

# Quality Counts:

## Indiana Charter School Program Grant Application

2018-2019

**Applicant Entity:** Otwell Miller Academy, LLC

Contact Person for Grant: Mr. Rich Padgett	Title: Director
Total Grant Funds Requested: (Up to \$900,000): \$753,388.40	Total Project Period Months Requested (24-48 months): 44 Months
Application to: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open <input type="checkbox"/> Expand <input type="checkbox"/> Replicate	Expected Date School will Open, Expand, or Replicate: 8/2017
Charter Authorization Approval Date: August 2017 If not approved, please check Pending: <input type="checkbox"/> Indicate date on which charter application was submitted:	Charter Application Renewal Date: August 2022
Have you submitted a charter application for authorizer approval to more than one IN authorizer agency within the past three years? Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If YES, please list to which authorizing agencies the applicant has submitted a charter application. Please provide the date of application and indicate approval or denial status, as applicable:	
Proposed Charter School Address: 9958 East Country Road 150 N, Otwell, IN 47564	

Applicant Address (if different than proposed address):	
Applicant Telephone: (812) 354-0800	Applicant Email: rpadgett@oma.school
<b>Fiscal Contact</b>	
Fiscal Manager: Rose Rhodes	Title: Finance Chair Friends of Otwell Elementary, Ltd
Telephone: (812) 766-3987	Email: jewelrose@fullnet.com

<b>Charter School Board Contact Information</b>	
1. Board President: Robert Rhodes, President, Friends of Otwell Elementary, Ltd.	2. Email: jewelrose@fullnet.com
3. Board President Address: 9958 E Country Road 150 N, Otwell, IN 47564	
<b>Authorizer Contact Information</b>	
1. Authorizing Agency: Grace College	2. Authorizing agency contact person: Tim Ziebarth
3. Authorizing agency contact telephone: (574) 372-5100, extension 6191	4. Authorizing agency contact email: charterschools@grace.edu

5. Authorizing agency address: 200 Seminary Dr, Winona Lake, IN 46590

**20 U.S.C. § 5203(d)(3)** requires all Charter School Program (CSP) grant applications must be provided to the charter school authorizer and the authorizer must verify that the CSP applicant has notified them of application submission. Signature by the designated authorizer official indicates that the CSP grant application is supported by the proposed charter school authorizer.

If the applicant is currently in the process for authorizer approval, the signature below does not indicate that the prospective charter school's application to the authorizer will be granted.

Charter school applicants without an approved charter at the time of submission will not be able to access funds until the IDOE receives authorizer notification of an approved charter. Deviation from the timeline or the activities in the approved grant is grounds for forfeiture of the CSP funds.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Authorizer Official Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Assurances

Each participating subgrant recipient does hereby agree to comply with the following assurances (please check each box by clicking inside the box).

- 1. Subgrant funds will be expended during the specified grant period; standard accounting procedures will be utilized by subgrant recipients and records of all subgrant expenditures will be maintained in an accurate, thorough, and complete manner.
- 2. Subgrant recipients confirm their understanding that funds for implementation activities will be awarded only if they are an open and operating school or have submitted an application to a charter school authorizer and plan to open with 18 months.
- 3. Subgrant recipients will participate in all data reporting and evaluation activities as requested or required by the U.S. Department of Education, the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE), and Indiana Code, including on-site and desktop monitoring conducted by the Indiana Department of Education, annual, independent audits required by the state board of accounts that are publicly reported and include financial statements prepared with generally accepted accounting principles, annual reports, and a final expenditure report for the use of subgrant funds. This section includes participation in any federal or state funded charter school

research or evaluations. Failure to submit required information may result in a withholding of grant funds or a non-renewal of subsequent year funding within the project period.

☒4. Subgrant recipients will expend implementation funds only for the purpose of implementation activities in a charter school which is nonsectarian in its programs, admissions, policies, employment practices, and all other operations, and which will be in compliance with all Indiana laws and administrative rules regarding staff certification and licensure.

☒5. Subgrant recipients will comply with all federal laws including, but not limited to, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and Uniform Grants Guidance ([2 CFR § 200](#)). This section requires each charter school to recruit, enroll, retain, and meet the needs of all enrolled students, including children with disabilities and English learners.

☒6. Subgrant recipients will comply with all state and local laws and health and safety requirements applicable to Charter Schools, including but not limited to all laws related to student admissions and enrollment, non-discrimination, data reporting, compulsory student attendance, and accountability.

☒7. Subgrant recipients will comply with all provisions of the Public Charter Schools Program of the U.S. Department of Education, including compliance with activities allowable for implementation funds. This section requires compliance with the [ESEA, specifically section 4303, which begins on page 246](#), in the hyperlinked document.

☒8. Subgrant recipients ensure that the Charter School will receive funds through programs administered by the U.S. Department of Education under which funds are allocated on a formula basis.

☒9. Subgrant recipients shall include important information on the website of the school to help parents and the community to make informed decisions about the education options available to their children, including information on the educational program, student support services, parent contract requirements (including any financial obligations or fees and information regarding textbook assistance), and enrollment criteria. This section requires the school to provide annual performance and enrollment data for the student body and subgroups of students to the IDOE in order to display on its public database.

☒10. It is the responsibility of each Charter School that receives funds under this grant to comply with all required federal assurances. Any Charter School that is deemed to be in noncompliance with federal or state statute and fails to address areas of noncompliance will not be funded. Funded schools will be expected to cooperate with the Indiana Department of Education in the development of certain reports to meet state and federal guidelines and requirements. Funded projects will be required to maintain appropriate fiscal and program records. Funded schools will be required to participate in desktop and on-site monitoring activities. If any findings of misuse of funds are discovered, project funds must be returned to the Indiana Department of Education. The IDOE may terminate a grant award upon thirty days' notice if it is deemed by the Indiana Department of Education that the school is not fulfilling the funded program as specified in the approved project or has not complied with the signed assurances.

11. The applicant agrees that in order to receive funds from the FY 2018 CSP funds, they must have an approved charter granted to them by an authorizing body by the time of the anticipated beginning of the Planning Period or Year 1 listed in the grant.

12. I hereby certify the plans for safe school and emergency preparedness for the school corporation have been reviewed and revised if necessary as required by Title 511 IAC 6.1-2-2.5 of the State Board of Education rules. I certify that the school leader has submitted evidence to the state via <https://www.doe.in.gov/safety/safe-schools-and-emergency-preparedness-planning-certification-form> to indicate that such a plan is in place. Plan has been included as an appendix in the application.

For more information about developing a Safety Plan, please contact the School Building Safety and Security Department at the IDOE, David Woodward, Director, [dwoodwar@doe.in.gov](mailto:dwoodwar@doe.in.gov), Ryan Stewart, School Safety Academy Specialist, [rstewart@doe.in.gov](mailto:rstewart@doe.in.gov), Deborah Swain-Bayless, School Safety Specialist, [dsbayless@doe.in.gov](mailto:dsbayless@doe.in.gov).

I have read the above and agree to all terms and assurances.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Project Contact

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Board President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed

\*Because of medical leave of the President, the Vice President is acting officer in accordance with the bylaws of our charter.

<b>Grade Levels to be Served</b>		
Year (of Grant Implementation)	Grade Levels	Projected Student Enrollment
First Year <b>2018-2019</b>	<b>K-5</b>	<b>80</b>
Second Year <b>2019-2020</b>	<b>K-5</b>	<b>90</b>
Third Year <b>2020-2021</b>	<b>PreK-5</b>	<b>120</b>
Fourth Year <b>2021-2022</b>	<b>PreK-5</b>	<b>125</b>
Maximum		

## Student Demographics

*indicate if actual or expected percentage of total student population*

Actual X Expected[MOU1]

Free/Reduced Price Lunch: 40%	Special Education: 25%	English Learners: 5% <sub>[MOU2]</sub>
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Black:	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander:	Hispanic:
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American Indian:	Multiracial:	Asian:
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White: 100%	Male: 50%	Female: 50%
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## Grant Requirements

**Expanding and Replicating Schools High Quality Determination**<sup>[MOU3]</sup>

The applicant confirms that they are an expanding school applicant as evidenced by a 50% or more increase in student population, or the addition of one or more grade levels in the school. (If not applicable, leave blank).

