school authorizer collaboration meeting
July 1, 2018	Financial end report and annual performance report due
August 1, 2018	Notification of continuation awards; release of request for CSP Proposals

f.2(i) Year-by-Year Estimate of Awards

IDOE expects to fund an average of 12 subgrants per year for 5 years at the maximum of \$900,000 per subgrant. Award size will vary depending on the individual requests of each the application.

Year	Number of Subgrants	Anticipated Average Award
Year 1 – 2017	12	\$800,000
Year 2 – 2018	12	\$750,000
Year 3 – 2019	12	\$700,000
Year 4 – 2020	12	\$700,000
Year 5 – 2021	12	\$700,000

The year-by-year estimates are based on data relating to the past five years of Indiana charter school openings. Over the last five years, Indiana has opened an average of nine charter schools per year (see chart below).

School Year	Total Number of Charters Opened	Urban	Rural
2013-14	11	7	4
2014-15	5	5	0
2015-16	13	7	6
2016-17	6	2	4
2017-18*	8	5	3

*Projected to open as of May 1st

However, changes in the landscape lead us to believe we will see increases in applications. First, despite the unavailability of CSP funding in 2015 and 2016, schools continued to open. Second, the funding formula in Indiana has been changing slightly over the past two bienniums to raise the foundation amount for all schools, enabling schools to open outside of urban areas, which have traditionally received higher funding. A higher foundation amount in these areas combined with available planning funds via philanthropic organizations and CSP funds should lead to an increase in charter school viability and thus, an increase in successful CSP subgrant applications.

f.2(ii) Previous CSP Subgrant Information

Indiana was awarded a CSP grant in 2010. Indiana received a CSP grant for the 2010-2015 grant period. During the grant period, 124 subgrants have been awarded to eligible charter schools, providing over \$30 million dollars in support to charter schools. As the number of charter schools grows in Indiana, additional funding will be key to the expansion and replication of the successes of the current grant.

g. Quality of Management Plan and Theory of Action

Indiana's *Quality Counts* project has one overarching goal: To collaboratively work with all stakeholders, leveraging all federal and State funding sources, to ensure that Indiana's charter schools are high quality and highly effective in meeting the academic needs of all students.

1. Logic model

To achieve this goal, Indiana will utilize the attached logic model, found below. As explained in the State Plan, and throughout the Project Narrative, Indiana will leverage a variety of resources and partners to execute activities that are aligned to outputs and outcomes (short-, mid- and long-term outcomes) to demonstrate achievement of the four objectives described above in section b. Leveraging CSP funding across subgrants and technical assistance, Indiana will increase the number of quality charter schools and thus, improve educational outcomes for students by supporting the schools' planning years and technical assistance across program design and initial launch.

Indiana *Quality Counts* Logic Model

Inputs & Resources	Activities	Outputs	Short Term Goals	Mid-Term Goals	Long Term Goals
Objective 1: Increase the number of high quality charter schools statewide.					
IDOE Staff, Authorizers, & Nonprofit Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IDOE announces <i>Quality Counts</i> subgrant project & bidders Conference • IDOE runs rigorous competitive RFP process to solicit high quality subgrant applications • Nonprofit organizations share best practices and provide technical assistance to applicants 	<p><i>a.</i> Subgrants awarded to highest quality applicants to <i>incubate, expand, replicate & improve charter schools</i></p> <p><i>b.</i> Subgrants awarded to highest quality applicants to open new charters within existing traditional public school districts in collaboration with Indiana authorizers.</p>	By 2019, 10 new charter schools will be operational in Indiana	By 2021, 30 new charters will be operational in Indiana	Increase the number of high quality charter school seats available to Indiana students and families by successfully implementing 60 subgrants statewide.
Objective 2: Leverage support specific to building charter school capacity					
IDOE Staff & Nonprofit Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IDOE builds charter capacity via technical assistance • IDOE enhances charters accessibility & utilization of federal resources • Nonprofit provides support & share evidence based best practices 	<p><i>a.</i> Specific PD for charter schools navigating growth</p> <p><i>b.</i> IDOE enhances charter school access to other federal funds & student outcome data</p> <p><i>c.</i> Schools share evidence based best practices across charters & traditional public schools</p>	By 2019, 10 new charter schools will be operational in Indiana	By 2021, 30 new charters will be operational in Indiana	Increase the number of high quality, fiscally sound charter schools in Indiana by supporting the implementation of 60 high quality subgrants.

