



**BALL STATE
UNIVERSITY**

Office of Charter Schools

Renaissance Academy Charter School

2021-22 Charter Renewal Application

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CSAPPHIRE SUBMISSIONS AND UPDATES:

The following documents were submitted in CSAPPHIRE.

School Documents

Curriculum and Instructional Methods
General Descriptions of Responsibilities of Teachers and Staff
Methods of Promoting Parent and Community Involvement Practices
Methods of Pupil Assessments
Organizational Chart (updated administrative organizational chart)
School Calendar (current school year) (**annual folder titled “School Calendar”**)
Staffing Matrix
Supplemental Programs (Information on Current Student Clubs, Organizations, and Other Extracurricular Activities Offered (including athletic teams))

Current School Plans and Policies

Conflict of Interest Policy
Criminal Background Check Policy
Deposit of Funds Policy
Discipline Policy
Elementary School Reading Plan
Fundraising Policy and Guidelines
Graduation Requirements, including diploma types offered (if applicable)
Medication Policy
Performance Evaluation Plan for Administrators and Teachers
Personnel Plan, including Methods of Selection, Retention and Compensation of Employees
Plan and Programs for At Risk and Special Populations
Policy and Procedures for Special Education
Professional Development Methods
Promotion/Retention Policy
School Admission Policy
School Safety and Emergency Preparedness Plan
Social Media Policy
Staff Handbook
Student Handbook
Student Health Screening Policy
Student Records Policy
Teacher and Staff Compensation and Benefits Plans
Transportation Policy (if applicable)

Corporate Documents

Articles of Incorporation (and any Amendments thereto)
Board Member List (including Current Contact Information)

Calendar of Board Meetings

ESP Agreement (together with all Amendments thereto, if applicable)

Financials and Budgets

School's Budgets for 2020-21 and 2021-22

School's Audit (if not conducted by Donovan CPAs) for the school years ended 6/30/2020 and 6/30/2021 (if not conducted by CliftonLarsonAllen)

Board – Agenda and Minutes

Board Minutes approving School's Budgets for 2020-2021 and 2021-2022

Insurance

Certificate of Liability Insurance

Evidence of Property Insurance

Facility Documents

Lease Agreement(s) or Deed(s) for All Occupied Facilities

Certificate of Occupancy issued by the Indiana Department of Health

RENEWAL NARRATIVE

I. Enrollment

Provide the enrollment and demographic information for the current school year.

2021-22 ENROLLMENT & DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION		
	#	%
Total Enrollment	264	
# of Students on Waiting List	20	
Gender		
Male	122	46.2
Female	142	53.8
Ethnicity/Race		
White	211	80
Black	16	6
Hispanic	8	3
Asian	5	2
Native American	0	0
Other	24	9
Special Populations		
Students with IEPs	29	11
English Language Learners	0	0
Homeless Students	3	1
Eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch	59	22.3

Provide enrollment information for length of current charter contract (ADM count).

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Total Student Enrollment	252	223	238	245	264

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 2	Year 4	Year 5
Grade	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
K	30	23	33	33	31
1	30	31	23	34	31
2	38	28	38	26	35
3	26	31	24	37	27
4	29	22	30	29	42
5	29	28	22	28	27
6	27	22	23	24	29
7	23	24	23	21	23
8	20	14	22	21	19
9	x	x	x	x	x
10	x	x	x	x	x
11	x	x	x	x	x
12	x	x	x	x	x
All Grades	252	223	238	245	264

Students eligible for special education by eligibility category

	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5	
	2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22	
	28	11%	24	11%	25	11%	27	11%	26	10%
Autism Spectrum Disorder	2	1%	3	1%	3	1%	4	2%	3	1%
Blind of Low Vision										
Cognitive Disability									1	.3%
Deaf of Hard of Hearing										
Deaf-Blind										
Development Delay (early ch)										
Emotional Disability							1	%	2	.7%
Language or Speech Impairm	11	4%	8	4%	9	4%	10	4%	8	3%
Multiple Disabilities										
Orthopedic Impairment										
Specific Learning Disability	13	5%	12	5%	11	5%	9	4%	9	3%
Traumatic Brain Injury										
Other Health Impairment	2	1%	1	%	2	1%	3	1%	3	1%

ELL students

ELL STUDENT POPULATION CHART									
Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5	
2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22	
#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
0	0	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0

Homeless students

HOMELESS STUDENT POPULATION									
Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5	
2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22	
#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Provide the number and percentage of High Ability students for length of current charter contract.

HIGH ABILITY STUDENTS									
Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5	
2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22	
#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
63	25	59	26	72	29	59	24	55	21

Enrollment Projections for the next 5 years

Academic Year	Planned Number of Students	Maximum Number of Students	Grade Levels Served
2022-23	276	308	K-8th
2023-24	276	308	K-8th
2024-25	276	308	K-8th
2025-26	276	308	K-8th
2026-27	276	308	K-8th
At Capacity (specify year)			

Executive Summary

Community and School Overview

Renaissance Academy is a small Montessori-based K-8 school in LaPorte, Indiana, and on the edge of Michigan City, Indiana, within the bounds of the Michigan City Area Schools district. It is a semi rural area near the two small cities. Michigan City has been a struggling district with many challenges, including difficulties resulting from hosting the State Prison. The district has restructured to try to create magnet schools and families have had the option of enrolling in other public schools, with many opting for New Prairie High School

The majority of Renaissance Academy students are from the Michigan City and LaPorte communities. Renaissance Academy fulfills a need in the surrounding community by providing a public option which has personalized lesson plans designed to challenge each student to reach his or her own highest potential, high teacher to student interaction, classrooms that are learner centered, rich experiential learning, and an environment where personal responsibility and safety is not a goal but a reality.

Since Renaissance Academy opened its doors 21 years ago, the school has been inundated by inquiries from parents whose children's needs were not being met by area schools. Many of the children were performing significantly below grade level expectations, many other children were not achieving at their highest potential. Renaissance Academy's individualized curriculum, hands-on learning methods, comfortable atmosphere, and enriched experiences helps all the children who enroll make remarkable progress.

At Renaissance Academy, we have found that all children benefit from a curriculum designed to encourage each student's personal best. The school is designed from the ground up to be learner

centered, with instruction tailored to each student's abilities and learning style. Students not only achieve more, they also experience greater joy in the process. We have both children and parents report a new excitement about attending school after transferring to Renaissance Academy. Even more significantly, this excitement is sustained throughout the student's career at the school.

