



**BALL STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

**Office of Charter Schools**

**2021-22 Charter Renewal Application**

**October 1, 2021**

**Rural Community Academy**

*“THE hands-on learning experience  
powered by parents and community”*



## **RENEWAL NARRATIVE**

### **I. Enrollment Diagnostic**

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

2021-22 ENROLLMENT & DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION		
	#	%
Total Enrollment	118	
# of Students on Waiting List	0	
Gender		
Male	65	55%
Female	53	45%
Ethnicity/Race		
White	115	97%
Black		
Hispanic		
Asian		
Native American		
Other multi-racial	3	3%
Special Populations		
Students with IEPs	33	28%
English Language Learners	0	
Homeless Students	0	
Eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch	78	70%

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

	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2021-22</b>
<b>Total Student Enrollment</b>	177	135	95	97	118

*Provide the student attendance information for the length of the charter contract.*

	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
<b>Grade</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2021-22</b>
<b>K</b>	15	13	11	17	19
<b>1</b>	31	9	11	8	18
<b>2</b>	21	23	9	10	13
<b>3</b>	22	21	18	12	9
<b>4</b>	24	21	12	15	11
<b>5</b>	20	16	11	12	13
<b>6</b>	15	15	13	9	12
<b>7</b>	10	22	10	3	14
<b>8</b>	7	7	7	4	9
<b>9</b>					
<b>10</b>					
<b>11</b>					
<b>12</b>					
<b>All Grades</b>	177	135	95	97	118

Provide the number and percentage of students eligible for special education by eligibility category for the length of the current charter contract based on each school year's December 1 count..

	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5	
	<b>2017-18</b>		<b>2018-19</b>		<b>2019-20</b>		<b>2020-21</b>		<b>2021-22</b>	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Autism Spectrum Disorder	14	22%	7	13%	5	5%	4	13%	5	16%
Blind of Low Vision										
Cognitive Disability										
Deaf of Hard of Hearing										
Deaf-Blind										
Development Delay (early childhood)					2	4%	1	3%	3	9%
Emotional Disability	4	6%	3	4%	13	4%	2	6%	2	6%
Language/Speech Impairment	7	11%	6	30%	8	38%	11	35%	11	34%
Multiple Disabilities			1	1%	1	2%	1	3%		
Orthopedic Impairment										
Specific Learning Disability	21	33%	17	30%	1	21%	6	19%	7	22%
Traumatic Brain Injury										
Intellectual Disability	2	3%	2	4%	2	4%	1	3%		
Other Health Impairment	16	25%	10	19%	5	19%	5	16%	4	13%
Total	64	100%	45	100%	36	100%	31	100%	32	100%
<b>#/% of Total Enrollment</b>	177	36%	135	33%	95	38%	97	43%	118	27%

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

<b>ELL STUDENT POPULATION CHART</b>									
Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5	
<b>2017-18</b>		<b>2018-19</b>		<b>2019-20</b>		<b>2020-21</b>		<b>2021-22</b>	
#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1	100%	1	100%	1	100%	0	100%	0	100%

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

<b>HOMELESS STUDENT POPULATION</b>									
Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5	
<b>2017-18</b>		<b>2018-19</b>		<b>2019-20</b>		<b>2020-21</b>		<b>2021-22</b>	
#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
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.

<b>HIGH ABILITY STUDENTS</b>									
Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5	
<b>2017-18</b>		<b>2018-19</b>		<b>2019-20</b>		<b>2020-21</b>		<b>2021-22</b>	
#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
0	0	0	0	10	100%	10	100%	17	100%
% Total Enrollment					10.5%		10.3%		14.4%

*Enrollment Projections for the next 5 years*

Academic Year	Planned Number of Students	Maximum Number of Students	Grade Levels Served
2022-23	130	180	K-8
2023-24	140	180	K-8
2024-25	150	180	K-8
2025-26	160	180	K-8
	170	180	K-8
At Capacity (specify year)	180 in 6 years	180	K-8

***Optional narrative about your Enrollment Diagnostic***

There are three rural charter schools under the Ball State umbrella that have several of the same problems and yet successes. Rural Community Academy started in 2004; Cannan Community Academy and Mays Community Academy utilized Rural's charter design with a place-based curriculum. We know, as we guided them along their charter success.

Rural charters are different than urban or suburban charters. The rural environment focuses on the student, parents and community. All three of these rural charters were previously the community school where generations of grandparents, parents, and their children and grandchildren attended. Rural communities are more stagnant in moving from "home". The advantage of rural schools are they are smaller which is more conducive to working with students one-on-one.

As rural charter schools, parent choice is perceived as thinking children receive more instruction in a smaller school, especially in the elementary grades. And the parent choice for an environment where their educationally delayed or autistic child could receive more attention is a small, rural charter schools. The other choice for these parents are non-inclusive classrooms or "special" classrooms in a large traditional school environment. In fact, we have often heard from parents that the traditional schools recommend our school for behavioral and learning disabilities.

And caring for special needs students is a passion at RCA. Not only do we work with students one-on-one because of our small classrooms, we provide a victory for special needs students in outcomes. Teachers work with students with delay and special learning needs to increase background knowledge and build their skills in the reading process. Math follows reading skills and computation. And for certain instruction, life skills is necessary which matches well with our place-based curriculum.

## II. Executive Summary

### A. School and Community Overview

#### 1. Briefly describe the community/communities the school serves and explain how the school's mission and model is meeting identified community needs. Describe the needs-based rationale for focusing on the targeted student population.

As a K-8 school, we are not a geographical mecca as we border Illinois on the west and lie between Terre Haute and Vincennes. The north and south corridors on State Road 63 are townships that are even smaller than ours at 344 households. Our township is 64% farmland. The county seat is 10 miles away. The majority of our students come from Southwest School Corporation (1,820 students) and some from Northeast School Corporation (927 students). Transportation became increasingly important, and it is going very well with strategic pick up points for pockets of population. We have a charter competitor in Sullivan County in Dugger Union, sponsored by Grace College. With a county of less than 20,000 populace, each little hamlet has a rich history. Many rural schools have died over the years with consolidation for the sake of a taxpayer dollar and those towers of educational strength and fierce sports competition have ceased to exist except in a county who normally would not have even one charter, let alone two. We predict that before it is over that the two traditional school corporations will merge, leaving two charters and one traditional corporation.