Inputs & Resources	Activities	Outputs	Short Term Goals	Mid-Term Goals	Long Term Goals
Objective 3: Evaluate the impact of charter schools on student outcomes					
IDOE Staff, Authorizers, & External Experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IDOE collects & analyzes student outcome data for all subgrantees • Evidence based best practices identified & shared 	a. IDOE hosts annual Best Practices Showcase b. Research & evaluation identifies best practices & opportunities for growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subgrantees increase students at or above proficiency on state Math assessments by 5% • Subgrantees increase students at or above proficiency on state English/LA assessments by 5% 	Subgrantees decrease the achievement gap between historically under-served students and state averages.	Increased academic outcomes for students attending Indiana charter schools by the percent of charter school students scoring in the Top 75% subgroup category.
Objective 4: Support implementation of high quality charter school authorizing practices					
IDOE Staff, External Experts & Authorizers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IDOE conduct competitive process for selecting experts to support Indiana Authorizers 	a. IDOE & Selected expert collect & analyze baseline data on authorizer portfolios	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up 5 year plan collaboratively with authorizers to provide tailored support 	Each authorizers' percentage of schools in their portfolios identified as Quality or Improving will increase from year 1 of the project	Increased percentage of charter schools in authorizers portfolios identified as Quality &/or Improving

g.2 Project-Specific Performance Measures supporting the logic model

Quality Counts has four specific, measurable—and ultimately—attainable objectives:

- 1) *Increase the number of high-quality charter schools operating in Indiana* – through incubation, replication, expansion, or improvement efforts
- 2) *Provide Indiana charter schools support with capacity* – to align and engage Indiana’s educationally focused nonprofit community, authorizers, and statewide stakeholders to provide the necessary supports for high quality charter schools navigating growth
- 3) *Evaluate the impact of charter schools on student outcomes* – to measure project and student success, as well as to inform policy decisions and best practices among traditional and charter public schools in Indiana
- 4) *Support the implementation of high quality charter school authorizing practices* – to encourage consistent high quality charter school authorizing practices statewide and ensure capacity for supporting high quality charter school growth.

Quality Counts		
Overview		
Objective 1: Increase number of high quality charter schools operating in Indiana		
Resources Needed to Support Strategies & Deliverables: IDOE Staff; Indiana Charter School Authorizers; Educationally Focused Nonprofit organizations; Federal CSP Grant Funding		
Activities/ Strategies to Meet Objectives	Outputs/Deliverables resulting from Strategies	Outcomes
IDOE develops rigorous RFP to solicit applicant to compete for CPS sub-grants	Applications reviewed, with preference points awarded for early childhood, postsecondary options, and rural initiatives	
IDOE offers a bidders’ conference for potential applicants and authorizers; IDOE and Support Networks offer TA to enable highest quality proposals	Charter Support Network shares best practices for: staffing plans; PD plans; acquisition of supplies, training & equipment; engaging stakeholders; and non-sustained costs for opening, replication or expansion of charters	
IDOE develops scoring rubric; Selects & trains Peer Reviewers for rating CSP applications	Highest quality applicants selected for CSP subgrants	
IDOE awards subgrants for planning, expansion, replication & improvement	Sub-grant recipients notified and participate in meetings with IDOE staff to understand	