Large traditional schools are less able to effectively address behavior issues. A large proportion of the inquiries about Renaissance Academy from parents with students in upper elementary grades are prompted by public school safety concerns. Renaissance has earned a reputation as a safe place. Students are held to a high standard of personal responsibility. Because of our small multi-age classes, segregated social groups are not tolerated and so do not form. The school fosters a family-like atmosphere where every member of the community is included and appreciated as the important individual they are.

Students at Renaissance Academy are part of defining and governing the social rules and boundaries that their society will follow. Anti-social, clique-ish, or destructive behavior is rare, and is quickly addressed and resolved. Parents have commended the school's policy of gently and immediately attending to hurt feelings. This level of responsiveness is in tremendous need, not only in the area but also in the entire country, as demonstrated by the tremendous national concern over bullying and social exclusion. We take very seriously creating a culture of inclusiveness, because we recognize that children cannot learn, feel joy, or achieve their potential in an environment where they feel threatened physically or mentally.

Related to this, Michigan City and LaPorte Middle Schools both have had to deal with violence and drug issues. We have had calls from parents who were told that their child's safety could not be guaranteed. The extensive amount of one-on-one attention students receive at Renaissance Academy, and the "family" atmosphere of the school, has allowed it to avoid these issues.

Purpose and Mission

The purpose of Renaissance Academy Charter School is to create a superior system of education in which .. every child enrolled is helped **to reach his or her greatest potential with confidence and joy**. This purpose is carried out in our mission to serve kindergarten to eighth grade students in a small school that provides a supportive community atmosphere with a rigorous academic program based in the Montessori philosophy of education and supported by student exposure to a variety of enrichment classes and experiential learning activities.

Renaissance Academy Charter School provides a valuable alternative for public school students in the larger Michigan City /LaPorte area. It closed a gap in the area by providing a small kindergarten-through-eighth grade school that combines the Montessori philosophy of hands-on learning and individualized instruction with high quality academics, high student expectations, and a wide array of enrichment activities. It is a small public school where all students can feel good about themselves while learning at their own best pace.

Our goal is to give every child who enrolls a superior educational foundation, well-rounded experience, and a lifelong love of learning.

Children have opportunities to progress far beyond the usual expectations, without feeling out of place at their current level. Students are treated with respect and taught to respect others. Every child is exposed to a wide variety of subject areas, learning methods, and enrichment courses so each can grow in his or her own best way to be the best person he or she can be.

Renaissance Academy Charter School provides a thriving school community where children feel safe and welcomed, recognized and fully accepted as the individuals they are.

Kindergarten through eighth grade is offered in an environment where children are held to high standards for their behavior and learning. Renaissance Academy Charter School has improved student achievement throughout the community with its high standards and by providing an alternate public school option.

At Renaissance Academy Charter School, we believe in incorporating hands-on, abstract, traditional, and cutting-edge techniques to personally create each child's work plan focused on the ways that he or she best learns. We believe in an academically focused Montessori philosophy of education.

Achievements, Challenges, and Plans for the Future

Renaissance Academy has enjoyed great success in carrying out its purpose and mission. We have established a stable and successful K-8 charter school attracting students from a wide area and providing a challenging supportive educational experience. The school has earned accolades for academic growth and achievement: Just before the ISTEP change, Renaissance Academy was one of six schools honored by the Indiana Department of Education for having results that showed double digit increases in English/Language Arts and Math. Almost 97 percent of Renaissance's students passed the language arts testing and 94 percent passed the state math tests. In addition, student teams have earned repeated top places in Regional and State Team Chess Tournaments,

Academic Bowl, Mathathon, and more. Renaissance students consistently show excellent growth each year. Just as importantly, students appear happy and at ease, they want to come to school and are excited about new learning, they demonstrate growth in responsibility, self-direction, academic and social skills, and they exude confidence both in school and on our many educational excursions.

In March 2020, Renaissance received great praise from the Cognia Review Team. We were pleased to earn high marks in almost every target area and were honored by the visitors' accolades.

The school has been on a solid path - fiscally responsible, stable, and meeting its goal to give every child enrolled a superior educational foundation, well-rounded experience, and help each to reach his or her greatest potential with confidence and joy.

It was only days after the review was completed that the pandemic hit new heights and schools were closed. The excellent Renaissance staff scrambled to become an online school and help all our students get through the difficult time with support from us. Then, last fall the school reopened with half days of online learning and half days on campus in outdoor classrooms. Renaissance Academy proved its grit in adapting to the circumstances to provide the best possible education for our students throughout.

Moving through to the 2021/22 school year, Renaissance has very few students leave and applications rolled in to bring the school back to the current 264 enrolled. In 2018, the school enrollment took a hit when two upper elementary teachers (and basketball coaches) left at the same time to return to their hometowns. We fully recouped and responded by working to expand our support teaching staff to be more ready to fill gaps from within, as well as focusing on trying to hire people who are long term from the area to avoid that kind of repeat. In echoes of the nation, hiring is a challenge, especially of high ability teachers but we continue to seek creative ways to meet the need.

Renaissance Academy has reached its target in terms of classrooms with two kindergarten classes, four lower elementary 1st-3rd grade classes, four upper elementary 4-6th grade classes, and two junior high 7th-8th grade classes. In the next few years, we plan to grow the student population that final 5% to reach our enrollment goals.

At the same time, we hope to increase the numbers of students coming to Renaissance Academy for our challenging high level curriculum by refortifying the school's reputation as a top choice for high ability students. This is a population the design of Renaissance serves very well.

In the past several years Renaissance, along with so most schools, has seen an increase in the number of students in need of extra support or special education services and we have worked to find ways to best meet the varied needs. Recovery from the pandemic closures and related issues has increased concerns, and brought new challenges.

We are pleased that Renaissance was ahead of the times in hiring a full time school counselor focused on social emotional learning for all students. R Counselor was positioned to help students through the difficult times and continues to be proactive in supporting students emotional needs and overall well being.

Renaissance Academy has made a positive impact on students, families, and the community and is well poised to continue serving its purpose through the next charter term and beyond.

Student Performance

Academic Performance Framework

Renaissance Academy was rated by the Cognia eProve™ as part of their renewal process with outstanding results. The Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot) is a “learner-centric classroom observation tool that comprises 28 items organized in seven environments aligned with the Cognia Standards. Trained and certified observers take into account the level of embeddedness, quality, and complexity of application or implementation; number of students engaged and frequency of application.

Renaissance Academy scored well above the Cognia averages in **Every** area of the effective learning environments evaluation.