Sullivan County is no different than any other rural community. One school does not support the needs of all students. We consider ourselves as a viable choice for parents in meeting the educational needs of their child(ren). School choice describes a wide array of programs aimed at giving families the opportunity to choose the school their children will attend. The school is primarily comprised of students whose parents believe in choice. We are not drawing from the small rural community where the school is located but rather we are drawing the majority of students from the traditional school corporation. The community alumni are aging and dying off which has reduced the support we see from when the Big Bang happened and the local school district decommissioned the school.

The community wants a school where our rural life is preserved. The parents want a good education for their child, which means that each child can be the best they can be. The staff cares. The boards of both the community non-profit and the school want to achieve the missions each organization has set forth.

Our basic mission is reviewed at each charter renewal and the mission has not changed in what it represents as it gets clearer with additional wording with each renewal. Our ideals and beliefs have been refined over time but still contains what the original organizers designed. It is apparent our unique mission allows us an opportunity for a “do over” in communicating to the new millennial parents that our school is different. We feel that communicating our organizational goals would also instill the recognition that our school is different. Utilizing the same communication as our mission, we feel as though we can solidify our uniqueness with a new generation of families who are different than those of 20 years ago which utilized television, radio, newspaper, and

signage that we have invested in so heavily during our first years. Now it is time to reinvent to the digital age and renew the reason we are a school of choice.

Being in a small, rural community with less than 20,000 people and only 5 stop lights in the entire county has its advantages. Our county has only one newspaper and it is only published 3 days a week, and we believe some grandparents with character and values still tell their children what they should do. By utilizing our own large, recently acquired portable billboard in the center of the county seat, we are talking about placing our mission on both sides of it as well as utilizing newspaper and social media as well as our website to communicate our mission before our next enrollment period. Our recent marketing class has led us to discuss school-specific benefits and how to relay those benefits to millennial parents. The revised mission statement was approved at the April 20, 2021 Board meeting.

School choice does not give preference to one form of schooling or another, but rather it manifests itself whenever a student attends school outside of the one they would have been assigned to by geographic default. We feel we give parents more control over their child's education, allowing parents to pursue the most appropriate learning environments for their child(ren). We feel we give stronger discipline with consequences for actions, everyday skills relative to life, and good foundational skills. We market the school as a School of Choice. We believe that we make a difference by educating each student based upon their needs – whether that is special needs, poverty rates and even students without these needs.

Our mission is attractive to not only parents but also to enhance education with class sizes limited to 20 students to allow educators more of an opportunity to work one-on-one with students. Then to enhance the learning inside and outside of the classroom with people, places and things in our community, coupled with partnerships, local history and giving back to our community.

**2. Describe the school's size, community/communities, location, and changes it has experienced over the last charter term. Include demographic and socio-economic changes about the students, staff, and community at large.**

As everyone is aware, in 2017-18 we changed school leadership as our leader retired. These are the areas that have changed from that time with the new leadership:

<b>Demographics</b>	<b>Leadership for 12 years</b>	<b>Leadership for 18 months</b>
Students	168	95
Staff	35 (experienced)	25 (mostly inexperienced)
Special Education Count	70	53
Title I Count	59	33
Stakeholder Support	Fairly good	Divided

Time takes care of a lot of things and after a three-year stint of a disintegrating enrollment, staff changes and stakeholder support, we are at the stage of re-building. We are slowly gaining with fighting the RCA power of social media. We needed to remind parents why we are a school of choice and why that benefits their child(ren). Our attempt to market in this way will drive enrollment up. Time has not been kind but we are ready to re-envision our school and marketing the way we did originally with the power of digital.

**3. Provide an overview of the key design elements and how the school implements these elements, including; primary instruction methods, assessment practices, and essential features of the model.**



The purpose of Rural Community Academy is to provide students with a top-quality educational program using a place-based curriculum. With careful attention to the social dynamics and cultural values of the rural setting, Rural Community Academy seeks to instill students with self-confidence, practical skills, pride of place, and excellent academic abilities through differentiated instruction, strong parental support, and continuous interaction with the local community.

The Board and staff support the students in an effort to be the best they can be by:

- Limiting class sizes
- Encouraging parental involvement by requesting families to donate volunteer hours
- Supplementing curriculum with “place-based” instructional activities involving the local people, places and things in our rural community, along with local history.
- Incorporating partnerships with for-profit, non-profit, benevolent, veteran, agencies, educational and fraternal organizations to benefit the school and its students
- Allowing the school and its students and staff to give back to their community

Specific strategies we use include:

- We limit our class size to 20 students in each of our K-8 single classes.
- We request families to donate 20 hours per academic year and log that activity as well as logging in community support of those who are not parents for a minimum of 400 hours per year. We require Confidentiality of Information statements as well as provide an informal training. We log activities for both family and community participation.
- We supplement curriculum with farmers, professionals, parents and community members knowledgeable about a certain topic related to the standards, with local places relevant to academic standards, and with things relevant to academic standards and measure our success by logging people, places, and things tied to instructional minutes meeting a minimum of 10%-14% of instruction. We log these activities.
- We set a standard of a minimum of 10-14 or more partnerships with organizations per year. These partnerships are logged.
- We target a minimum of 4 specific projects, programs, or events (educational, service, or performance-oriented) events and activities involving students to support and give back to our local community. We log these activities.

Our teachers are inexperienced which does not allow old habits to interfere. We have taken the teachers and spent several days in curriculum mapping and plugging in Indiana academic standards with those core areas that we know are prerequisite to testing. Our CAO has taken the time to put each instructional staff member under her wing to show them how to implement best practices.

Instruction methods are focused on teaching new instructional staff best practices and utilizing the academic standards even more. Everybody knows these kids’ names and 90% of the parents as well as the kids knowing all of the adults. Assessment is addressed in detail in the following answers regarding student performance.

**4. Describe any anticipated changes to the essential terms of the school’s educational program, program as described in the current charter. Essential terms are those included, either directly or by incorporation, in the school’s existing charter contract that relate to its educational program, including but not limited to the school’s mission,**

**course of study, instructional program, grade levels served, and, if applicable, any mission-specific goals. Discuss any associated challenges or risks to these changes.**

After understanding that our target market has changed over time due to the innovations of technology and the way people communicate, we implemented the marketing tools from the IDOE marketing course (8 weeks, 2 times per week, with homework applicable to our charter). We discovered some things that forced us to re-evaluate where we had been and how to move forward. The school's mission, vision, and beliefs have not changed much over time because they are strong values for education and students. Our reputation suffered due to the change in school leadership, and we needed to get focused on what the school means to today's parents.