	programmatic, financial, and evaluative expectations for their initiatives	Increased numbers of high quality charter school seats available to Indiana students statewide
IDOE & educationally focused non-for profit organizations, as well as sub grant awardees engage students’ families and community stakeholders in decision-making relevant to CSP grant objectives	From inception and throughout implementation, family and stakeholder contributions are sought and valued, informing project strategies	
IDOE conducts risk-assessment to determine scope of ongoing SEA programmatic & fiscal monitoring across the project period	Periodic benchmarks from IDOE’s risk assessment used to evaluate progress & determine additional monitoring/TA needs	
IDOE conducts onsite monitoring of all sub-grantees within first 12 months	Sub-grantee adherence to approved activities ascertained; TA needs identified	
IDOE develops annual progress report expectations	Authorizers oversee the timely completion/submission of their charter schools’ Annual Progress Report, delineating (a) progress against stated outcomes and (b) adjusted action steps to ensure goals are met	
IDOE and authorizers ensures that sub-grantees develop transportation plan	Charter schools’ transportation plans address the needs of all students, including homeless & students with disabilities	
IDOE provides 1:1 training for charters’ access to other federal funding & IDOE resources	Charter schools receive their equitable share of Federal funds/IDOE supports, e.g., Title I, Special Education, EL	
IDOE offers annual fall/spring federal programs training, prior to application period	Charters attend annual fall/spring federal programs training, receiving ongoing PD & TA, and opportunities to collaborate with LEAs across the state	
Internal IDOE consultancy workgroup routinely meets to identify potential issues/supports needed	Authorizers receive quarterly updates from IDOE consultancy staff that support effective practices	
IDOE provides authorizers with accountability data for their annual reviews of charter school performance	Authorizers receive student performance/growth data, grad rates, student enrollment data (to calculate attrition) for use in their accountability reports	
Charters contract with Independent Auditor, in order to participate in annually-required audits	Authorizers work with charters in the resolution of any findings from audits	
Authorizers monitor their portfolio of charters for adherence to IC-20-24-9-4	Authorizers may revoke a charter at any time, after notification & time for corrective action	
Objective 2: Leverage support specific to building the capacity necessary for the Indiana charter school sector to grow quality programs.		
Resources Needed to Support Strategies & Deliverables: IDOE Staff; Indiana Charter School Authorizers; Charter Support Networks; Successful Not for Profits Organizations; Federal CSP Grant Funding		
Activities/ Strategies to Meet Objectives	Outputs/Deliverables resulting from Strategies	Outcomes
IDOE prepares RFP, Scoring Rubric & Peer Review Process to select 2 or more	Highly-qualified, proven Nonprofit Organizations selected to support the building	

nonprofits with record of success in capacity building	of capacity of charter schools in need of support with incubation, replication, expansion, and/or improvement.	Increased numbers of high quality and fiscally sustainable charter schools statewide
Non-for profit organizations provide support to charter school applicants and sub grant awardees focused on, but not limited to: Incubation Support Supporting All Students Teacher Recruitment & Retention Instructional Supplies & Technology Professional Development & Licensing Parent, Family, & Community Outreach	Initial supports provided to applicants and sub grant awardees focus on school and network level needs assessments, special education, ELL, incubation, staffing & instructional supports, & stakeholder outreach.	
IDOE surveys applicants and subgrant awardees on the quality of support services provided by IDOE approved non-for profit support organizations.	Applicants provide information to IDOE about quality of support services they receive from identified non-for profit partners.	
Objective 3: Evaluate the impact of charter schools on student outcomes		
Resources Needed to Support Strategies & Deliverables: IDOE Staff; Indiana Charter School Authorizers; National Organization/External Expert; Federal CSP Grant Funding		
Activities/ Strategies to Meet Objectives	Outputs/Deliverables resulting from Strategies	Outcomes
Systems are developed by IDOE to identify all data collection elements anticipated relevant to the CSP grant	Elements include both federal GPRA required elements, as well as project-driven elements identified by Indiana (as articulated in Objectives 1-3)	Increased academic outcomes for Indiana students attending charter schools
IDOE collects student performance results on statewide assessments for all sub-grantee charter schools	Individual charter school performance results in English/language arts and mathematics on State assessments are disaggregated by student subgroups.	
IDOE analyzes data results specific to race, socio-economic status, English Language Learners, Special Education status, foster care, homeless students attending Indiana charter schools, Bottom 25% and Top 75%	At a minimum, analyses include individual sub-grantee disaggregated E/LA and math results; comparisons of results among sub-grantees; and comparisons to State averages to determine achievement gaps.	
Evaluation results are broadly shared	All Indiana district and disaggregated school performance results are posted on the IDOE Compass website and accessible to all entities	
IDOE continuously identifies best practices between charter schools and other public schools	IDOE hosts annual Best Practices Showcase	
Across the project period, IDOE will utilize our robust and comprehensive longitudinal school choice data set to evaluate the impact of charter schools on student achievement, families and communities	This long-term research project will identify best practices between charter schools and traditional public schools; inform policy making, identify strengths (best practices) and areas where further growth is needed.	
Objective 4: Support the implementation of high quality charter school authorizing practices.		