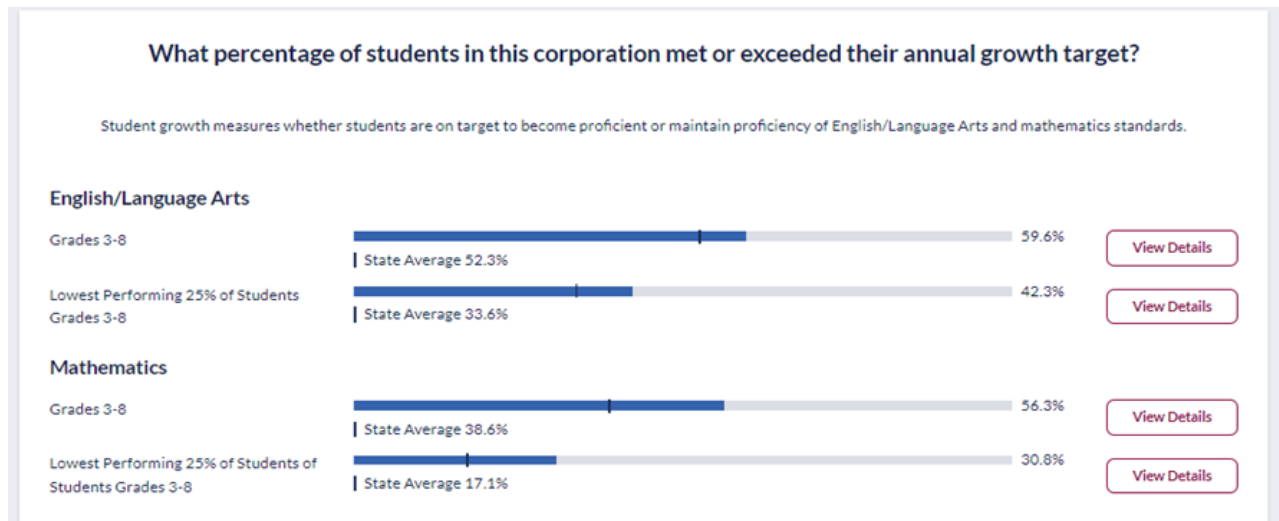
The full report is below but just to highlight the standout result from Cognia:

Status and Index of Education Quality

Below is the average (range) of all AIN institutions evaluated in the last five years. The range of the annual AIN IEQ average is presented to enable you to benchmark your results with other institutions in the network.

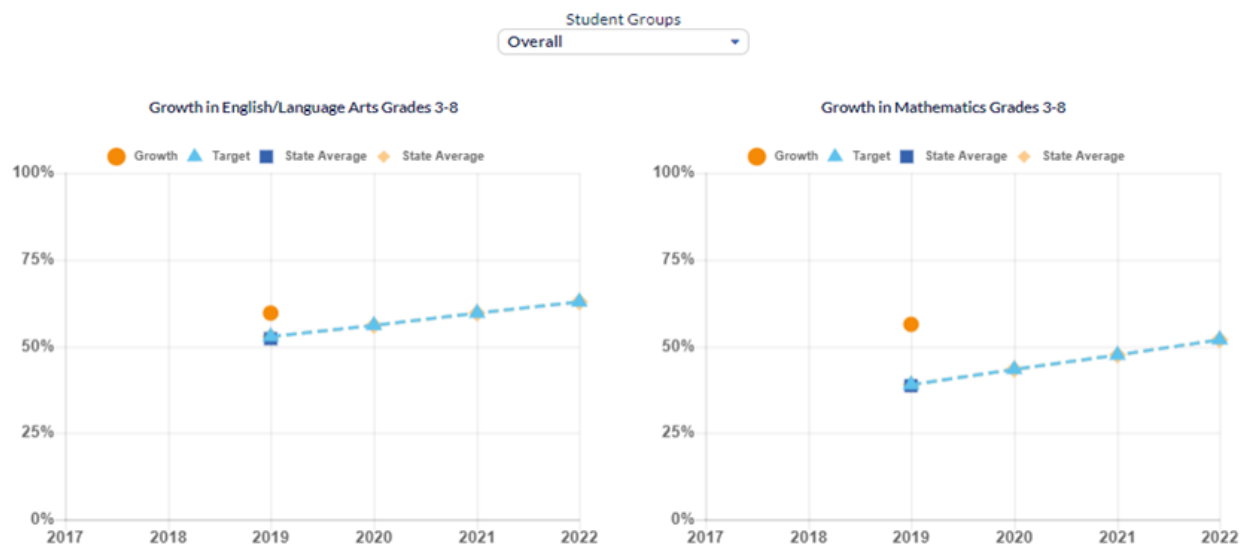
Institution IEQ	330.00	AIN 5 Year IEQ Range	278.34 – 283.33
------------------------	---------------	-----------------------------	------------------------

Likewise, Renaissance Academy is ahead of state averages in all statewide assessment scores growth measures according to the Indiana Department of Education, as shown on InView:



How are students in this corporation performing compared to the state's interim targets for English/Language Arts and Mathematics growth toward proficiency?

Interim targets indicate expected progress needed to achieve the state's long-term goals for growth toward proficiency.

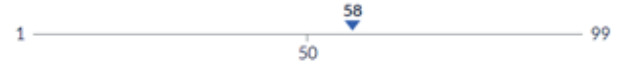


What is the median growth percentile of students in this corporation?

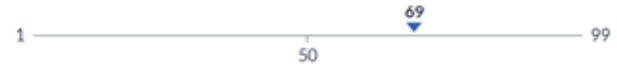
Student Growth Percentiles represent the amount of academic progress students made in a given year compared to other students with similar histories of academic achievement.



English/Language Arts Median Growth Percentile Grades 3-8



Mathematics Median Growth Percentile Grades 3-8



As well as ahead of state averages in all statewide assessment scores:

How did students in this corporation perform on the statewide assessments?

Student proficiency measures whether students met or exceeded grade-level standards and expectations.

English/Language Arts Proficiency

Grades 3-8



[View Details](#)

Mathematics Proficiency

Grades 3-8



[View Details](#)

Science Proficiency

Grades 4 & 6



[View Details](#)

Social Studies Proficiency

Grade 5



[View Details](#)

Reading Proficiency

Grade 3



[View Details](#)

How are students in this corporation performing compared to the state's interim targets for English/Language Arts and Mathematics proficiency?

Interim targets indicate expected annual progress needed to achieve the state's long-term goals for proficiency.



While the scores are not as high as we hope to achieve and we constantly strive to improve even more, finding new ways to best help our students, they are impressive. This especially when considering that the large majority of Renaissance students come from the Michigan City Area Schools Corporation which performs below the average in the same areas.