The applicant confirms that they are replicating a high quality school model, as evidence the school whose model they replicating having an Accountability grade of A or B. (If not applicable, leave blank).

As an Expanding or Replicating School applicant, an Accountability grade of A or B can be confirmed:

N/A:

No Significant Issues as demonstrated by no open corrective action plans with the IDOE in the following areas:

School Safety:

School Finance:

Operational Management:

Statutory or Regulatory Compliance:

English Learners:

N/A:

By checking the box the expanding or replicating applicant confirms they are meeting subgroup needs:

**Compliance with this standard demonstrated by the school not being considered under targeted support & improvement as defined by Indiana's ESSA plan.**

N/A:

***By checking the box, as a developer of a new, high quality charter school*** I confirm that the school has opened within the past three years (Fall 2015) or submitted a charter application and plans to open within 18 months.

N/A:

If the applicant is applying for one of the competitive priorities, the applicant confirms that they meet the requirements listed in the instructions for:

Early Childhood Program:

Post-Secondary Program:

Rural Locale:

N/A:

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Funding Requested		
	Month/Year to Month/Year	Funding Requested by Year
Planning (if applicable, prior to opening)	to * *Max 18 months	* *Max \$300,000 for planning year
Year 1 Implementation	1/2019 to 7/2020 <sup>[MOU4]</sup>	\$400,000
Year 2 Implementation	8/2020 to 7/2021	\$115,431.90
Year 3 Implementation (if applicable)	8/2021 to 7/2022	\$127,799.50
Year 4 Implementation (if applicable)	8/2022 to 9/2022* *May not extend beyond 9/30/22	\$110,157
Year 5 (if applicable, do not utilize this row if utilizing the planning period)	to * *May not extend beyond 9/30/22	



Total (max 5 years, planning + implementation)	\$753,388.40* Max \$900,000
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### Charter School Program Areas Contacts

Students with Disabilities:	Contact Name: Leigh Ann Tusing Email: ltusing@oma.school Phone Number: (812) 354-0800
English Learners (including Title III):	Contact Name: Leigh Ann Tusing Email: ltusing@oma.school Phone Number: (812) 354-0800
Title I, Part A:	Contact Name: Leigh Ann Tusing Email: ltusing@oma.school Phone Number: (812) 354-0800
Title II, Part A:	Contact Name: Leigh Ann Tusing Email: ltusing@oma.school Phone Number: (812) 354-0800

### Management Organization Information

Will the school work with a charter or educational management organization?  
 Yes                     No  
 If no, skip to the next page.

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If yes, name the management organization:  
 Employer Identification Number (EIN):

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Is the management organization:            For Profit                    Not for Profit



## Required Appendices

A) Charter Application to Authorizer (New, Replication) or Amendment to Existing Charter (Expansion)	Attached: <input type="checkbox"/>
B) Budget worksheet (use required form)	Attached: <input type="checkbox"/>
C) 2016-2017 Expanded Annual Performance Report (if applicable) or most recent <i>Found at <a href="http://compass.doe.in.gov">compass.doe.in.gov</a> &gt; Accountability &gt; Annual Performance Report</i>	Attached: <input type="checkbox"/> N/A-----: <input type="checkbox"/>
D) Proof of non-profit status of the governing board of the charter school or proof that the application for such status has been made	Attached: <input type="checkbox"/>
E) Enrollment or student admissions policy	Attached: <input type="checkbox"/>
F) Agreement or contract between the charter school governing body and the management organization (if applicable)	Attached: <input type="checkbox"/> N/A-----: <input type="checkbox"/>
G) School's discipline policy. Statute requires discipline policies that promote retention and reduce the overuse of discipline practices that remove students from the classroom	Attached: <input type="checkbox"/>
H. School Safety Plan: Schools must attach their school safety plan and evidence that it was submitted to the State Board of Education.	Attached: <input type="checkbox"/>

### **Competitive Priority Points: Rural Area**

Because of the importance placed on rural life, the sustainability of our rural communities, and the realization that our students may not frequently be exposed to a diverse student population, OMA will develop additional standards in the following content areas:

- Diversity and Cultural Understanding
- Local (SW Indiana) History
- Rural Economy

The principal-led teaching staff will be involved in developing these local standards and adding them to the school curriculum both horizontally and vertically. The development process will begin with the staff pre-service training and continue through curriculum committee meetings that are on-going (every two weeks) throughout the school year. It is the founding board's belief that the development of these additional standards is an ideal foundation and springboard for an effective and active curriculum committee. The development and implementation of these local standards will build ownership, underscore the importance of the standards-based curriculum, and help make the important transition from a founding board (creating and determining curriculum) to an operational school staff implementing and managing the curriculum. These additional local standards are placed alongside the Indiana Academic Standards. Local standards will not replace or cause omission of any of the statewide standards. Additional standards in these content areas enhance the education of our local student population by paying specific attention to the needs of the southwest Indiana rural student.

The National Education Association actively supports the development of programs that recognize and deal with the particular needs of students, educators, school employees and communities in the nation's vast rural areas.

Rural communities depend on their schools to serve many functions beyond their primary mission of educating children. Rural school districts are often the largest single employer in their area and rural schools serve as the social, recreational and cultural foundation of their communities. But many rural school districts are under funded and some lack a steady revenue stream.

#### **1. Vision of the Charter School**

It is the desire of the Friends of Otwell Elementary LTD to start a charter so that the community of Otwell may reopen their school and educate their youth, promoting community stability and future growth as students return to attend a school in the county and then, upon graduation, return to the area to give back. The intention of Otwell Miller Academy (OMA) is to not only maintain the rural school that focuses on strong values and high academic standards, but to assist in helping the greater whole of Pike County. Essentially, OMA desires to work with the community toward a common goal: to fiscally strengthen the county through unique and enterprising efforts, such as school choice.

As a new charter school, OMA has high expectations for the success of its students and faculty. These expectations include:

- All teachers to be qualified educators who are proficient in project-based instruction.
- Giving back to the community through service learning projects.
- Offering community artistic performances; including plays, concerts, and examples of student accomplishments.
- Maintain a community garden to not only supplement the school's food choices but

- also donate to local food pantries.
- Our students to have the will, skill, capacity and knowledge to bring about positive change to themselves, others, and their community.
  - Creating an environment of respect, where each voice is valued.
  - Communication and transparency with students and their families.
  - Teachers are supported and encouraged to teach with freedom and creativity.
  - Each child leaves fifth grade as fully prepared to succeed in a rigorous high school program.
  - Increased revenue over expenses each year.
  - Having 60 days cash surplus in reserve by our fifth year.
  - Retainment of 90% of students from year to year.

1a) The Founding Board of Friends of Otwell Elementary (FoOE) feel strongly that the school's Mission and Vision reflect Indiana Code-Title 20, Article 24 – Charter Schools IC 20-24-2-1 Purposes of Charter Schools. Based on the review of these codes, the following mission and vision were developed for Otwell Miller Academy.

Mission: To develop alternative educational opportunities, improve existing educational structures, and build a brighter pathway to success for our children.

Vision: At Otwell Miller Academy, we believe that the life-long educational journey begins with a love of learning. However, our academy's mission extends beyond book learning to encouraging our students to embrace service above self, becoming active citizens and leading others to excellence.

1b) The Pike County School Board voted to close Otwell Elementary School on June 8th, 2015. The Corporation was four million dollars in deficit and, due to a failed referendum, further cuts were inevitable. The community of Otwell wanted to see the school board find alternative ways of cutting costs so the school would remain open and jobs would not be lost. They feared that without an elementary school, residents and businesses would leave, tax dollars would be lost, perpetuating a downward economic spiral. Community members believed strongly that this rural school was the hub of the community, providing employment and serving as a social, recreational, and cultural foundation. At a school board meeting Michael Houtsch, now FoOE President, cited the number of businesses that left Otwell and the neighboring town of Velpen when they lost their respective high schools, reinforcing that to maintain a strong vibrant community a strong central gathering point, such as a school, was needed.