Resources Needed to Support Strategies & Deliverables: IDOE Staff; Professional Organization/External Expert; Indiana Charter School Authorizers; Federal CSP Grant Funding		
Activities/Strategies to Meet Objective	Outputs/Deliverables resulting from Strategies	Measurable Outcome
IDOE develops RFP, scoring rubric and peer review process to select Professional Organization/external expert	Professional Organization/expert selected	Charter school authorizing process is strengthened, as measured by the percentage of each authorizers' portfolio of charters identified as "Quality or Improving" on <i>School Performance</i> reports
IDOE partners with Professional Organization/expert to provide in-depth support and foster improvement for Indiana's active authorizers	A 5-year sequence of sustained support tailored to individual authorizers' specific needs and challenges, and continuous review of progress is established	
Professional Organization/expert collects baseline data on Indiana authorizers' (a) portfolio of charter schools' performance (academic, financial, & student equities) and (b) authorizing practices	Informed by baseline data findings (strengths & opportunities for growth), Year 1 baseline <i>School Performance</i> data established for each authorizer's portfolio of schools	
Identity opportunities for growth and/or plans for outliner data points in the domain of <i>School Performance</i> for each authorizer	Targets established to increase numbers of charter schools identified as "Quality/Improving" in the domain of <i>School Performance</i>	
Authorizers develop plans for taking actions to implement plans with IDOE and Professional Organization expert support	Capacity of active authorizers is strengthened to employ strategies aligned to NACSA's <i>Principles & Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing</i>	
IDOE staff and Professional Organization expert develops multi-year Work Plan to target assistance to authorizers (individually and collectively) to enable consistency of implementation fidelity of national standards of best practice in authorizing	Multi-year curriculum of trainings and resources designed to benefit authorizers as a group	
	Across Years 2-4 of the grant period, expert provides customized technical assistance for individual authorizers across entire grant period	
	Across Years 2-4 grant period, IDOE & expert provide group trainings across entire grant period to promote collaboration among authorizers, share challenges/best practices in critical practice areas, e.g., financial oversight, SpEd & EL rights, enrollment/recruitment compliance, discipline policies	
IDOE annually reviews charter schools' performance in each authorizer's portfolio, consistent with the state's accountability plan under ESSA, as well as financial performance and student equities	Across the entire grant period, annual evaluation data informs goals for improvement, including specific targets for increasing the number of children in charter schools evaluated as "Quality" or "Improving"	
IDOE and professional organization/expert conduct a follow-up analysis of progress in Year 5 of the grant	Progress toward—and success in—fulfilling the expectations of Objective 4 are	

	documented in an end-of-project summary report	
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Project-specific **performance measures**, including GPRA measures required by the U.S.

Department of Education, support our logic model. Measureable outcomes and data collection and reporting methods are described below.