We revised our identifier from "A Public School Where Every Child Soars" to focus more on the mission; and after stakeholder input, the new identifier is "THE hands-on learning experience, powered by parents and community". We discovered that the general populace does not understand the term "place-based" but does understand "hands-on"; therefore, we are still doing place-based but not describing it in terms of "people, places and things". The other three educational options in Sullivan County are:

- Southwest's identifier of "Educate – Explore – Excel"
- Northeast's identifier of N/A on website
- Dugger Union Charter identifier of "A 100 Year Story"  
(None of these educational competitors tell a story of what the school is or anything special about them)

We believe that due to our 20% requirement of place-based activities and instructional time that our students would benefit by the school focusing more on academic improvement rather than satisfying our commitment of a percentage of required activities and instruction to be in a certain format. Therefore, we request that we not focus so much on numbers but on activities to do our place-based activities and instructional time at approximately 10%. With a relatively new staff of only two years tenure, we feel as though the staff needs to focus more on Indiana academic standards and build on those opportunities over the next charter period. We are certainly not abandoning our emphasis, just the amount of time we will focus on quality place-based items to improve student performance.

## ***B. Goals and Plans***

### **1. State and provide an overview of the charter school's future goals. Summarize the plans for accomplishing these goals (e.g. academic benchmarks, organizational changes, facility improvements, financial stability).**

- We would be remiss if we did not mention the completion of two goals that we met during our charter term.
  - Goal one was to become a model for other rural charters. With the addition of Mays Community Academy and Canaan Community Academy who utilized our charter in its entirety when they started, we will continue to help other rural charters who contact us regarding visitation, missions, curriculum, etc. as they look to being a road to chartering their decommissioned schools.
  - Being chosen by the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools as an example of a successful rural charter school (see [www.rcsi.k12.in.us/StoryofRuralCharters](http://www.rcsi.k12.in.us/StoryofRuralCharters))



has given us reason to believe we are meeting our vision as stated of being a model for others. Our second goal was to gain more national recognition during our charter term. Our school leader at the time, Susie Pierce, was chosen by the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools to represent them before the legislature at the State of West Virginia in Charleston, WV. Then this last charter term we were recognized by the Bill Gates Foundation's at Washington University as an example of one of the top 35 schools in the nation regarding our best practices in the area of special education. Our administrators in academics and in special education were given a free three-day trip to Washington to make a presentation.

- **Academic Improvement: This is the area of biggest focus.**

Areas that show a positive trend in performance are:

- NWEA student growth in reading
- NWEA student growth in math
- ISTEP student growth in math until ISTEP changed to ILEARN.

Areas that show a negative trend in performance are:

- Students demonstrating grade level proficiencies in math and ELA on ILEARN
- Staff Retention: We needed to hire teachers and quick in the 2018-19 school year; and we got some who were not good teachers but rather the bottom of the barrel. Our academic performance plummeted. In 2019-20 we had to hire more as we terminated many and kept the better ones. Eighty percent of those teachers have remained for the 2020-21 school year and we are back to starting over on a tenured staff. We are working with best practices and focusing on the academic standards
- Stem School: We would like to work towards becoming an IDOE Stem School. Other than our early interest in 1:1 devices, the virtual learning that was required helped us to be ahead of other schools in the county and with more satisfaction from parents. The only drawback is that our side of the county is so rural with limited Internet access. And the only other good thing that has come from this last year is the comradery of the other schools allowing our new school leader to develop long-term relationships. Our other saving grace is our CAO who is data driven and understands how to teach teachers. She is a valued member of our team.
- Feeder School: The additional thing we are looking at is a feeder school – a pre-school within our school so that parents and students can think of RCA first over the other schools they could choose.
- Kindergarten Readiness with Data: Working with preschools for entry to kindergarten because current students are not prepared. We have identified, visited and are working with daycares and preschools to help them identify weaker students and to develop a relationship and allow us to market to those families.
- Transportation: Although transportation has been a blessing, it is still a deterrent. It has changed the communication patterns of parents who used to gather together at the beginning and the end of the day which has meant less parental involvement and less teacher interaction with parents.
- Family-Friendly School: We are working toward becoming an IDOE Family-Friendly School.
- Farm to Table School: We are implementing a true Farm to Table curriculum where all ages will work with plants of all kinds to not only learn by doing but also to provide pride of participation in providing some products for our cafeteria and perhaps even selling some product. Initially we are starting with raised beds, a flower garden and an orchard.

Then we plan on expanding to a hoop house and rain catchment system to water our produce.

- Social, Emotional Learning: We are starting the 2021-22 year with a licensed social worker who will implement the program for not only students but also families. Our SEL program, based on IDOE employability standards, highlights attractive characteristics such as growth mind set, work ethic, effective communication, initiative, problem solving and self-confidence. Lessons were formulated by surveys that teachers facilitated students to determine basic needs in that class and then final survey to see if made a difference in the SEL of the students.
- Continued Development: The board will continue working with of the CAO and COO in delving into our academic and financial areas. And, in turn, those administrators will be working with instructional and non-instructional staff in improving student performance and financial performance.
- Facility: The facility will be upgraded with air and water systems with stimulus funds.

## **2. Summarize plans for addressing any past academic, organizational, or financial deficits.**

- Improving Academic Performance:
  - All RCA students will improve proficiency in Math and in English/Language Arts across grade levels and across the curriculum. This goal is based on data with respect to historical deficiencies in English Language Arts. We have contracted with two specialists from our service center who would lead professional development in the area of curriculum mapping and assessment development for teachers in K-8 grades. We asked our coaches to assist with the creation of standards-based instructional calendars for the 2021-22 school year, working monthly after we started the identify and strategies over the summer of 2021.
- We have just purchased a new program from Curriculum and Associates with two segments that should help improve academic performance. The two segments are “Ready” which helps teachers teach with a Teacher Toolbox with flexible, standards-based instruction and practice for reading and mathematics and “I-Ready” which is an intervention program that allows actionable assessments and engaging instruction that drive student gains in reading and mathematics.
- Improving Financial Performance.
  - This was a tough three years with the changes in school leadership as enrollment plummeted.
  - We have chosen a digital marketing firm to target our millennial parents to increase enrollment to improve financial position.
  - We have increased enrollment over this last year to improve financial performance.
- Improving Organizational Performance.
  - We have implemented Dr. Carpenter’s improvement measures regarding Bylaws and Oversight

## **3. (OPTIONAL) Provide any additional information you would like to share with the public and community that were not prompted in the previous sections.**