When the closure of Otwell Elementary was announced, the people of the town came together and developed Friends of Otwell Elementary LTD (FoOE), a non-for-profit entity to support the effort to reclaim the school as a charter. Community outreach began immediately. Board meetings were held weekly and Public meetings monthly. These meetings produced multiple committees and research groups who came together to complete the application for charter. The FoOE submitted a charter application to Ball State University in spring of 2016. The application was denied citing the need for additional time to prepare for a charter school opening. The application was then accepted and approved by Grace College in fall 2017.

Otwell Elementary was a 4Star, Blue Ribbon School, consistently achieving an A rating. When Otwell was closed approximately 30% of the school's students chose to attend a school outside the county rather than be bussed to the other two elementary schools in the

county.

Fitting the profile of many small farming communities in Indiana, Otwell has a population just over 400. Despite its size, there was tremendous support from the residents and the businesses of Otwell to reopen the school, in an effort to maintain their strong rural presence.

1c) After a study of innovative educational models, discussion with educational leaders, and a visit to many schools, the founding group has decided to embrace a project based model of educating their youth using our Indiana State Standards and the Core Knowledge Sequence. It is their belief that by using resources available to them in the community and creating opportunity for learning to come to life, they will best prepare students educationally, socially, and emotionally at levels that the students will truly internalize and ultimately be

**Figure 7: Proposed Core Academic Curricular Materials Grades K-5**

Grade Level	Literacy	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies
K	<b>Reading:</b> Core Knowledge, Literacy Centers & Guided Reading (internally developed) <b>Phonemic Awareness:</b> Orton Gillingham <b>Writing:</b> Six Traits of Writing <b>Online Learning:</b> Istation	enVision Math	FOSS Science Kits	Scott Foresman
1	<b>Reading:</b> Core Knowledge, Literacy Centers & Guided Reading (internally developed) <b>Phonics:</b> Orton Gillingham <b>Writing:</b> Six Traits of Writing <b>Online Learning:</b> Istation	enVision Math	FOSS Science Kits	Scott Foresman
2	<b>Reading:</b> Core Knowledge, Literacy Centers & Guided Reading (internally developed) <b>Phonics:</b> Orton Gillingham <b>Writing:</b> Six Traits of Writing <b>Online Learning:</b> Istation	enVision Math	FOSS Science Kits	Scott Foresman
3	<b>Reading:</b> Core Knowledge, Literacy Centers & Guided Reading (internally developed) <b>Vocabulary:</b> Words Their Way <b>Writing:</b> Six Traits of Writing <b>Online Learning:</b> Istation	enVision Math	FOSS Science Kits	Scott Foresman
4	<b>Reading:</b> Core Knowledge, Literacy Centers & Guided Reading (internally developed) <b>Vocabulary:</b> Words Their Way <b>Writing:</b> Six Traits of Writing <b>Online Learning:</b> Istation	enVision Math	FOSS Science Kits	Scott Foresman
5	<b>Reading:</b> Core Knowledge, Literacy Centers & Guided Reading (internally developed) <b>Vocabulary:</b> Words Their Way <b>Writing:</b> Six Traits of Writing <b>Online Learning:</b> Istation	enVision Math	FOSS Science Kits	Scott Foresman

able to teach others what they have learned. It is the founding board's belief that their students will continue to gain skills and knowledge in post-secondary education and will, in due course, give back to their community.

OMA will build its education on a robust curriculum with rigorous academics and high expectations. The curricular design and instructional strategies are rooted in scientifically based research and best practice. Using the Indiana Academic Standards adopted in April of 2015 by the

State Board of Education, and enhancing them with supplemental materials, students will be provided a college preparatory education beginning in kindergarten [pre-kindergarten, once added to the OMA grade plan]. OMA will align standards vertically to ensure students do not miss skills necessary for success in the following grade, and horizontally to make connections across content areas. This means, for example, that as students learn about incorporating strong voice into their writing, they are focused on identifying a character's voice in a fictional text or analyzing historical perspective in social studies. To develop our curriculum, each summer teachers will work in grade level teams with their academic standards to plan for the year's curriculum by analyzing standards-based assessments aligned to the OMA's scope and sequence to divide the year into units of study. Teachers begin each school year with a detailed roadmap of instructional topics and clear benchmarks to hit for mastery along the way. This detailed roadmap will be developed jointly with the administration and all teachers to ensure a seamless transition throughout the student's career at OMA. All selected materials listed in Figure 7 (above) are well-aligned to the Indiana Academic Standards and designed to be used in a project-based environment with technology

as an important tool. OMA integrates these simple principles in its educational program design.

1d) Otwell Miller Academy's assessment strategies will be consistent with the Indiana Academic Standards and Common Core State Standards. OMA's educational program will integrate creative teaching methodologies consistent with the Indiana Academic Standards to provide a learning environment that assures each student meets or exceeds State standards for achievement. One of the primary goals of OMA is that all of its students score in the proficient or superior ranges on state exams. OMA's educational approach will provide students with the necessary skills and tools to achieve high performance levels, and will promote cooperation and community-based learning, inspire and provide the tools for complex thinking and problem solving, enhance effective communication, and, perhaps most importantly, instill a lifelong love of learning and a sense of personal and community responsibility.

1e) It is a priority at OMA to provide the quality and depth of instruction that will best prepare students with the academic foundation necessary for success in middle school, achievement in high school, graduation from college, and success in life. To ensure this, curricular materials for each subject and grade level will be reviewed by the leadership team to determine which are most developmentally appropriate, academically rigorous, and highly engaging. In reviewing textbooks and other curricular resources, OMA considers the following factors: (a) alignment to the Indiana Academic Standards; (b) enhanced cohesion to the State Standards; (c) basis in scientific research; (d) degree of use in high performing urban schools; and (e) proven effectiveness with special populations of students. Because OMA stands firm on the belief that literacy is the best lever for future academic success, the team reviews content area materials for inclusion of grade-level appropriate reading and writing skills and analyzes the level of vocabulary throughout the text. Understanding of Indiana's expectations for students in K-5 and in-depth knowledge of the Indiana Academic Standards, led OMA to the selection of the following curricular materials as outlined in Figure 7. Each year OMA will evaluate the success of curricular models and materials and make adjustments to better meet the needs of the students.

To better develop 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills and prepare students to be college ready and career ready, OMA will give students the opportunity to:

- Develop deep understanding of content and skills through interdisciplinary studies;
- Acquire higher-level problem-solving skills through study of real-world issues;
- Explore and understand the world around them through hands-on and minds-on experiences;
- Discover the complex interactions among natural and social systems;
- Build the teamwork skills needed to succeed in adulthood;
- Capitalize on diverse learning styles using individualized approaches to learning; and
- Learn to live in harmony with the world around them.

1f) As a majority of the costs incurred through the life of this grant are start-up costs, or one-time costs that won't regularly appear, much of the sustainability of this charter school will depend on the regular state and federal funding received on a year to year basis. After these initial start-up costs are covered through this grant, school enrollment numbers will supply

the appropriate funding needed.

## 2. Expertise of the Charter School Developer

2a) This charter truly began as the community coming together for one cause. Because of this, the board of FoOE was the key developer for this charter school. The following figure displays the board members and their expertise.