The purpose of Renaissance Academy is to create a superior educational system and, with this in mind, our staff is continuously striving to find the best ways to help every child reach his or her highest potential with confidence and joy.

Administrators, classroom teachers, special education teachers, and support staff regularly meet as teams to evaluate the success of our program and current student learning. The school boasts a highly engaged staff dedicated to the goal of continuously being the best we can be and providing the best possible learning experience for every individual child. We regularly adjust methods, rearrange groups, engage multiple support teachers, and do whatever else possible to improve learning. The results of this activity are clear and well demonstrated in the reality of what takes place.

This was demonstrated clearly once again when the school adapted to the rapidly changing world with online teaching, followed by outdoor classrooms, separated pods of students and continuing readjustments to best respond to and meet the needs of our students.

Organizational and Financial Overview

Organization

The Renaissance Academy Charter School Board of Directors is a well functioning team at this point which has been vital in navigating the many changes – quarantines, openings, closings, plans, masks, and so forth – of the COVID 19 pandemic. The Board gives school leadership the autonomy to manage day to day operations effectively and make needed quick decisions but has been available to oversee the major decisions and also to listen and help process the sometimes angry reactions of parents on both sides of each decision.

Current Board Members are Ann Bates – President, Jack Stewart – Vice President, Heidi Potucek – Treasurer, Melissa Lilly – Secretary, Nancy Barnard, Pam Navarro, Brett Antisdell. Two are current parents and two parents of graduates. One of our ongoing challenges has been finding members who can give the time needed as a board volunteer, especially from outside of the school which is important to maintaining the role of oversight with an eye to the big picture.

Renaissance Academy is an independent school that does not contract with an education service provider (ESP)

Renaissance has a strong leadership team that was central in designing the original purpose and mission of the school and obtaining the charter. The leadership is focused on carrying out this purpose to create a superior educational system in which every child can achieve his or her

highest potential with confidence and joy. Stakeholders including all staff members and students are engaged in finding the best ways to carry out this mission. Renaissance Academy Charter School boasts a dedicated and committed staff working together to provide the best possible learning environment. Leadership is an area of strength for the school.

Finance

Ball State University Financial Performance Framework Dashboard

Meets
Does Not Meet
Falls Far Below

1. NEAR TERM INDICATORS			
1.a.	Current Ratio (Working Capital Ratio)	Current Assets divided by Current Liabilities	3.76
1.b.	Cash to Current Liabilities	Cash divided by Current Liabilities	2.58
1.c.	Unrestricted Days Cash	Unrestricted Cash divided by ((Total Expenses-Depreciation Expenses)/365)	92
1.d.	Enrollment Variance	Actual Enrollment divided by Enrollment Projection in Charter School Board-Approved Budget	.96
1.e.	Default		No
2. SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS			
2.a.	Total Margin	Net Income divided by Total Revenue	7.02
		Aggregated Total Margin: Total 3 Year Net Income divided by Total 3 Year Revenues	2.30
2.b.	Debt to Asset Ratio	Total Liabilities divided by Total Assets	.44
2.c.	Cash Flow	Multi-Year Cash Flow = (Year 3 Total Cash)-(Year 1 Total Cash); One-Year Cash Flow = (Year 2 Total Cash)-(Year 1 Total Cash)	\$357,283 Multi \$156,941 1 yr
2.d.	Debt Service Coverage Ratio	(Net Income + Depreciation + Interest Expense)/(Annual Principal, Interest, and Lease Payments)	1.43

Financial Performance Framework – Data Points	
Current Assets	\$718,329
Current Liabilities	\$191,086
Cash	\$492,637
Unrestricted Cash	,\$492,637
Total Expenses	\$2,026,910
Depreciation	\$70,361

Enrollment Projection in Charter School Board-Approved Budget	276
Actual Enrollment	266
Default	Yes or No No
Net Income	\$153,051
Total Revenue	\$2,179,961
Total 3 Year Net Income	\$140,729
Total 3 Year Revenues	\$6,119,020
Total Liabilities	\$832,878
Total Assets	\$1,871,721
Year 1 Total Cash	\$135,354
Year 2 Total Cash	\$292,295
Year 3 Total Cash	\$492,637
Interest	\$29,611
Annual Principal, Interest, and Lease Payments	\$169,472

Renaissance Academy Charter School has maintained a strong financial picture even with the limited funding. School administration, teachers, staff and the Board of Directors have all worked to keep students as the number one priority in every decision made. Funding is always focused on meeting instructional needs first, and this includes classroom materials, student support, enrichment activities and experiences.

The schools Chief Administrator has done a superior job of finding and obtaining grants to help support the excellent programs Renaissance Academy Charter School provides and to assist with facility improvements. Monies from Covid assistance funds were very helpful in providing for outdoor shelters and grounds improvements to facilitate extended outdoor learning, as well as technology to support the long periods of virtual learning.

One of our next goals is the expansion of the administrative team as the constantly increasing reporting requirements and other demands have pushed our few personnel far beyond reasonable time expectations. Renaissance has recently increased our accountants hours to full time and is working to add additional secretarial support. Time for the current administration to focus on ongoing programming, as well as manage and obtain additional grants will be gained.

Ball State University - Renaissance Academy Charter School

LaPorte, IN (USA)



March 3-4, 2020

Ball State Engagement Review

268402

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Cognia Continuous Improvement System

Cognia defines continuous improvement as “an embedded behavior rooted in an institution’s culture that constantly focuses on conditions, processes, and practices to improve teaching and learning.” The Cognia Continuous Improvement System (CIS) provides a systemic fully integrated solution to help institutions map out and navigate a successful improvement journey. In the same manner that educators are expected to understand the unique needs of every learner and tailor the education experience to drive student success, every institution must be empowered to map out and embrace their unique improvement journey. Cognia expects institutions to use the results and the analysis of data from various interwoven components for the implementation of improvement actions to drive education quality and improved student outcomes. While each improvement journey is unique, the journey is driven by key actions.

The findings of the Engagement Review Team will be organized by the Levels of Impact within i3: Initiate, Improve, and Impact. The organization of the findings is based upon the ratings from the Standards Diagnostic and the i3 Levels of Impact.

Initiate

The first phase of the improvement journey is to **Initiate** actions to cause and achieve better results. The elements of the Initiate phase are defined within the Levels of Impact of Engagement and Implementation. Engagement is the level of involvement and frequency stakeholders are engaged in the desired practices, processes, or programs within the institution. Implementation is the degree to which the desired practices, processes, or programs are monitored and adjusted for quality and fidelity of implementation. Standards identified within Initiate should become the focus of the institution’s continuous improvement journey to move toward the collection, analysis and use of data to measure the results of engagement and implementation. A focus on enhancing the capacity of the institution in meeting the identified Standards has the greatest potential impact on improving student performance and organizational effectiveness.