### **Optional Executive Summary Attachments**

- ✓ Marketing Plan from IDOE Marketing Class with Nick Leroy - 16 segments
- ✓ Targets and Prospects
- ✓ Video of ad

- ✓ Video of ad 2
- ✓ RCA ad billboard, newspaper, flyer

### III. Student Performance Diagnostic

#### A. Academic Performance Framework

##### 1. Describe indicators that show a positive and negative trend in performance.

According to the BSU Renewal expectations from 2016, the following academic indicators have been identified as priorities for improvement:

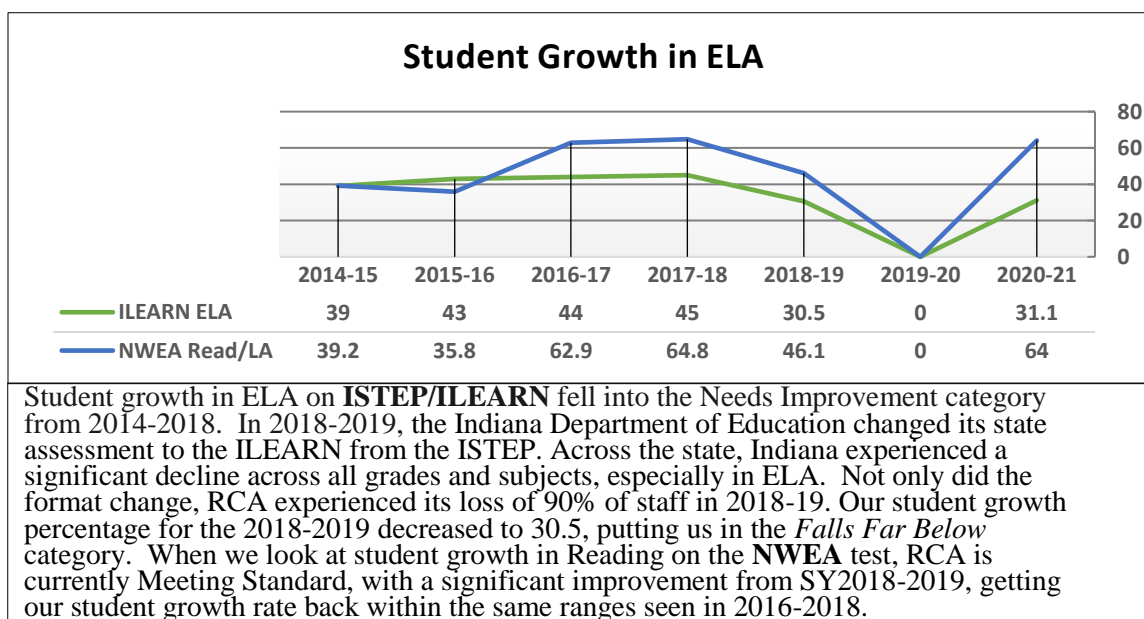
- IN 1.1.g. At least 60% of students achieve or exceed target growth in Reading as measured by NWEA
- IN 1.1.h. At least 60% of students achieve or exceed target growth in Math as measured by NWEA
- IN 1.2.c. Improve educational equity in regards to student proficiency on state assessment in ELA
- IN 1.2.d. Improve educational equity in regards to student proficiency on state assessments in Math.

Areas that show a positive trend in performance are:

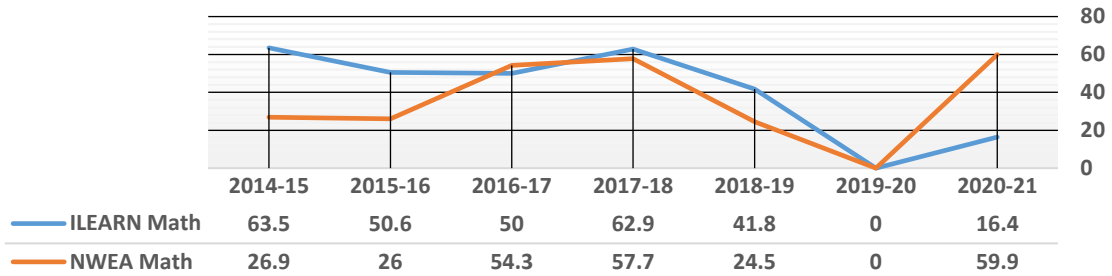
- NWEA student growth in reading
- NWEA student growth in math
- ISTEP student growth in math until ISTEP changed to ILEARN.

Areas that show a negative trend in performance are:

- Students demonstrating grade level proficiencies in math and ELA on ILEARN

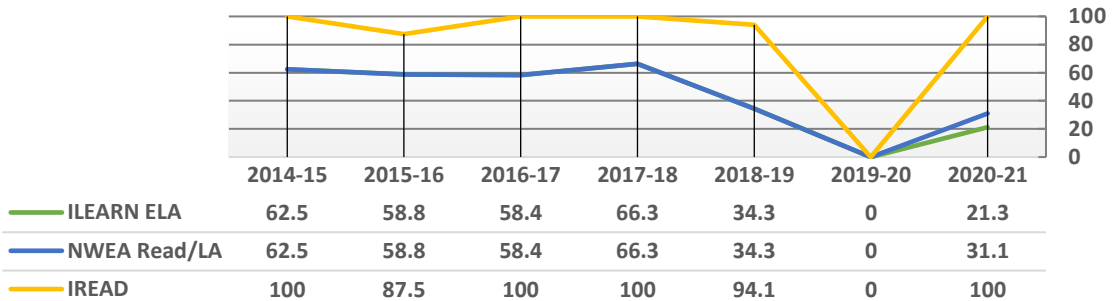


### Student Growth in Math

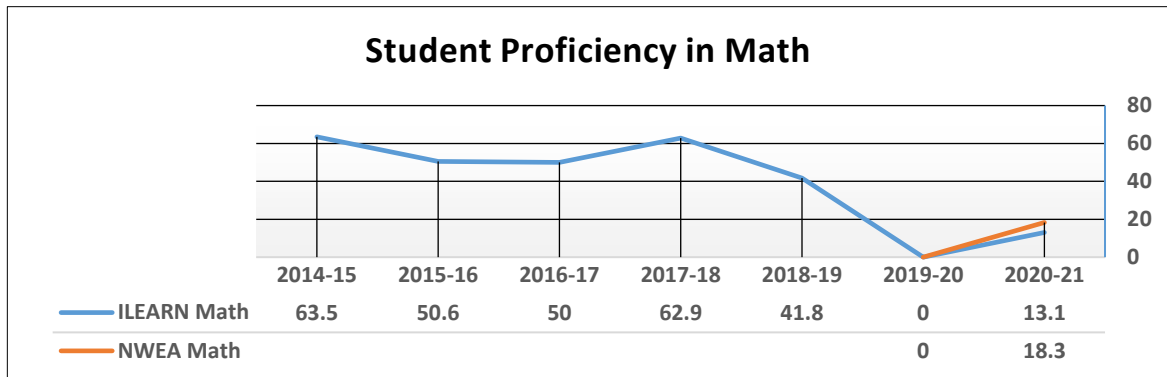


Student growth scores in Math on the **ISTEP/ILEARN** falls below the expected 50%, with a significant decrease in the last two years of available data. In 2018-2019, the Indiana Department of Education changed its state assessment to the ILEARN from the ISTEP. Across the state, Indiana experienced a significant decline across all grades and subjects, especially in ELA. RCA experienced its loss of 90% of staff in 2018-19 as escribed in the Executive Summary. In addition, there was a significant decline in scores from this year (2020-2021) across the state due to COVID. Student growth scores on **NWEA** have continued to rise with 2020-21 being the highest (we scored 59.9 and meets standard starts at 60)

### Student Proficiency in ELA



Students demonstrating grade level proficiency in ELA on the **ISTEP/ILEARN** has continued to stay in the *Fall Far Below* category, with a significant decrease in the last two years of available data. In 2018-2019, the Indiana Department of Education changed its state assessment to the ILEARN from the ISTEP. Across the state, Indiana experienced a significant decline across all grades and subjects, especially in ELA. RCA experienced its loss of 90% of staff in 2018-19 as escribed in the Executive Summary. In addition, there was a significant decline in scores from this year (2020-2021) across the state due to COVID. **NWEA** scores also conclude students demonstrating grade level proficiency in reading *Far Fall Below* expected levels of performance. Students in 3rd grade **IREAD** have exceeded standard with a 90% pass rate on the first attempt and a 100% pass rate in the summer.



Students demonstrating grade level proficiency in Math on the **ISTEP/ILEARN** has continued to stay in the *Fall Far Below* category, with a significant decrease in the last two years of available data. In 2018-2019, the Indiana Department of Education changed its state assessment to the ILEARN from the ISTEP. Across the state, Indiana experienced a significant decline across all grades and subjects. RCA experienced its loss of 90% of staff in 2018-19. In addition, there was a significant decline in scores from this year (2020-2021) across the state due to COVID. NWEA scores continue to also have been impacted.

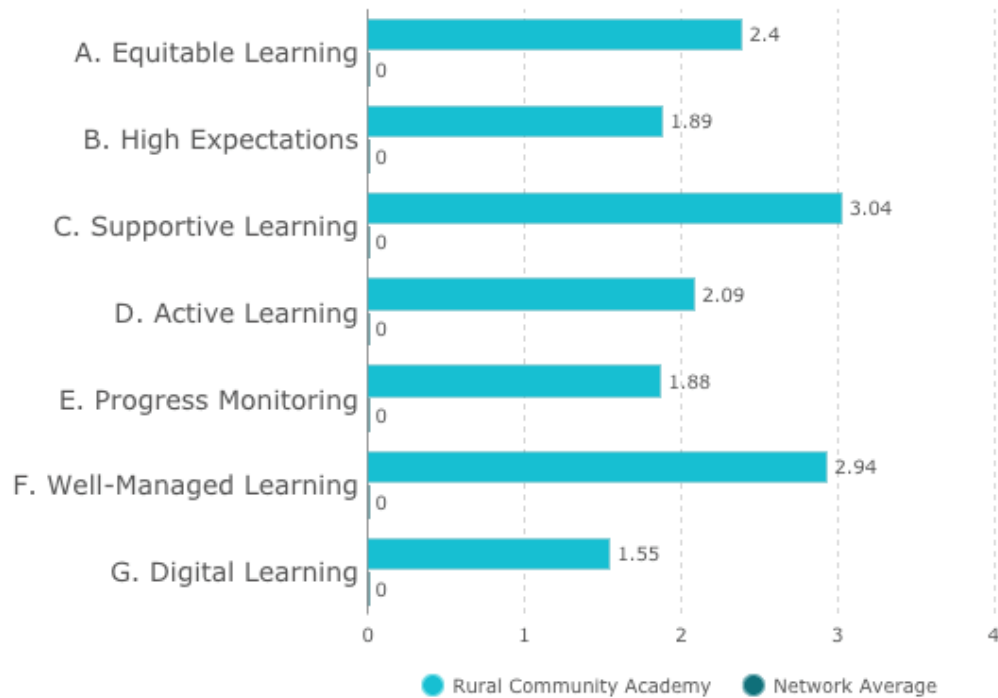
**2. If academic performance has resulted in a rating of ‘Falls Far Below’ on any Quality indicator in the Ball State Academic Framework during the charter term, please provide the school’s assessment of those results and describe changes being made to address any deficiencies.**

Our academic concern is that our students aren’t meeting grade level proficiencies. There has been a negative trend over the last 7 years in both ELA and Math. Even before the ISTEP changed to the ILEARN, there was a decline in student meeting proficiencies. However, we want to state that the ILEARN also changed level of complexity and difficulty of how standards are assessed. We recognize that changing tests and testing companies as well as the state’s “forgiveness” of tests because of the low scores and then the Covid pandemic has not done much to allow us to bring up our scores. Then we had a problem with staffing with the new school leadership’s power struggle with the board which left us with a 90% turnover of instructional staff, which crippled us by having to hire inexperienced teachers with many transitions to teaching as well as emergency licenses. All of these things held us hostage and resulted in lower test scores. Our inexperienced staff is now two-years tenured, and our CAO has put a lot of emphasis on best practices and standards to help us achieve better test scores as illustrated by our ELEOT observation scores below. We are not saying that our score of 2.27 is wonderful as compared to the network average of 2.75; but as you read the 7 eleot environments, it clearly shows the observer and the learner working towards definitive goals.

## eleot Reporting Results

Reporting

All (26) 30 Days (0) Certified Observers (0)



Overall Score: **2.27** Network Average: **2.75** ?

Additionally, RCA has contracted with two individuals from our service center who are leading professional development in the area of curriculum mapping and assessment development for teachers in grade kindergarten-8th grade. We asked our coaches to assist with the creation of standards-based instructional calendars to ensure:

- high priority standards were given priority within the school year
- all standards were covered prior to the end of the ILEARN assessment for grades 3-8
- instruction was paced or given an allotment of time for each standard in order to teach to the depth required.