<b>Friends of Otwell Elementary, Ltd. Board Members</b>		
<b>Officers:</b>	<b>Current Job Title and Employer:</b>	<b>Role with Friends of Otwell Elementary, Ltd. and Expertise</b>
Robert Rhodes	Retired Air Force pilot (Colonel), Elementary teacher	President and Chair of Chartering Committee Expertise: Leadership, Business Knowledge, Focus
Josh Byrd	<b>Pike County Highway Dept.</b> Foreman Skills – Construction, Paving, Painting and Equipment Operator	Vice-President Chairman of the Political Interface Committee Expertise: Political Outreach
Robert Atwood	Retired, Business Advisor to Washington Catholic	Treasurer Expertise: Business Knowledge, Finance
Elisabeth Luff	<b>Luff Law</b> – Independent Practice – Specializing in Civil Matters <b>Kimball Electronics</b> – Independent Legal Counsel	Secretary Chair of Legal Committee Expertise: Legal
<b>Additional Members:</b>		
Michelle Durcholz	<b>Kimball Electronics, Inc.</b> , Decision Support Analyst	Serves as Chair, Finance Subcommittee OMA Board Expertise: Accounting, Finance
Emily Willis	<b>Pike County Library</b> Specialization – Technology Vincennes University	Serves as Secretary for the OMA Board Chair of Publicity and Communications Committee Expertise: Communications and Public Relations
Rita Allen	Retired teacher	Expertise: Educational
Richard Padgett	<b>Union County High School</b> , Assistant Principal	Expertise: Leadership, Educational
Rose Rhodes	Retired Registered Nurse with 28 year of working experience in Intensive Care Unit, Dialysis Unit, Home Health, and Mental Health. Eight years retail store manager	Chair of the Pre-school Committee Expertise: Management, Organization, Planning
Rhonda Robinette	Bookkeeper	Expertise: Finance

Once the charter application was made and approved, FoOE received technical assistance from Grace College and Indiana Charters LLC. Grace College has three other Indiana schools it is currently chartering, all at least in their fourth year of successful operations. These schools include Seven Oaks Classical School in Ellettsville, Dugger Union Community Schools in Sullivan County, and Smith Academy of Excellence in Fort Wayne, and represent the expertise Grace College provides to OMA.

2b) Teachers at OMA will challenge and motivate students to learn by providing them with real life problems to solve. Students will learn to better communicate, collaborate, and think



critically and creatively. Project Based Learning (PBL) is an inclusive approach to education, which involves a participatory community of learners in the process of solving academic and real-world problems. It is based on a number of research-based assumptions:

- Human beings are driven to solve problems.
- We are challenged and motivated when confronted with problems that need solutions.
- The current generation of students is technologically sophisticated.
- The work world in which students will participate is increasingly characterized by critical thinking, analysis of evidence and data, and a team approach to getting work done.

Students are presented with a problem that they must research and attempt to solve. They work in groups or teams, with the teacher acting as a coach giving students guidance as to how to ultimately solve the problem. Students must do research, weigh evidence, and think critically and analytically about the problems they are examining. This experiential approach to learning will take different forms (problem-based learning, project-based learning, and design-based learning) as we differentiate instruction based upon the age and grade level of the students. The problems solved and the inquiry that the students will engage, will increase in complexity and be of a longer duration spanning numerous academic threads and multiple weeks.

At OMA, teachers will use various teaching methods to differentiate the curriculum for all learners. Differentiating the curriculum for students is natural in teaching a project-based curriculum. Students are given choices and will gravitate to “how they learn”. Differentiation is a way of teaching; it’s not a program or package of worksheets. It requires teachers to know their students well in order to provide each one with experiences and tasks that will improve learning. Educator, author, and speaker Carol Ann Tomlinson says, “differentiation means giving students multiple options for taking in information” (1999). Differentiating instruction means that you observe and understand the differences and similarities among students and use this information to plan instruction. Below is a list of some key principles the teachers will use to form the foundation of differentiating instruction in their classroom.

- Ongoing, formative assessment: Teachers continually assess to identify students’ strengths and areas of need, so they can meet students where they are and help them move forward.
- Recognition of diverse learners: The students we teach have diverse levels of expertise and experience with reading, writing, thinking, problem solving, and speaking. Ongoing assessments enable teachers to develop differentiated lessons that meet every student's needs.
- Group Work: Students collaborate in pairs and small groups whose membership changes as needed. Learning in groups enables students to engage in meaningful discussions and to observe and learn from one another.
- Problem Solving: The focus that differentiating instruction is on issues and concepts rather than the book or the chapter itself. This encourages all students to explore big ideas and expand their understanding of key concepts.
- Choice: Teachers offer students choice in their reading and writing experiences and in the tasks and projects they complete. By negotiating with students, teachers can create motivating assignments that meet students’ diverse needs and varied interests. From this list you can see that differentiating instruction asks teachers to continually strive

to know and to respond to each students' needs to maximize learning

### **3. Charter School Goals**

The goals of Otwell Miller Academy align under the overall goals of its authorizer, Grace College. These goals include having qualified staff and a staff retention rate of 90%; having students at or above passing test scores; and to uphold school autonomy.

3a) The following goals address the academic outcomes of all students that specifically related to activities within this grant:

1. 80% of students will pass state exams with proficient or superior scores by year three of the Quality Counts CSP Grant. This will be measured through state exam scores and other achievement data from the state content assessment.
2. Overall discipline referrals will decrease by 10% each consecutive year of the grant. This goal will be measured by the number of referrals in the first year of operations compared to those in the following years. Students will also participate in character development course modules to demonstrate what it means to be a productive, giving, caring member of society.
3. Maintain a 90% student retention rate by year three. While this will simply be measured by the number of students who return for their next year at Otwell Miller Academy, there will be many action steps taken to help secure this retention rate. These action steps include hosting activities to promote high student-parent engagement, quarterly achievement awards for students who are excelling and/or have no discipline referrals, and monthly celebrations for students within their classrooms.

3b) Teachers will compile an annual self-evaluation that includes teaching goals they met, administrative feedback, and an overall school assessment. After fall conferences, parents will be asked to complete a survey that measures parent satisfaction and solicits ideas for change and improvement. A second parent survey will be distributed and collected at the end of every school year to measure continued parent satisfaction. OMA will collate the information gathered from the teacher self-evaluations and parent surveys and evaluate the results for improvement in the coming year. Charter schools are schools of choice; their success is reflected in the retention of students. As a measure of accountability, OMA will strive for a 90% student retention rate (excluding exiting graduates and families relocating out of area). Parents of both returning and exiting students will be asked to indicate how the OMA program has met or not met their student's expectations and/or needs. This information will be analyzed and reviewed by the Governing Board. OMA will make every effort to provide all stakeholders, especially parents, with the progress and development of the school. We will also ask that graduating students (and their parents) complete exit interviews so that we may continually improve the quality of our school. Finally, we will ask that the Governing Board provide an end-of-year evaluation that looks not only at school achievement, but at our fiscal accountability and our service to the community.

### **4. Use of the CSP Funding**

Otwell Miller Academy plans to effectively achieve the above goals through the use of CSP funding. This funding will allow OMA to pay for professional development for staff,

purchase new technology such as Chromebooks, iPads, and Smartboards to supplement classroom learning, and to purchase new curricular materials – including textbooks – and classroom supplies. Through this funding, staff will be able to better engage students and achieve the goals set forth in this proposal.

4a) In the first year, the spending plan will focus around new curricular supplies and technology for all students. Currently, the school has purchased Chromebooks for grades 3, 4, and 5, but desires to move toward a 1:1 ratio by purchasing iPads for kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> graders. Year one will also consist of purchasing new curricular materials and classroom supplies, including new textbooks. These large purchases make up a substantial amount of the CSP grant budget.

4b). Since the CSP grant budget is designed to cover the initial, one-time costs, the basic school sustainability budget post-grant is small enough to be covered by Average Daily Membership (ADM) funding and regular state education grants received by Otwell Miller Academy.

4c) See attached Budget Worksheet.

## **5. School Governance Plan and Administrative Relationships**

5a) The Friends of Otwell Elementary LTD leadership team possesses the diverse skills needed to lead this strong community initiative. Each member of the FoOE has a vested interest in maintaining a school in the community and has strong ties to the community. Up to three members (non-officers) are selected to serve on the OMA board to ensure close ties without majority control of the school board. The Officers will be tasked with the selection and submission to the OMA Board for approval of the Director.

5b) Otwell Miller Academy is governed by a school board who is responsible for selecting and appointing a Director of the school. Through the Board, the Director has been given hiring and personnel decision-making powers as well as the power to make day-to-day school related decisions. Staff have weekly meetings as a whole, with the Director, and participate in common planning periods for peer-to-peer support.

5c) FoOE established a separate school board for OMA consisting of two students, selected by the teaching staff; two teachers, selected by the Director; two parents/guardians, elected in an open election at a public board meeting; and up to three FoOE members. Each Board member serves a 2 year term. This multilayered oversight structure provides for succession planning and creates a diverse administration.