Improve

The second phase of the improvement journey is to gather and evaluate the results of actions to **Improve**. The elements of the **Improve** phase are defined within the Levels of Impact of Results and Sustainability. Results represent the collection, analysis, and use of data and evidence to demonstrate attaining the desired result(s). Sustainability is results achieved consistently to demonstrate growth and improvement over time (minimum of three years). Standards identified within Improve are those in which the institution is using results to inform their continuous improvement processes and using results over time to demonstrate the achievement of goals. The institution should continue to analyze and use results to guide improvements in student achievement and organizational effectiveness.

Impact

The third phase of achieving improvement is **Impact** where desired practices are deeply entrenched. The elements of the **Impact** phase are defined within the Level of Impact of Embeddedness. Embeddedness is the degree to which the desired practices, processes, or programs are deeply ingrained in the culture and operation of the institution. Standards identified within Impact are those in which the institution has demonstrated ongoing growth and improvement over time and has embedded the practices within the culture of the institution. Institutions should continue to support and sustain these practices that are yielding results in improving student achievement and organizational effectiveness.

Cognia Performance and the Engagement Review

Performance is pivotal to leveraging education quality and continuous improvement. Using a set of rigorous research-based standards, the review process examines the whole institution—the program, the cultural context and the community of stakeholders—to determine how well the parts work together to meet the needs of learners. Through the Cognia Review Process, highly skilled and trained Engagement

Review Teams gather first-hand evidence and information pertinent to evaluating an institution's performance against the research-based Cognia Performance Standards. Using these Standards, Engagement Review Teams assess the quality of learning environments to gain valuable insights and target improvements in teaching and learning. Cognia provides Standards that are tailored for all education providers so that the benefits of review are universal across the education community.

Through a comprehensive review of evidence and information, our experts gain a broad understanding of institution quality. Using the Standards, the review team provides valuable feedback to institutions which helps to focus and guide each institution's improvement journey. Valuable evidence and information from other stakeholders, including students, also are obtained through interviews, surveys, and additional activities.

Cognia Standards Diagnostic Results

The Cognia Performance Standards Diagnostic is used by the Engagement Review Team to evaluate the institution's effectiveness based on Cognia's Performance Standards. The diagnostic consists of three components built around each of the three Domains: **Leadership Capacity**, **Learning Capacity** and **Resource Capacity**. Results are reported within four ranges identified by the colors. The results for the three Domains are presented in the tables that follow.

Color	Rating	Description
Red	Insufficient	Identifies areas with insufficient evidence or evidence that indicated little or no activity leading toward improvement
Yellow	Initiating	Represents areas to enhance and extend current improvement efforts
Green	Improving	Pinpoints quality practices that are improving and meet the Standards
Blue	Impacting	Demonstrates noteworthy practices producing clear results that positively impact the institution

Under Each Standard statement is a row indicating the scores related to the elements of Cognia's i3 Rubric. The rubric is scored from one (1) to four (4). A score of four on any element indicates high performance, while a score of one or two indicates an element in need of improvement. The following table provides the key to the abbreviations of the elements of the i3 Rubric.

Element	Abbreviation
Engagement	EN
Implementation	IM
Results	RE
Sustainability	SU
Embeddedness	EM

Leadership Capacity Domain

The capacity of leadership to ensure an institution's progress toward its stated objectives is an essential element of organizational effectiveness. An institution's leadership capacity includes the fidelity and commitment to its purpose and direction; the effectiveness of governance and leadership to enable the institution to realize its stated objectives; the ability to engage and involve stakeholders in meaningful and productive ways; and the capacity to implement strategies that improve learner and educator performance.

Leadership Capacity Standards										Rating
1.1	The institution commits to a purpose statement that defines beliefs about teaching and learning including the expectations for learners.									Improving
	EN:	4	IM:	1	RE:	1	SU:	1	EM:	4
1.2	Stakeholders collectively demonstrate actions to ensure the achievement of the institution's purpose and desired outcomes for learning.									Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	3	SU:	1	EM:	4
1.3	The institution engages in a continuous improvement process that produces evidence, including measurable results of improving student learning and professional practice.									Improving
	EN:	4	IM:	2	RE:	1	SU:	1	EM:	4
1.4	The governing authority establishes and ensures adherence to policies that are designed to support institutional effectiveness.									Improving
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	1	SU:	1	EM:	3
1.5	The governing authority adheres to a code of ethics and functions within defined roles and responsibilities.									Improving
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	1	SU:	1	EM:	3
1.6	Leaders implement staff supervision and evaluation processes to improve professional practice and organizational effectiveness.									Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	3	RE:	3	SU:	3	EM:	4
1.7	Leaders implement operational process and procedures to ensure organizational effectiveness in support of teaching and learning.									Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	4	SU:	3	EM:	4
1.8	Leaders engage stakeholders to support the achievement of the institution's purpose and direction.									Improving
	EN:	4	IM:	2	RE:	1	SU:	1	EM:	4
1.9	The institution provides experiences that cultivate and improve leadership effectiveness.									Improving
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	1	SU:	1	EM:	4
1.10	Leaders collect and analyze a range of feedback data from multiple stakeholder groups to inform decision-making that results in improvement.									Improving
	EN:	3	IM:	2	RE:	3	SU:	2	EM:	3

Learning Capacity Domain

The impact of teaching and learning on student achievement and success is the primary expectation of every institution. An effective learning culture is characterized by positive and productive teacher/learner relationships; high expectations and standards; a challenging and engaging curriculum; quality instruction and comprehensive support that enable all learners to be successful; and assessment practices (formative and summative) that monitor and measure learner progress and achievement. Moreover, a

quality institution evaluates the impact of its learning culture, including all programs and support services and adjusts accordingly.