During these sessions, reading level expectations were also discussed so that teachers were aware of what level a student should be reading by the end of the school year. Coaches are returning to RCA throughout the school year (one time per month) to work with teachers on writing assessments for semester 1 and for semester 2 in SY2021-22.



**3. Provide any academic performance-related evidence, supplemental data, or contextual information that may not be captured in academic framework.**

Our Title program is focusing on all K-4 students utilizing aimswebPlus to assess our students with a robust set of standards-aligned measures. AimswebPlus is proven to uncover learning gaps quickly, identify at-risk students, and assess individual and classroom growth. AimswebPlus also has add-on screeners for behavior and dyslexia for a comprehensive, all in one system.

aimswebPlus® is an assessment, data management, and reporting system that provides national and local performance and growth norms for the screening and progress monitoring of math and reading skills. The program uses two types of measures: curriculum-based measures which are brief, timed measures of fluency on essential basic skills—and standards-based assessments, which are comprehensive measures aligned to current learning standards. By combining these two types of measures, aimswebPlus provides the data that we need for program planning and evaluation and for a tiered assessment indicating the amount of support a student needs. We frequently collect information about student performance to see the student's rate of improvement versus expected growth to determine if adequate progress is being made in Special Education toward end-of-year goals or if changes to instruction are needed to improve student growth.

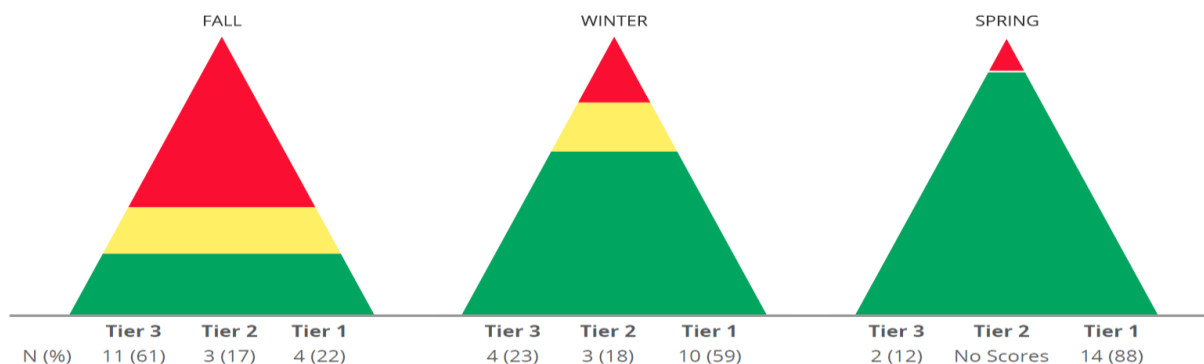


**Tier 1 Low Risk** 

**Tier 2 Moderate Risk** 

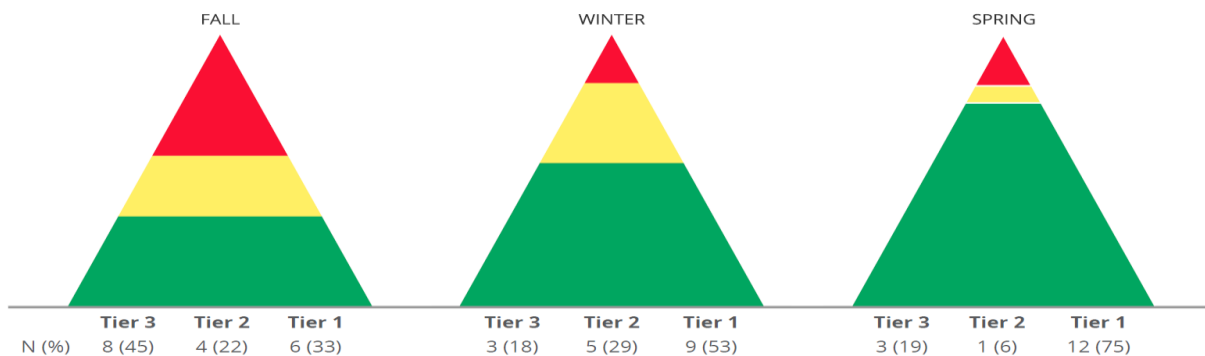
**Tier 3 High Risk** 

**| Early Literacy | Grade: K |**



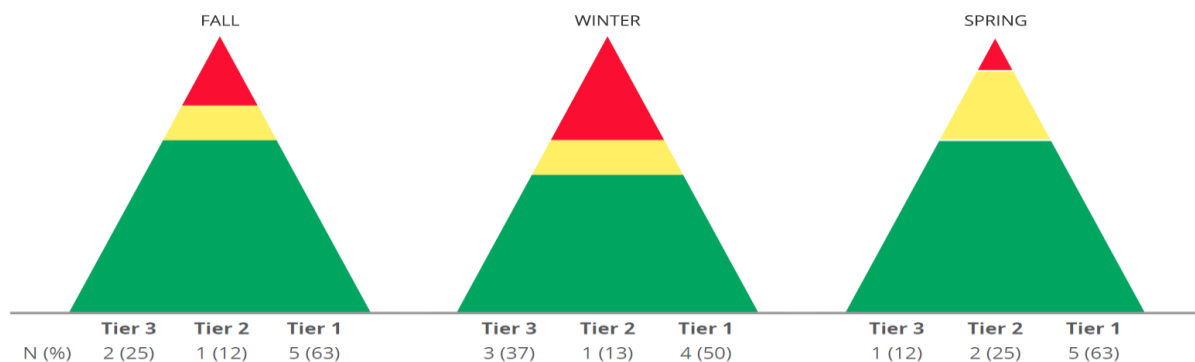
In Early Literacy in Kindergarten, there was significant growth. In the fall, most students fell into the tier 3 category. By Winter, the number of students in the tier 3 category had decreased significantly and the tier 1 students grew as well. By Spring there were no longer students in the tier 2 category and the tier 3 category had almost completely disappeared as well.