5d) To date, OMA Board training has been conducted twice. Once prior to the start of the school year to provide a high level overview of serving on a school board. Local attorney and Secretary of FoOE provided training on basic personnel matters (confidentiality, complaint handling, etc.) and the Board's corporate structure. A follow-up training was held in October, following a few monthly Board meetings, to address questions and re-cap the initial training. Grace College offered a Director level training in Indianapolis before the start of school to assist principals in development of their roles as leaders of a charter school. Grace intends to offer this training annually and expand it to encompass the school boards.

Ideally, OMA's school board should attend the statewide School Board Association training and has proposed multiple opportunities but financial constraints have prevented attendance to date. With the help of CSP grant funds, OMA intends to offer at least one

opportunity per year. A second training event for the Finance subcommittee is preferred to assist in the necessary and crucial procedural details needed to manage and oversee school finances.

5e) Grace College will evaluate the performance of every charter school annually and for renewal purposes according to a set of academic, financial, and organizational performance standards that will be incorporated into the charter agreement. The academic performance standards will consider status, growth, and comparative performance based on federal, state, and school-specific measures. The financial performance standards will be based on standard accounting and industry standards for sound financial operation. The organizational performance standards will be based primarily on compliance with legal obligations, including fulfillment of the governing board’s fiduciary obligations related to sound governance.

5f) OMA has financial and governance reporting obligations on multiple levels. The CSP Grant funds are another layer to this web of reporting obligations – all overseen by outside accounting firm Greggs and Reid which specializes in rural charter schools. All reporting functions begin in the OMA office with the school secretary, who was responsible for the Pike County School Corporation day-to-day reporting obligations (financial) for many years. The director oversees this work and submits all accounts and reports to the OMA Board for review and approval. Any discrepancies or concerns are submitted to both Greggs and Reid and FoOE for third party evaluation and counsel. All such discrepancies and concerns are reported to Grace College for yet another layer of oversight. Grace College maintains a strict calendar for all reporting obligations.

**6. Student Recruitment and Admissions Process**

6a) Otwell Miller Academy has designed a comprehensive recruitment plan to attract a sufficient pool of applicants to meet their enrollment projections. They will prioritize diversity (as much as their demographics will dictate) in their recruitment practices. They have ensured an expansive and extensive strategy to build awareness throughout the southwestern counties in Indiana. As their immediate community holds the greatest need, they will prioritize early outreach to target families who were forced out of the school at the close of the 2015-2016 school year and enrolled in out of county schools. They will recruit neighborhoods regardless of race, disability, ethnicity, or gender, and will continue outreach efforts within the surrounding counties. Outreach has or will include: exposure through local radio stations, local paper coverage, letter of support from businesses and politicians, Town Hall meetings, social network promotions, an active website, local TV exposure, yard signs, continued monthly fundraising, flyers and mailings, door to door outreach, and family information sessions.

OMA will maintain a small school enrollment. The desired maximum capacity will be reached in year four with no more than 160 students. The founding board feels that this is a realistic and attainable number given the geographic area of Pike County. More importantly the small hometown environment is more conducive to achieving a warm nurturing school climate and culture. Additionally, controlled growth will help the teachers concentrate on curriculum and instruction rather than acclimating and acculturating many new students per year.

Grade Level	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Pre-K	20	22	22	22	22

K	20	20	22	22	22
1	22	24	24	26	26
2	22	24	26	28	28
3	22	24	26	28	28
4	22	24	26	28	28
5	22	24	26	28	28
<b>Total*</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>160</b>

OMA understands the importance of keeping the teacher/student ratio at a level conducive to continued positive outcomes. It is most important in the lower grades as children are developing essential academic and social skills to ready them for the rigors of upper levels. OMA will have one class per grade level. As the number of students increase in year two, an additional classroom assistant and community volunteers will support the class. These plans are in compliance with Indiana Code 20-24-5.

6b) In compliance with Indiana Code, if the school receives more applications than there are spaces for students, all timely applicants will be given an equal chance of admission. In this circumstance, students will be admitted to Otwell Miller Academy based on a random drawing held during a public meeting.

### **7. Meet the Needs of Educationally Disadvantaged Students**

Otwell Miller Academy is committed to providing high-quality instruction and appropriate supplemental services to students with Individualized Education Programs (IEP), students with Section 504 plans, English Language Learners, and students at risk of academic failure or dropping out. Accordingly, OMA will implement a comprehensive assessment to identify any students with these needs and serve them appropriately.

7a) OMA will provide special education and related services to any child with a disability in accordance with the child's IEP and will make a good-faith effort to assist the child to achieve the goals and objectives or benchmarks listed in the IEP. Review of the IEP will occur annually or more frequently if the student is not succeeding. In addition, Extended School Year services (ESY) (34 CFR §300.106) will be provided to the child with a disability beyond the regular school year, as necessary in order to provide Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) as determined by a child's IEP.

Students with disabilities will have available to them the variety of educational programs and services available to students without disabilities, accessible facilities, and the same instructional regular school day as is provided to all other students. In addition, OMA will ensure that each child with a disability participates with non-disabled students in non-academic and extracurricular services and activities, including meals, recess periods, and the services and activities set forth in 34 CFR §300.320.

### **8. Community Outreach Activities**

8a) From the beginning, OMA has epitomized a strong rural school. It was parents and the Otwell community who raised awareness and strong opposition to closing the public elementary school. Parents were actively involved, assisting the organizing group, getting accurate information to the community at large and gathering ideas for the OMA proposal document. There were committees of people looking at academics, governance, and

financial issues that needed to be addressed. Additionally, several local teachers helped to bring the charter to fruition.

As this initiative has been solely parent and community driven, there is no doubt community and parent groups will stay involved in the school through its inception and beyond. We will assure continued support through:

- Continued open communication between the school, parents, and the community
- Weekly parent information meetings at various community locations
- Summer activities to bring families and teachers together (picnics, ice cream social, curriculum information meetings, team building etc.)
- Contact with community members in organizing their involvement in planning curriculum and field activities
- Contact with parents in organizing volunteer opportunities

In a small rural area community involvement is an essential piece of daily instruction. Community involvement will include, but not be limited to:

- Career Day – Community members will be asked to speak to student groups regarding their vocation and what educational components are necessary to obtain employment in their profession.
- Guest Speakers – locals, foundation representatives, civic club members, politicians, historians, etc. will be utilized in teaching the history of Pike and surrounding counties.
- Field trips to museums, cemeteries', local municipalities, parks, and historic sites, will give students' unique insight into the places and things that surround them.
- Community professionals will lead students in various studies such as water and soil testing, crop growth, identification of local plants, trees, animals and fish.
- Community members will teach local folklore and customs, share artifacts, etc.
- Community liaisons will financially support summer initiatives.

Parent involvement and community collaboration are critical to student growth and will provide the educational investment necessary to develop students into a skilled workforce and responsible citizenry.

8b) N/A

## **9. Fiscal Management Plan**

9a) OMA has contracted with Greggs and Reid to assist the governing board's establishment of accounts, purchasing, and payroll processes. The governing board's approach is to assist the school in finding the best possible administrative staff prior to startup while continuing to provide detailed oversight. Depending on the skills of the individual(s) the school hires, accounting processes will be customized to take best advantage of the on-site staff.

Regardless, all processes will require at least three different individuals to be involved from the beginning to the end of each business transaction.

Software, forms, and all components of the accounting system will be State Board of Accounts (SBOA) compliant and, more importantly, will be property of OMA. Monthly management reports, including a statement of net assets, statement of revenue and expenditures, actual vs. budget analysis, and cash flow projections, will be provided to school leadership and the board. OMA selected a qualified CPA firm to conduct the annual audit and prepare appropriate non-profit informational tax returns.

9b) All items in the Budget Narrative were approved or submitted by OMA teachers and staff. All purchases will be part of the standard accounting system described above, including the multi-tiered approval process. All costs are reasonable estimates based on quoted prices or researched items. Once granted, OMA shall engage in negotiated purchasing to reduce pricing and achieve Best Pricing costs which will not exceed the estimated prices.

The CSP grant will be tracked by the school's administrative assistant, who also serves as treasurer. The school also has in place a purchase order system that is accessible to Grace College, the contracted accounting firm, and Indiana Charters LLC.