Learning Capacity Standards										Rating
2.1	Learners have equitable opportunities to develop skills and achieve the content and learning priorities established by the institution.									Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	4	SU:	3	EM:	4
2.2	The learning culture promotes creativity, innovation and collaborative problem-solving.									Improving
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	2	SU:	1	EM:	4
2.3	The learning culture develops learners' attitudes, beliefs and skills needed for success.									Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	4	SU:	3	EM:	4
2.4	The institution has a formal structure to ensure learners develop positive relationships with and have adults/peers who support their educational experiences.									Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	4	SU:	4	EM:	4
2.5	Educators implement a curriculum that is based on high expectations and prepares learners for their next levels.									Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	4	SU:	3	EM:	4
2.6	The institution implements a process to ensure the curriculum is aligned to standards and best practices.									Impacting
	EN:	4	4	4	RE:	4	SU:	4	EM:	4
2.7	Instruction is monitored and adjusted to meet individual learners' needs and the institution's learning expectations.									Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	4	SU:	4	EM:	4
2.8	The institution provides programs and services for learners' educational futures and career planning.									Improving
	EN:	2	IM:	3	RE:	3	SU:	3	EM:	3
2.9	The institution implements processes to identify and address the specialized needs of learners.									Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	3	SU:	4	EM:	4
2.10	Learning progress is reliably assessed and consistently and clearly communicated.									Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	3	RE:	3	SU:	3	EM:	4
2.11	Educators gather, analyze, and use formative and summative data that lead to demonstrable improvement of student learning.									Impacting
	EN:	3	IM:	4	RE:	4	SU:	4	EM:	4

Learning Capacity Standards										Rating
2.12	The institution implements a process to continuously assess its programs and organizational conditions to improve student learning.									Insufficient
	EN:	1	IM:	2	RE:	1	SU:	1	EM:	1

Resource Capacity Domain

The use and distribution of resources support the stated mission of the institution. Institutions ensure that resources are distributed and utilized equitably so the needs of all learners are adequately and effectively addressed. The utilization of resources includes support for professional learning for all staff. The institution examines the allocation and use of resources to ensure appropriate levels of funding, sustainability, organizational effectiveness, and increased student learning.

Resource Capacity Standards										Rating
3.1	The institution plans and delivers professional learning to improve the learning environment, learner achievement, and the institution's effectiveness.									Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	3	SU:	2	EM:	4
3.2	The institution's professional learning structure and expectations promote collaboration and collegiality to improve learner performance and organizational effectiveness.									Improving
	EN:	4	IM:	2	RE:	1	SU:	1	EM:	4
3.3	The institution provides induction, mentoring, and coaching programs that ensure all staff members have the knowledge and skills to improve student performance and organizational effectiveness.									Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	2	SU:	2	EM:	4
3.4	The institution attracts and retains qualified personnel who support the institution's purpose and direction.									Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	3	RE:	2	SU:	3	EM:	4
3.5	The institution integrates digital resources into teaching, learning, and operations to improve professional practice, student performance, and organizational effectiveness.									Initiating
	EN:	2	IM:	1	RE:	1	SU:	1	EM:	2
3.6	The institution provides access to information resources and materials to support the curriculum, programs, and needs of students, staff, and the institution.									Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	2	SU:	2	EM:	4
3.7	The institution demonstrates strategic resource management that includes long-range planning and use of resources in support of the institution's purpose and direction.									Improving
	EN:	2	IM:	3	RE:	2	SU:	2	EM:	4

Resource Capacity Standards										Rating
3.8	The institution allocates human, material, and fiscal resources in alignment with the institution's identified needs and priorities to improve student performance and organizational effectiveness.									Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	3	RE:	3	SU:	2	EM:	4

Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool® Results

The Cognia eProve™ Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot) is a learner-centric classroom observation tool that comprises 28 items organized in seven environments aligned with the Cognia Standards. Classroom observations are conducted for a minimum of 20 minutes. Trained and certified observers take into account the level of embeddedness, quality, and complexity of application or implementation; number of students engaged and frequency of application. Results from the eleot are reported on a scale of one to four based on the students' engagement in and reaction to the learning environment. In addition to the results from the review, the average results from all reviews for the previous year are reported to benchmark your results against. The eleot provides useful, relevant, structured, and quantifiable data on the extent to which students are engaged in activities and/or demonstrate knowledge, attitudes, and/or dispositions that are conducive to effective learning.

The insights eleot data provide an invaluable source of information for continuous improvement planning efforts. Although averages by eleot Learning Environment are helpful to gauge quality at a higher, more impressionistic level, the average rating for each item is more fine-grained, specific and actionable. Institutions should identify the five to seven items with the lowest ratings and examine patterns in those ratings within and across environments to identify areas for improvement. Similarly, identifying the five to seven items with the highest ratings also will assist in identifying strengths within and across eleot Learning Environments. Examining the eleot data in conjunction with other institution data will provide valuable feedback on areas of strength or improvement in institution's learning environments.

eleot® Observations		
Total Number of eleot Observations:		17
Environments	Rating	2018-19 Averages
Equitable Learning Environment	3.43	2.82
Learners engage in differentiated learning opportunities and/or activities that meet their needs	2.88	2.34
Learners have equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support	3.71	3.30
Learners are treated in a fair, clear and consistent manner	3.94	3.45
Learners demonstrate and/or have opportunities to develop empathy/respect/appreciation for differences in abilities, aptitudes, backgrounds, cultures, and/or other human characteristics, conditions and dispositions	3.18	2.18
High Expectations Environment	3.39	2.71
Learners strive to meet or are able to articulate the high expectations established by themselves and/or the teacher	3.47	2.74

eleot® Observations		
Total Number of eleot Observations:		17
Environments	Rating	2018-19 Averages
Learners engage in activities and learning that are challenging but attainable	3.47	2.95
Learners demonstrate and/or are able to describe high quality work	3.24	2.43
Learners engage in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks that require the use of higher order thinking (e.g., analyzing, applying, evaluating, synthesizing)	3.47	2.67
Learners take responsibility for and are self-directed in their learning	3.29	2.78
Supportive Learning Environment	3.79	3.15
Learners demonstrate a sense of community that is positive, cohesive, engaged, and purposeful	3.76	3.07
Learners take risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback)	3.71	2.97
Learners are supported by the teacher, their peers and/or other resources to understand content and accomplish tasks	3.82	3.24
Learners demonstrate a congenial and supportive relationship with their teacher	3.88	3.34
Active Learning Environment	3.01	2.71
Learners' discussions/dialogues/exchanges with each other and the teacher predominate	3.24	2.77
Learners make connections from content to real-life experiences	2.76	2.41
Learners are actively engaged in the learning activities	3.47	3.12
Learners collaborate with their peers to accomplish/complete projects, activities, tasks and/or assignments	2.59	2.45
Progress Monitoring and Feedback Environment	3.28	2.63
Learners monitor their own learning progress or have mechanisms whereby their learning progress is monitored	3.12	2.43
Learners receive/respond to feedback (from teachers/peers/other resources) to improve understanding and/or revise work	3.47	2.93
Learners demonstrate and/or verbalize understanding of the lesson/content	3.71	2.90
Learners understand and/or are able to explain how their work is assessed	2.82	2.25
Well-Managed Learning Environment	3.60	3.20
Learners speak and interact respectfully with teacher(s) and each other	3.82	3.42
Learners demonstrate knowledge of and/or follow classroom rules and behavioral expectations and work well with others	3.76	3.35
Learners transition smoothly and efficiently from one activity to another	3.35	2.89

eleot® Observations		
Total Number of eleot Observations:		17
Environments	Rating	2018-19 Averages
Learners use class time purposefully with minimal wasted time or disruptions	3.47	3.15
Digital Learning Environment	1.25	1.79
Learners use digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning	1.29	1.97
Learners use digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning	1.24	1.79
Learners use digital tools/technology to communicate and/or work collaboratively for learning	1.24	1.61