### | Early Numeracy | Grade: K |



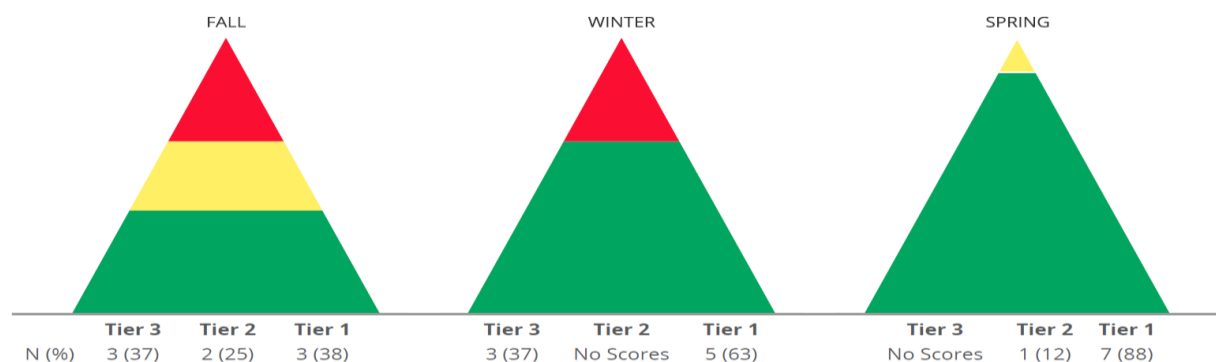
There was also evidence of significant growth in kindergarten in math as well. Although there were less students starting in the tier 3 category, they showed growth and most students ended the year in the tier 1 category.

### | Early Literacy | Grade: 1



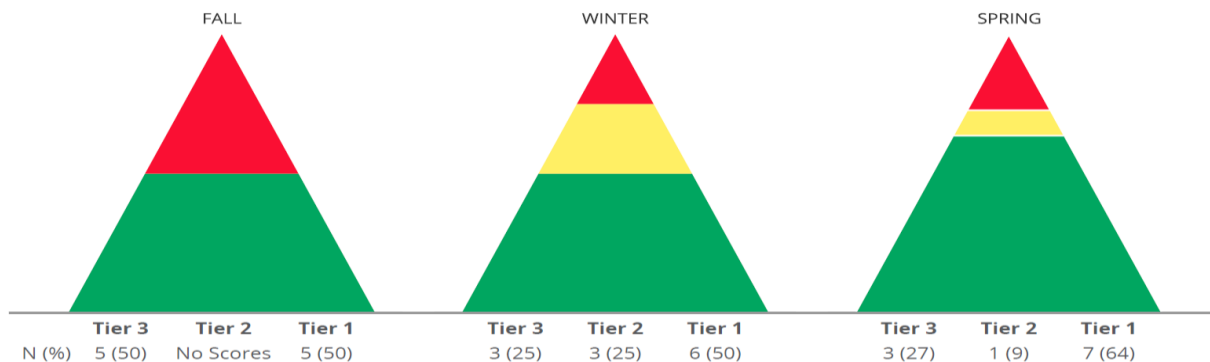
In the area of early literacy in grade 1 there were more students starting in the tier 1 category and only a small portion in tier 2 and 3. In the winter there was an increase in the number of students falling into the tier 3 category, but by spring the students in the tier 3 category had significantly decreased showing overall growth.

### | Early Numeracy | Grade: 1 |



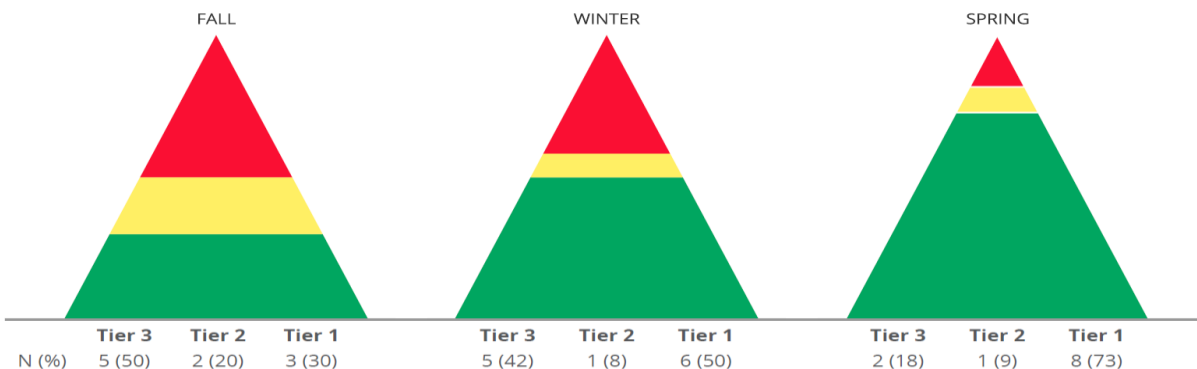
In the area of math for grade 1, the students showed an equal distribution across the three tier categories in the fall. By winter, the number of students who fell into the tier 2 category had made enough progress to tier 1. By spring, all of the students showed so much growth that there were no longer any students in the tier 3 and only one student who still fell into the tier 2 category.

### | Reading | Grade: 2 |



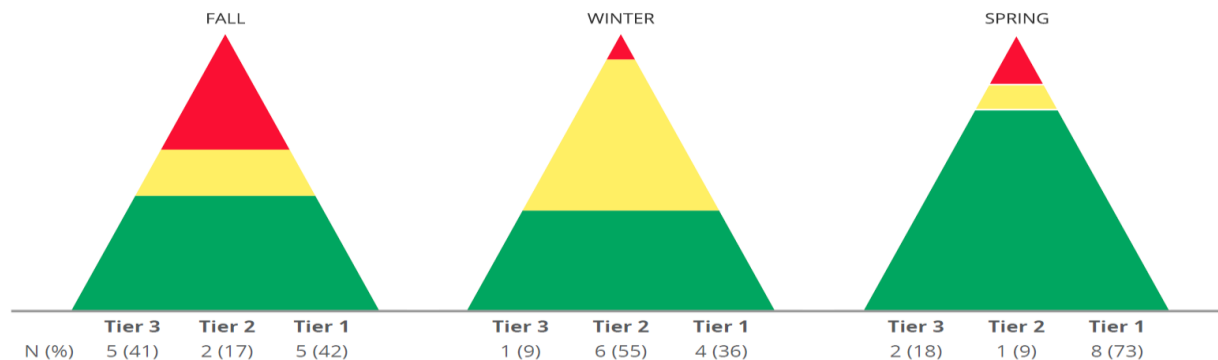
In the area of math for grade 1, the students showed an equal distribution across the three tier categories in the fall. By winter, the number of students who fell into the tier 2 category had made enough progress to tier 1. By spring, all of the students showed so much growth that there were no longer any students in the tier 3 and only one student who still fell into the tier 2 category.