9c) Otwell Miller Academy will continue effective operation of the school and student achievement beyond initial startup costs through federal and state grants as well as ADM funding from the state of Indiana. These funding streams will provide coverage for staffing and other related costs.

## **10. Facilities**

10a) OMA's charter grant is limited to 130 students. Our new building is built to hold up to our grant population plus the Lil Hoosier's pre-school which occupies two rooms in the building. FoOE owns and manages the building for OMA's use. Local community voices have risen in support of adding to the new building as funds allow to create a "café-torium" to remove the need for the trips to the local Community Center. No definitive plans have been made but the building was designed to permit expansion. Currently, no meals are provided by the school. Plans are underworks to provide a Federally approved lunch program for the 2018-2019 school year.

Pike County School Corporation placed the Otwell Elementary School building on the Indiana Department of Education's Unused Facility list, but intends to remove it for use as its alternative school for its approximately nine students requiring special services. OMA considered acquiring the use of this site and approached the school corporation multiple times seeking to use the facility to its full potential. This building is located at 1869 N SR 257, Otwell, IN 47564.

10b) OMA currently uses two busses for a monthly fee and is responsible for maintenance, staff, inspection and licensing costs of the busses. With the assistance of CSP funds, OMA will purchase the busses securing their use in the future. The busses are vital for transporting the children to and from school in a rural community. There are two bus routes extending a 20 mile radius from the school grounds and reaching as far as Petersburg. Additionally, one bus is used for gym and library time (less than 1mile away). OMA anticipates a severely handicap child enrolling in kindergarten for the 2018-2019 school year. This anticipated student will require specialized transport necessitating the purchase of a third bus that is handicap accessible. Two bus drivers, maintenance and costs are calculated as part of the OMA 5 budget. By removing the monthly fee from the budget, much needed capital will be released for other items, such as licensing and hiring for the hoped-for third bus. It is a long term goal of OMA to expand this transportation plan to be door-to-door routes.





Appendix D:

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE P. O. BOX 2508 cnqctNNÄTT, OH 45201

Date : FEB 22

FRIENDS OF OTWELL ELEMENTARY LTD

PO BOX 4

OTWELL, IN 47564-0000

Dear Applicant :

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Employer Identification Number : 47-5295088 DLN :

26053442002566 Contact Person: CUSTOMER SERVICE 31954 Contact Telephone  
Number : (877) 829-5500

Accounting Period Ending :

December 31

Form 990 -PF Required:

Yes

Effective Date of Exemption: October 13, 2015 Addendum Applies :

No

We re pleased to tell you we determined you re exempt from federal income tax under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501 (c) (3) . Donors can deduct contributions they make to you under IRC Section 170. You re also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under Section 2055, 2106, or 2522. This letter could help resolve questions on your exempt status. Please keep it for your records .

Organizations exempt under IRC Section 501 (c) (3) are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. We determined you re a private foundation within the meaning of Section 509 (a)

You 're required to file Form 990-PF, Return of Private Foundation or Section 4947 (a) (1) Trust Treated as Private Foundation, annually, whether or not you have income or activity during the year. If you don't file a

required return or notice for three consecutive years, your exempt status will be automatically revoked.

If we indicated at the top of this letter that an addendum applies, the enclosed addendum is an integral part of this letter .

For important information about your responsibilities as a tax-exempt organization, go to [www.irs.gov/charities](http://www.irs.gov/charities). Enter <sup>11</sup> 4221-PF <sup>tt</sup> in the search bar to view Publication 4221-PF, Compliance Guide for 501 (c) (3) Private Foundations, which describes your recordkeeping, reporting, and disclosure requirements .

Letter 5437

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FRIENDS OF OTWELL ELEMENTARY LTD

Sincerely ,

Director, Exempt Organizations

Jeffrey I . Cooper

Rulings and Agreements

Letter 5437

## Appendix E: Enrollment Policy:

### Lottery and Enrollment Policy

#### **Lottery and Enrollment Policy**

- a) Tentative dates for the application period will be March 11<sup>th</sup> – April 1st, 2017. Intent-to-Enroll forms are available on the website, along with a description of the enrollment procedure. The forms will also be available for pick up at the school office. Intent-to-Enroll forms will be accepted in person or via U.S. Postal Service. Applicants will be put on an enrollment list in the order the Intent-to-Enroll forms were received. If the number of eligible applicants does not exceed the number of vacancies for the building, then all qualified applicants who have timely applied will be offered admission. If the number of applicants exceeds the number of vacant seats, OMA will hold a lottery to determine who will fill those spots.
- b) Tentative lottery date will be April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017. This is two weeks after the closing of the application period. If there are more eligible applicants than available spaces in the building, then a lottery will be conducted by random drawing in a public meeting at a time set by the administration each year. OMA will use a software program, to be determined, that has the component to facilitate the application process and lottery. A name (or number assigned to a name) will be drawn for each vacancy that exists, and each applicant whose name is drawn will be offered admission. Notification will be made by telephone, e-mail, or U.S. Postal Service. Failure of an applicant to respond within 48 hours of the date of the telephone call or e-mail, or within three (3) business days of a post-marked letter, will forfeit his/her position in the application process. Parents or guardians notified by mail will be instructed to call the school immediately upon receipt of the notice in order to preserve their child's position in the lottery.
- c) The remaining names in the lottery will be placed on a waiting list in the order in which they were drawn. If a vacancy arises before the commencement of the school year, the individual on the waiting list with the lowest number assignment will be offered admission and then removed from the waiting list. If an application is received after the application period has passed, the applicant's name will be added to the waiting list behind the names of the applicants who timely applied. Students are able to withdraw from OMA at any time during the school year. If a student would choose to re-enroll during the school year, they will be put on the waitlist, unless there is an open seat in their grade level. Currently enrolled students are not required to re-enroll each year. OMA will accept transfer students; they must follow the enrollment policy set forth by the school. Exceptions: OMA will exempt from the lottery students and siblings of students already admitted and students enrolled in the Pre-K program and their siblings if there is a space available.
- d) OMA has intentionally designed the school to operate on a scale to create effective learning opportunities for each student. This principle is in effect for the school as well as classrooms. OMA admits students of any race, color, and national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

## Appendix G: Discipline Policy

### **Attachment 9: Student Discipline Policy**

Note: All parents will be given a copy of this document during enrollment. At that time, they will be asked to read and sign that they agree to the rules and policies detailed.

#### Student Discipline

##### **Disciplinary Code of Conduct**

Otwell Miller Academy (OMA) holds high expectations for student behavior and places a high priority on maintaining an atmosphere of respect that is conducive to learning and the safety of all. We focus on making available engaging academic pursuits for all students. Students focusing on these pursuits will have little time or interest in being disruptive. In the event students make poor choices in their behavior or self-control, every effort is made to keep students working to overcome the obstacles holding them back. We ask that all parents, guardians and adults responsible for the student's behavior, encourage and assist in the enforcement of these rules and policies.

Students who engage in disruptive behavior will be informed of the disruptive behavior and called upon to correct that behavior. If a student cannot correct the behavior, he or she will be sent to meet with a school administrator. You will be notified by the school administrator of this meeting and be able to follow up with the administrator on ways to encourage improvement. Students consistently failing to show improvement, identified as three visits during a school year to an administrator, or who demonstrate such behavior as to endanger themselves or others will be suspended. OMA students cannot succeed academically when distracted by the behavior of others.

When a student is suspended, he or she will receive a Notice of Suspension from the superintendent or designee. This Notice of Suspension will contain a time and day for the parent or guardian to meet with the school administrator to discuss the events leading up to the Notice of Suspension. The meeting will review the method in which the student can achieve re-admittance to the school and set up how the student can continue his/her school while suspended.

When a student is suspended, we recommend that parents/guardians help him/her continue to meet the expectations of the school so the student does not fall further behind.

##### **Infractions with most serious consequences up to and including suspension and expulsion:**

**Code 1: Possession or use of alcohol.** No student shall knowingly possess, use or be under the influence of alcohol or any alcoholic beverage.