Measureable Outcomes & Data Collection/Reporting Aligned to Logic Model	
Objective 1: Increase number of high quality charter schools operating in Indiana	
Baseline data: As of the 2016-17 school year, 93 charter schools are operating in Indiana	
Short-term Target	By 2019, at least 10 new high quality charter schools will be operational in Indiana
Mid-term Target	By 2021, at least 30 new high quality charter schools will be operational in Indiana
Long-term Target	By Year 5 of the grant period, at least 40 new high quality charter schools will be operational in Indiana
<i>Data Collection & Reporting Methods:</i> The IDOE will annually track the numbers of new charters established, statewide, via incubation, replication, expansion, or improvement. Data will be shared with stakeholders, posted on the IDOE Charter School website, and submitted as part of Indiana’s Annual Performance Report (GPRA measures) to the U.S. Department of Education.	
Objective 2: Leverage support specific to building the capacity necessary for the Indiana charter school sector to grow quality programs	
Baseline: As of the 2016-17 school year, Indiana operates nine Innovation Network Schools (district-run charter schools)	
Long-term Target	The number of district-run innovation charter schools in Indiana will continuously increase by 2 a year, across the 5-year project period.
<i>Data Collection & Reporting Methods:</i> The IDOE will annually track the numbers of new charters established, statewide, via incubation, replication, expansion, or improvement. Information will be disaggregated by charter-types. Data will be shared with stakeholders, posted on the IDOE Charter School website, and submitted as part of Indiana’s Annual Performance Report (GPRA measures) to the U.S. Department of Education.	
Objective 3: Evaluate the impact of charter schools on student outcomes	
Baseline: Established at the end of the new charter school’s first year of operation	
Annual Target	CSP sub-grantee charter schools will increase the percentage of 4 th grade, 8 th grade and HS students at or above proficiency on the State’s English/language arts assessments <i>each</i> year by five (5) percentage points
Annual Target	Subgrantee charter schools will increase the percentage of 4 th grade, 8 th grade and HS students at or above proficiency on the State’s mathematics assessments <i>each</i> year by five (5) percentage points
Annual Target	CSP sub-grantee charter schools will annually decrease achievement gaps between charter school performance and the State’s average performance on English/language arts assessments
Annual Target	CSP sub-grantee charter schools will annually decrease achievement gaps between charter school performance and the State’s average performance on mathematics assessments
Long-term Target	Long-term research project will identify best practices between charter schools and traditional public schools; inform policy making, identify strengths (best practices) and areas where further growth is needed
<i>Data Collection & Reporting Methods:</i> Following its established baseline year, charter schools’ academic performance on State assessments will be reported on IDOE’s Compass website, the same as other public and private	

schools. Each year, charter school performance State E/LA and mathematics assessments for students in Grades 4, 8 and high school will be compared to prior year’s performance. Achievement gaps will be analyzed between charter school subgroups (with 20 or more students) and State average achievement (all schools) for student subgroups (Overall, American Indian, Asian, Black, Hispanic, Multi-racial, White, Pacific Islander, Free & Reduced Lunch, EL, and Special Education). Data will be shared with stakeholders and submitted as part of Indiana’s Annual Performance Report to USDOE.	
Objective 4: Support implementation of high quality charter school authorizing practices	
Baseline data not available, as this is a new initiative	
Short-term Target	Year 1: Identify number of each authorizer’s schools identified as (a) Quality/Improving; and (b) Low-performing, based on national expert’s pre-assessment findings measuring <i>School Performance</i>
Mid-term Target	Years 2-4: IDOE will survey authorizers to ascertain their satisfaction with support received through Professional Organization/external expert to inform any adjustments needed.
Long-term Target	Year 5: Each active authorizer’s percentage of charter schools identified as Quality/Improving, will increase from Year 1 <i>School Performance</i> findings.
<i>Data Collection & Reporting Methods:</i> In collaboration with professional organization/external expert, IDOE documents the overall quality of each authorizer’s portfolio of charter schools (academic performance, financial performance & student equities) in Years 1 and 5 is reviewed to ascertain improvements needed. Annual summary reports and an end-of-project final report will memorialize findings.	

g.3.i Adequacy of management plan to achieve the objectives

Indiana has worked diligently with community partners and other state agencies in the development of the **Quality Counts** proposal to ensure collaboration from the inception of the **Quality Counts** proposal. Working to build buy in and authentic participation in the process has been a critical step in setting up this proposal for successful implementation. Per executive order, IDOE has also submitted this proposal for review, prior to submission, to the Indiana Office of State-Based Initiatives (OSBI) (see Appendix F). We have also included a risk plan for keeping subgrantees on target over the course of the granting period as a way to minimize the potential for compliance issues. We have deliberately made decisions, recommendations, and set targets based on 10+ years of data specific to Indiana’s school choice landscape. Additionally, IDOE has provided a list of Chiefs, Directors, and Specialists with expertise specific to the successful implementation of this grant. These individuals, in addition to the Director of Title Grants and Federal Grants Specialist for Charter Schools, are well-equipped to deal with issues that may arise over the granting period.

g.3.ii Adequacy of management plan to address compliance issues or findings

In addition to the proactive measures outlined in g.3.i, we have also included a robust evaluation process and progress monitoring plan within our *Quality Counts* processes. IDOE will engage a rigorous and competitive application process that involves peer reviewers and capacity support from our engaged nonprofit community. The combination of a rigorous application process, coupled with capacity support serve as a strong framework within which to support the successful implementation of the 2017 CSP grant.