Status and Index of Education Quality®

Cognia will review the results of the Engagement Review to make a final determination concerning performance status, including the appropriate next steps for your institution in response to these findings. Cognia provides the Index of Education Quality (IEQ) as a holistic measure of overall performance based on a comprehensive set of standards and review criteria. A formative tool for improvement, it identifies areas of success as well as areas in need of focus. The IEQ is comprised of the Standards Diagnostic ratings from the three Domains: 1) Leadership Capacity; 2) Learning Capacity; and 3) Resource Capacity. The IEQ results are reported on a scale of 100 to 400 and provides information about how the institution is performing compared to expected criteria. Institutions should review the IEQ in relation to the Findings from the review in the areas of Initiate, Improve and Impact. An IEQ score below 250 indicates that the institution has several areas within the Initiate level and should focus their improvement efforts on those Standards within the Initiate level. An IEQ in the range of 225-300 indicates that the institution has several Standards within the Improve level and is using results to inform continuous improvement and demonstrate sustainability. An IEQ of 275 and above indicates the institution is beginning to reach the Impact level and is engaged in practices that are sustained over time and are becoming ingrained in the culture of the institution.

Below is the average (range) of all AIN institutions evaluated in the last five years. The range of the annual AIN IEQ average is presented to enable you to benchmark your results with other institutions in the network.

Institution IEQ	330.00	AIN 5 Year IEQ Range	278.34 – 283.33
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Insights from the Review

The Engagement Review Team engaged in professional discussions and deliberations about the processes, programs and practices within the institution to arrive at the findings of the team. These findings are organized around themes guided by the evidence, examples of programs and practices and provide direction for the institution's continuous improvement efforts. The Insights from the Review narrative should provide contextualized information from the team deliberations and provide information about the team's analysis of the practices, processes, and programs of the institution from the levels of Initiate, Improve, and Impact. The Insights from the Review narrative should provide next steps to guide

the improvement journey of the institution in its efforts to improve the quality of educational opportunities for all learners. The findings are aligned to research-based criteria designed to improve student learning and organizational effectiveness. The feedback provided in the Engagement Review Report will assist the institution in reflecting on its current improvement efforts and to adapt and adjust their plans to continuously strive for improvement.

The Engagement Review Team identified several themes from the review that support the continuous improvement process for Renaissance Academy. These themes present strengths and opportunities to guide the improvement journey.

Montessori philosophy and culture pervade all aspects of the operations, especially the focus on student-centered academics, the social/emotional emphasis, and the environment of family.

Student agency, called upstanders, was evidenced throughout the academics and extra-curricular activities. Each student observed had a work log for the week, was able to articulate the work expectations and the choices provided for completing work. Student interviews reinforced the concept that students were self-starters, worked collaboratively, and provided assistance and guidance to both younger students and peers. The social and emotional environment observed was one of kindness, caring, and helpfulness. Any digression from this expectation was immediately addressed, as noted in leadership interviews. The eleot observations reinforced the caring and safe relationship between students and adults and between students and students. Parent interviews emphasized the kindness displayed in the school and the prompt addressing of any misbehavior or unkind action or words. Teachers repeatedly said that the word family described the school. The concept of family extends to teachers who recently gave birth, being able to bring the baby to school and care for the baby in the work environment with the assistance of other adults when needed. Students cared for the family environment by removing their outdoor shoes and putting on slippers or house shoes. Overall, this environment is one of caring and support for both students and adults and contributes to the academic achievement of students, as noted on state assessments.

Collaborative spirit, cohesive staff, and the philosophy of students first were evident in the observed interactions and the interviews. The willingness of the staff to continue to grow professionally was evidenced through interviews and staff emphasis on being able to attend professional development outside of what is offered through Renaissance Academy. Interviewees indicated that if they provided a rationale, they were allowed to attend professional development with the expectation they bring back the information and teach their colleagues. Leadership indicated, through interviews and discussion, that they adjusted the math curriculum outside of the Montessori curriculum to meet the academic needs of the students and provide them the skills they need to succeed at the next level and in future education at high school. Through collaboration with the area high schools the students will likely attend, Renaissance Academy adapted the curriculum to make certain that the students are prepared to succeed academically. This supports the philosophy of students first.

Exposure to multi-age classes and to opportunities outside of the classroom by having a three-year cycle of experiential learning so that all students are exposed to a variety of cultures and experiences to expand their horizons and to let students see the potential possibilities distinguishes Renaissance Academy. Students at Renaissance Academy are in three-year, multi-age classrooms that allow the older students to serve as role models, and the younger students to receive guidance and assistance from older peers until the younger students become the older students and new roles are adopted. In addition to the classroom opportunities to

learn and use leadership skills, Renaissance Academy uses clubs to foster students' interests and provide them life-skills and opportunities for service learning. The Engagement Review Team witnessed the students engaged in clubs on Tuesday afternoon for 1.5 hours. During this time, student's problem-solved through chess-playing and rubric cube solutions, participated in service-learning with a partnership with the local animal shelter, gained real-life skills through cooking, and built sets for the whole school play. Observation by the Engagement Review Team and interviews with students and parents reinforced the importance of these opportunities to the development of the whole student. Experiential learning is planned to expose students to experiences they most likely would not have, such as snowshoeing as part of the unit on ancient cultures. Student and parent interviews support the importance of these experiences in the development of the whole child.

Formal processes for collection, documentation, and analysis of data for all operations is an area Renaissance Academy might consider strengthening its operational and academic functions. Renaissance Academy's leadership is aware that formal documentation of data collection is an area of weakness due to the bare-bones operation. Leadership is continually seeking input and feedback from stakeholders, as evidenced through interviews with students, teachers, and parents. However, it is not a formal, documented process, and according to leadership interviews, it has not been formalized due to a lack of time and a philosophy of student needs first. The Engagement Review Team found limited artifacts that document the collection and analysis of data in the area of operations. Finances limit the addition of a data director, and leadership is making an effort to have the secretary document meetings and data decisions. However, Renaissance Academy would be well served if a data director could be employed.