**Code 2: Drugs/paraphernalia and look-alikes.** No student shall engage in the unlawful selling or transmission of a controlled substance, illegal drug, alcohol, prescription drugs or anything purported to be or that is represented as a look-alike, or engaging in a criminal law violation that constitutes a danger to other students or constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function. No student shall knowingly possess, use or be under the influence of any narcotic drug, illegally obtained/used prescription drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, caffeine---based stimulants, substances containing phenylpropanolamine, stimulants or intoxicants of any kind or any paraphernalia used in connection with the listed substances.

**Code 3: Weapons/use of an object as a weapon/knowledge of deadly or dangerous weapon.**

No student shall knowingly possess, handle or transmit a knife or any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon, Deadly weapons are defined and elaborated in Indiana Code, title 35, article 41, chapter 1, section 8 (I.C. 35---41---1---8).

**Code 4: Possession of handgun.** No student shall be in possession of a handgun, a deadly weapon as defined in I.C. 35---41---1--8.

**Code 5: Possession of rifle.** No student shall be in possession of a rifle, a deadly weapon as defined in I.C. 35---41---1---8.

**Code 6: Firearms/use of an object as a weapon/knowledge of deadly or dangerous weapon.**

No student shall possess, handle or transmit any firearm or destructive device on school property. Students should report any knowledge of such weapons on school grounds immediately. Failure to do so can be grounds for suspension, pending expulsion.

**Code 7: Smoking/possession of smoking materials.** No student shall smoke or chew tobacco products while on school property. This includes in the building, on school grounds, in cars operated or parked on school grounds, or on school buses, or at any school function, dance or athletic event. Smoking and other tobacco paraphernalia, including lighters and matches, will be confiscated and not returned.

**Code 8: General disruption of the orderly educational process/disorderly conduct/terroristic threat or acts (on or off campus).** No student shall engage in violence and/or threat of violence against any student, staff member, and/or other persons. Prohibited violent or threatening conduct includes threatening, or conspiring with others to engage in a violent activity. No student shall threaten (whether specific or general in nature) damage or injury to persons or property, regardless of whether there is a present ability to commit the act. No student shall use violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, intimidation, fear, passive resistance, or other comparable conduct constituting an interference with school purposes, or urge other students to engage in such conduct. The following examples are meant to clarify types of behavior prohibited by Code 8. It is not an exhaustive list.

- Occupying any school building, school grounds or parts thereof with intent to deprive others of its use.
- Blocking the entrance or exits of any school building or corridor or room therein with intent to deprive others of lawful access to or from, or use of the building, corridor or room.
- Setting fire to or damaging any school building or property.
- Prevention of or attempting to prevent by physical act the convening or continued

functioning of any school or educational function or of any meeting or assembly on

school property.

- Continuously and intentionally making noise or acting in any manner so as to interfere with the ability of any teacher or any school personnel to conduct the educational function under their supervision.

**Code 9: Offensive touching/inappropriate lewd behavior exposing himself or herself/offensive remarks.** No student shall violate or repeatedly violate any rules that are reasonably necessary in carrying out school purposes or an educational function and are validly adopted in accordance with Indiana law, including, but not limited to engaging in sexual behavior on school property.

**Code 10: Extortion.** No student shall obtain any goods or services through force or threat.

**Code 11: Theft/counterfeiting.** No student shall steal, attempt to steal or knowingly receive school property or private property of another without the consent of the owner.

**Code 12: Fire/explosives.** No student shall be involved in setting fires or explosives that threaten or cause damage to human life or property on school grounds or at educational events. Students and the student's guardian or parent will be held responsible for payment of any damages that occur as a result of these actions.

**Code 13: Fighting.** No Student shall participate in physical altercation with another student or any other person. The physical nature of a fight could include but is not limited to hitting, punching, slapping, poking, grabbing, pulling, tripping, kicking, and pinching. School and local police authorities will be contacted as necessary to prevent injury and escalation. Situations will be

handled on a case---by---case basis to determine whether such actions were self ---defense and may or may not warrant a lesser consequence. In addition, no student shall record or videotape a fight between any individuals. If a student is caught recording or spreading such recordings (through phones, emails, YouTube, or by other means), that student will face a similar consequence.

**Code 14: Assault/Battery.** No student shall commit assault or battery against another individual. Assault is defined as placing another in fear of a harmful or offensive touching (i.e. threatening). Battery is defined as harmful or offensive touching of another.

**Code 15: Violation of school probation (academic or behavioral).** No student shall violate any school---or law---sanctioned rules, laws, or policies.

**Code 16: General classroom disruption/disorderly conduct.** No student shall fail to follow the direct instructions of a staff member. No student shall fail to comply with directions of teachers or other school personnel when the student under the supervision of such personnel, where the failure constitutes an interference with school purposes, the safety of the student or others, or an educational function.

**Code 16: Inflammatory actions/ disorderly conduct/withholding information.** No student shall participate in any behavior or say anything intended to incite another. No student shall engage in physical contact of a playful nature (horseplay) which is deemed dangerous to the student or others or disruptive. This includes but is not limited to distracting another from performing his or her job, startling, playing tricks on others, wrestling or any other playful behavior that disregards safety precautions. No student shall willfully withhold information that could be important for the safety of any person.

**Code 17: Excessive tardiness/lateness 5 times.** No student shall be tardy to school or to any class period more than 5 times each semester. In the event of an emergency, students must attain late passes from an appropriate staff member, authorizing the tardiness. Excused tardiness or lateness does not excuse the student from completing school work.

A child will be considered tardy in the morning after the tardy bell rings at 8:15 a.m.

A child will be considered tardy in the afternoon if they leave before the dismissal bell.

A 5-day letter will be issued by mail to the parents or guardian of each student who reaches five tardies within a semester.

An 8-day letter will be issued by mail requesting a conference with the attendance officer, school counselor, or principal.

A 10-day letter may be issued to the Corporation's attendance officer.

**Code 18: Loitering/out of assigned area.** All students must follow the building and transition plans specified for his or her grade level and class. No student shall be out of his or her designated areas of the building without proper documentation from an appropriate staff member. In addition, no student may be out of the classroom or cafeteria during class without a pass. This includes but is not limited to hallways, restrooms, lockers, doorways, and other offices.

**Code 19: Disruption on the school bus.** No student shall participate in any behavior deemed disruptive by a bus driver or supervisor when on a school bus.

**Code 20: Trespassing.** No student shall remain in the school after the school day has ended unless accompanied by an adult.

**Code 21: Gambling.** No student, even those of legal age under Indiana state law, shall participate in any wagering of money or something of material value.

**Code 22: Harassment/hazing/defamation of character/bullying.** No student shall ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, harm or engage in repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications transmitted, and/or physical acts committed, or any other similar behavior.

**Code 23: Simple assault, threats of violence/bullying.** No student shall engage in any kind of aggressive behavior that does physical or psychological harm to another person or urge other students to engage in such conduct. Prohibited conduct includes coercion, harassment, bullying, hazing, or other comparable conduct.

**Code 24: dress/grooming.** No student shall fail to adhere to all aspects of the dress code (students may return the same day if they rectify their dress code issues).

**Code 25: Inappropriate use of technology/computers.** No student shall have unauthorized technology on school grounds. Any technology (cellphones must remain turned off and put away during class time) seen on during class time will be immediately confiscated and held until a parent retrieves it from an administrator. No student shall misuse school technology. This includes visiting prohibited websites, using technology for unauthorized purposes, hacking into networks or files, altering settings or configurations and physically tampering with technology.

**Code 26: Lying/false statements/forgery/cheating/plagiarism.** No student shall willingly declare a false statement. Students are expected to be honest when prompted by a staff member.

No student shall participate in any activity that reveals academic dishonesty. Cheating includes

but is not limited to duplicating parts of or whole assignments as the student's original work, exchanging assignments with other students whether the intent is to copy or not, utilizing unauthorized materials during testing that supply information, utilizing a computer or other technology to attain answers to an assignment (including translators for foreign language and summaries/commentaries in lieu of reading assigned materials), giving or receiving answers during tests or quizzes, taking credit for work when the student has not contributed, and accessing a test or quiz to gain information in advance of its administration.

No student shall perform academic dishonesty in the form of plagiarism. Plagiarism may include but is not limited to taking part of or whole assignments and submitting them as original, utilizing material written by someone else or rephrasing the ideas of another without properly citing the source, presenting the work of others (including parents, friends, family members and internet sources) as original.

**Code 27: Use of abusive language.** No student will engage in the use of profane language or obscene behavior. This may include any vulgar or indecent utterance, gesture or written expression intended for another person or presented in an overt manner.

**Code 28: Defiance of school personnel's authority.** No student shall be disrespectful or insubordinate toward adults (staff or volunteer) or one another.

**Code 29: Attendance/ unexcused absences/excessive absences.** No student shall be willfully absent from school or tardy to school. Failure to report to school daily and on time will result in school consequences and may result in legal consequences. According to IC 20---33---2---11, habitual truancy is defined as "having unexcused absences from school for more than 10 days of school in on school year." Habitual unexcused absences will be reported to the Pike County Circuit Court as required by law, who will proceed in accordance with IC 31-30 through IC 31-40.

**Any absences beyond 10 days are unacceptable by the new law.**

The attendance policies are based on the premise that something important happens each day in each class. Research has proven that there is a direct relationship between good attendance and successful academic achievement. The following attendance policy has been developed to promote good school attendance:

- A 5-day letter will be issued by mail to the parents of every student who reaches five unexcused absences within the school year.
- An 8-day letter will be issued by mail to the parents of every student who reaches 8 unexcused absences within the school year. Parents must call the school and arrange a conference with the student's teacher and school administrator.



- A 10-day letter will be issued to the parent/guardian reporting that the student has reached the state's maximum days of absences.
- Any additional absences will be reported to the Prosecutor and Pike County Circuit Court.

**It is the parent's responsibility to call the school before 9:00 a.m. the day a child is absent. Pre-arranged absence forms are available in the office.**

Documented absences not counted toward the county attendance policy:

- Medical, dental, and/or other clinical appointments for the students.
  - Student illness, hospitalization, or surgery documented by a statement from the doctor.
  - Funerals of relatives or friends must be verified in writing by the parent.
  - Court appearances where the student is required to attend. Proper paperwork from the court is required.
- 
- Illness or mental or physical incapacity is an authorized excuse provided that the parent or guardian produces a certificate of the incapacity for the school within six (6) days after it is requested by the school. Valid if signed by an Indiana Physician or by an individual holding a license to practice osteopathy or chiropractic in this state or by a Christian Science practitioner who resides in Indiana and is listed in the Christian Science Journal.

**Code 30: Vandalism.** No student will cause damage to, steal or attempt to steal school property. Student or responsible adult will be held responsible for any damages that occur. Vandalism includes any malicious attempt to access, harm, alter, or destroy hardware or software. The student and the responsible adult understand any vandalism to the computers should be reported immediately to the supervising staff member. Any vandalism may result in the loss of computer services, disciplinary action, and/or legal referral.

### **Suspension/Expulsion Policy**

The grounds for suspension or expulsion listed above apply when a student is:

- on school grounds, before, during, or after school hours
- off school grounds at a school event or activity
- traveling to or from school or a school event or activity

If a student is suspended from school for any reason, participation in extracurricular activities and events is suspended until the suspension period has ended. Students who are suspended

out-of-school on Friday will not be eligible for participation in extracurricular activities and are not to be on school property until the following Monday or the end of the suspension period.

In addition to the grounds listed above, a student may be suspended or expelled for engaging in any activity on or off school grounds if the activity may reasonably be considered to be an interference with school purposes or an educational function, or the student's removal is necessary to restore order or protect persons on school property. This includes any activity meeting the above criteria that takes place during weekends, holidays, school breaks or any time a student may not be attending classes or other school functions.

Detentions after school or suspensions from class can be determined by classroom teachers in consultation with the Superintendent (refer to the appropriate Indiana law at

IC 20---8.1---5.1---4). All disciplinary actions will be clearly described to all students with the intent that students will understand the consequences of their actions (i.e., homework not completed=detention).

**Suspension from school: When an administrator (or designee) determines that a student should be suspended, the following procedures will be followed:**

- A meeting will be held with the student and an impartial administrator prior to any suspension decision. At this meeting, the student will be entitled to procedural due process, which includes:
  - Written or oral statement of the offending behavior;
  - if the student denies the events, a summary of the events will be presented; and
  - The student will be provided an opportunity to explain his or her conduct.
- The student/administrator meeting shall precede suspension of the student except where the nature of the misconduct requires immediate removal. In such situations, the meeting will follow the suspension as soon as reasonably possible. Depending the severity of the behavior, students are not guaranteed a meeting prior to suspension.
- Parents/guardians will be notified of a possible suspension as soon as possible, but in all cases, the parents or guardians of suspended students will be notified in writing. The written notification will include the dates of the suspension, nature of the student's misconduct and the action taken by the administrator. Parents/guardians will have an opportunity, if requested, to review the summary of events presented to the student.

**Expulsion from school: When an administrator (or designee) recommends to the superintendent (or designee) that a student be expelled from school, the following procedures will be followed:**

Ensure that procedural due process has been offered as cited under procedures for suspension.

Filing procedures that must be followed include:

- Accurate completion of the student information on the Request for Expulsion Form
- Signature of the appropriate administrator
- Casual hearing date and/or pre---expulsion date when applicable; otherwise, not applicable
- All appropriate suspension information, if the student has been suspended, including the dates for the beginning and ending of the suspension

The date the expulsion would end if upheld.

The request for continued suspension should be checked on the Request for Expulsion form only if a principal (or designee) is requesting that the suspension be continued. This should only be requested when there is a risk to others or to the educational process. (Note: requesting a continued suspension can result in an additional hearing just to determine the continued suspension.)

In all cases, the Request for Expulsion form must be submitted to the superintendent no later

than 2 school days after the decision to request expulsion has been made. This timeline must be adhered to because of the great risk of violating due process.

The superintendent (or designee) may conduct an expulsion meeting, or may appoint a designee as the expulsion examiner.

An expulsion will not take place until the student and the student's parent are asked to appear at an expulsion meeting conducted by the superintendent or the person designated above. Failure by a student or a student's parent to appear at this meeting will be deemed a waiver of rights administratively to contest the expulsion or to appeal it to the board.

The request to appear at the expulsion meeting will be delivered by certified mail or by personal delivery, and contain the reasons for the expulsion and the date, time, place, and purpose of the meeting.

At the expulsion meeting, the administrator (or designee) will present evidence to support the charges against the student. The student or parent will have the opportunity to answer the charges against the student, and to present evidence to support the student's position.

If an expulsion meeting is held, the expulsion examiner will make a written summary of the evidence heard at the meeting, take any action found to be appropriate, and give notice of the action taken to the student and the student's parent.

Decisions of the person conducting the expulsion meeting may be appealed to the Board of Trustees within 10 days of the receipt of the notice of action taken. The appeal to the Board must be in writing. If the appeal is properly made, the Appeals Committee of the Board of Trustees will hear the appeal and will consider the written summary of the expulsion meeting and the arguments of the school and the student and/or the student's parent. The Appeals Committee will then take any action deemed appropriate.

Students with exceptionalities or who are served by an Individual Education Plan, Behavioral Intervention Plan, or who are participating in a Functional Behavioral Assessment or any other psychometric evaluation process are subject to all the rules and protections of Indiana Article 7, IDEA, and the ADA. These students have the right to proper due process in accordance with state and federal rules and regulation. Any student who meets these standards will be adjudicated through a manifestation determination conference to establish a plan to address the given behavior. Parents should forward any questions or concerns to their child's Teacher of Record (TOR) or the superintendent.

Requests for appeal should be forwarded to:

**President Board of Trustees Otwell, Indiana 47564**

Please refer to IC 20--8.1--5.1--13 for further clarification of your rights under Indiana law. All Indiana Code referenced can be found at [www.IN.gov](http://www.IN.gov) by searching the Indiana Code referenced.

#### **Additional Disciplinary Actions**

In addition to suspensions and expulsions, students may be subject to additional disciplinary actions. These disciplinary actions may include:

- Counseling with a student or group of students
- Conferences with a parent or group of parents
- Assigning additional work
- Rearranging class schedules
- Requiring a student to remain in school after regular school hours for any reason stated above
- Restricting extracurricular activities