To prepare the students to be digital citizens, Renaissance Academy might want to consider ways to integrate more digital use into the academic program. Renaissance Academy leadership recognized that their students need digital skills to access information and to have the needed skills to take the state assessments. To accomplish this, a grant was secured to obtain iPads, and each classroom is 1 to 1. Students do use the technology, especially to access the supplemental math curriculum and the social/emotional curriculum. However, technology is not a major emphasis of the academic program, as witnessed by the Engagement Review Team during eleot observations. Interviews with students and parents acknowledged that digital use is not a significant focus, and both groups were happy that more emphasis was put on reading than using technology. Students were observed using technology during the club time to gain information and problem solve. Renaissance Academy was just awarded the Digital Learning Grant that should help support the infusion of digital technology into more aspects of the environment. The Engagement Review Team noted that a math teacher had to be pulled half-time from the classroom to manage the iPads. However, that solution did not fully meet the academic nor technological needs as a full-time person is needed to manage the technology if students are to have more integration into the academic program. Ways need to be found to have more human resources to manage the digital needs of students and the organization.

Renaissance Academy is to be commended for the learning environment created for the students and staff. The routines and procedures prepare the students for future academic and life success and provide them with the knowledge needed to do well in whatever endeavor they seek. Renaissance Academy does a remarkable job of allocating human, material, and fiscal resources to fulfill the mission and meet the most pressing needs. However, a need for more human resources to manage digital technology and collect and analyze data is apparent.

Next Steps

Upon receiving the Engagement Review Report the institution is encouraged to implement the following steps:

- Review and share the findings with stakeholders.
- Develop plans to address the areas for improvement identified by the Engagement Review Team.
- Use the findings and data from the report to guide and strengthen the institution's continuous improvement efforts.
- Celebrate the successes noted in the report
- Continue the improvement journey

Team Roster

The Engagement Review Teams are comprised of professionals with varied backgrounds and professional experiences. All Lead Evaluators and Engagement Review Team members complete Cognia training and elect certification to provide knowledge and understanding of the Cognia tools and processes. The following professionals served on the Engagement Review Team:

Team Member Name	Brief Biography
Kristine Simons, Lead Evaluator	Kristine Simons retired after more than 40 years in education in three states. She holds a Bachelor of Science in education, a Master of Science in U.S. and Russian history, and advanced coursework in educational administration and leadership. Her career included positions as a substitute teacher, a college administrator, a high school history teacher, a department head and district gifted and talented coordinator in Illinois. In Indiana, Simons worked as an administrator and adjunct faculty at Indiana University before returning to the public schools where her career spanned 16 years in the school corporations of Elkhart, Penn, Mishawaka and South Bend in northern Indiana. Her positions included assistant principal, principal, founding director of an alternative high school and central office director. In Michigan, Simons served as a principal for rural and urban schools, as well as a New Tech director and assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction in Benton Harbor. Her doctoral research focused on the principal as a change agent. For Cognia, Simons served as a team member and an associate lead for school and system reviews, digital learning reviews and a diagnostic review, as well as a lead for school reviews.
Jill Barker	Jill Barker is currently in her fifth year of serving as C.E.O. and superintendent of Anderson Preparatory Academy, a public charter school located in Anderson, IN. She has been an educator for 15 years. Mrs. Barker previously served as director of curriculum and academics for Anderson Preparatory Academy as well as a high school English teacher. Additionally, she taught English 5-12 at G.E.O. Academies – 21 st Century Charter School at Fall Creek for four years. Mrs. Barker earned her B.A. in English education from Indiana State University, her M.A. in educational leadership and supervision from Ball State University, and her M.B.A. from Western Governors University. Mrs. Barker has served on multiple charter renewals and mid-term reviews.

Team Member Name	Brief Biography
Mary Mickelson	<p>Mary Mickelson is an experienced educator, having served as teacher, administrator, state education agency program director, and Lead Evaluator for Cognia. Mary has led school, system, and corporate teams in Indiana, Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Texas. She has served as Lead Evaluator or Associate Lead for Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) schools in Germany, the Netherlands, Japan, and South Korea. She has served as Lead Evaluator and team member for international school accreditation teams in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Lebanon, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Switzerland, and China. Ms. Mickelson is an adjunct instructor for transition to teaching programs. She has taught curriculum/instruction courses for online graduate education programs as well as onsite courses in Indiana and China. Mary served the Indiana Department of Education as the director of school accreditation and education consultant for gifted/talented education. In addition, Mary has experience at the local school and district levels serving as a continuous improvement and assessment director, gifted/talented education coordinator/teacher/curriculum developer, music educator, and grant writer. Ms. Mickelson holds a Bachelor of Science in music education and a Master of Library Science, Master of Arts music education/music history from Indiana State University as well as the gifted/talented education endorsement from Purdue University.</p>
Eva Merkel	<p>Eva Merkel accepted the position as Lakeland School Corporation superintendent in July 2016 after acting as interim superintendent/Lakeland High School principal from January 2015 through July 2015 and again from March 2016 through June 2016. She served as Lakeland High School principal for seven years. Previous positions include New Haven High School principal, assistant to the superintendent for East Allen County Schools, Harlan Elementary School principal, Leo Jr./Sr. High School and Bishop Dwenger High School assistant principal, and biology and chemistry teacher at Bishop Dwenger High School and Frankfort Senior High School. Before becoming a teacher, Merkel worked as a research technician for Indiana University Medical School at both the Fort Wayne and Indianapolis campuses. She is a 1980 graduate of East Chicago Washington High School. As of 1983, she earned a B.S. from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods; holds an M.S. in education as well as an Ed.S., and Ed.D. degree from Indiana University.</p>

Team Member Name	Brief Biography
Jayne Virostko	<p>Jayne Ann Virostko is currently in her first year as the principal of Woodrow Wilson Middle School in Terre Haute, Indiana. She has been an educator for 27 years. Ms. Virostko was a mathematics teacher for 16 years in Vigo County, Southwest Parke, and North Montgomery schools. Ms. Virostko then served as the assistant principal for three years and principal for seven years at North Vermillion. Ms. Virostko earned her undergraduate degree from St. Mary-of-the-Woods College. She earned her Master of Science in curriculum and then her Educational Specialist degree from Indiana State University. Ms. Virostko served on multiple accreditation visits and also served as a Lead Evaluator.</p>

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