### | Math | Grade: 2 |



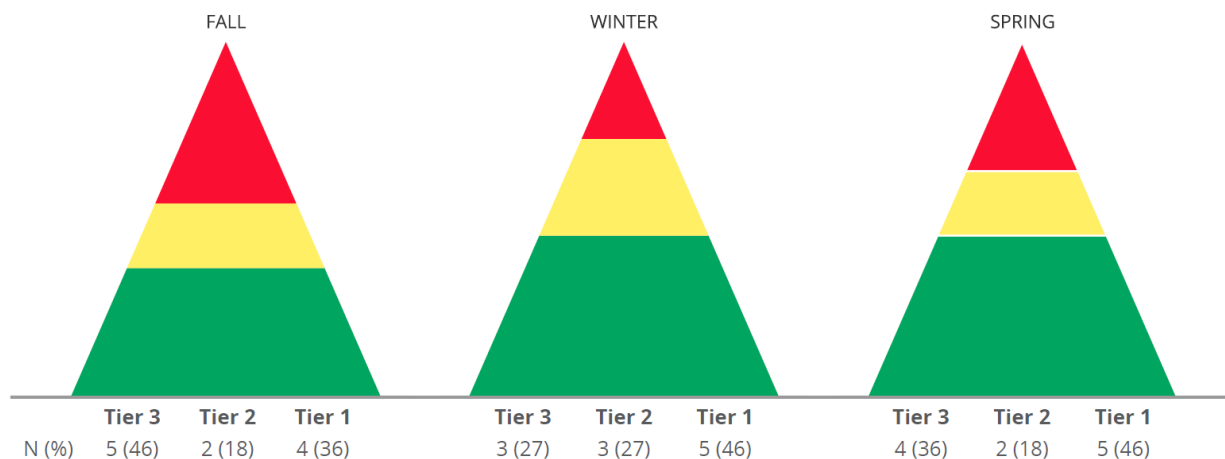
Grade 2 math showed significant growth overall. The students started out in the fall almost equally distributed in tiers 1, 2 and 3. By winter there was adequate growth where students had moved from tier 2 to tier 1. In the spring, most of the students had made great progress and were now in tier 1.

### | Reading | Grade: 3 |



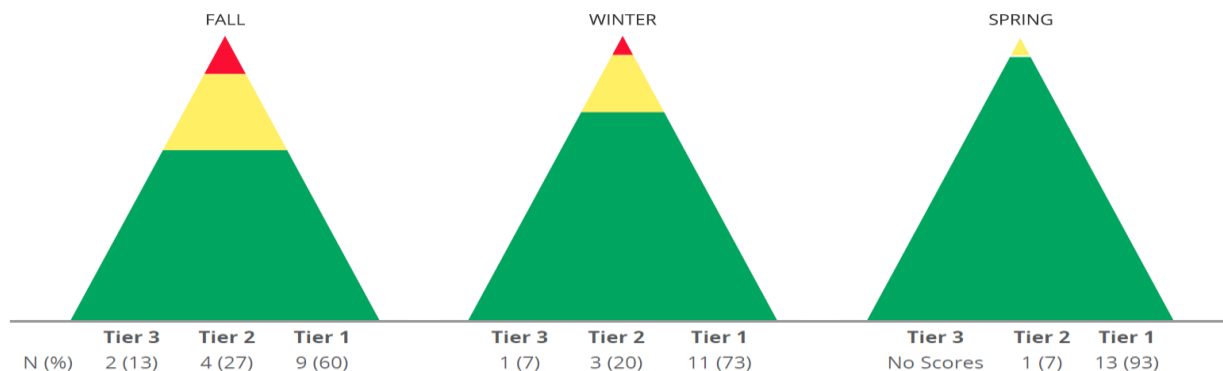
In 3rd grade reading, the students showed a great deal of improvement. By the end of the year there were minimal students still needing moderate or intense support. Most students ended the year in tier 1.

### | Math | Grade: 3 |



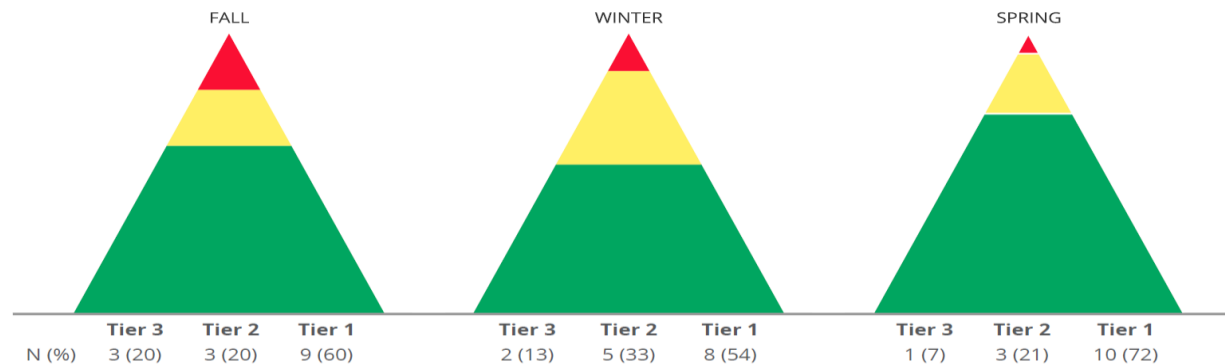
In grade 3 math, the students did show growth from fall to winter, but displayed a slight increase in the need for support from winter to spring.

### | Reading | Grade: 4 |



In 4th grade reading, the students started the year with only a few needing tier 2 and 3 support. By the end of the year, their progress increased so much that only one student still needed tier 2 support and no students needed tier 3.

### | Math | Grade: 4 |



In math for grade 4, there were similar results as the grade 4 reading. Most students started the year with only a few needing tier 2 or tier 3 supports and by the end of the year there was only one student in tier 3 and 3 students in tier 2. The student performance overall was high with adequate growth.

## **B. Continuous Improvement Practices**

### **1. Does the school engage in a systematic, inclusive and comprehensive process to review, revise and communicate the school's mission and design? Please describe this process, and when it last occurred, or is planned.**

#### **2016-2021 Mission Statement**

*"At Rural Community Academy all staff will give the students the opportunity to reach his or her greatest potential personally and academically with small class sizes in a rural setting with emphasis on Sullivan County history, with active parental involvement, supported with the people, places and things of the community, incorporating partnerships and a focus on giving back to their community."*

#### **2022-2027 Mission Statement approved by Board 04/20/2021**

*"To teach students the basics using county history, county people/places/and things, with small class sizes (20 max), with parents and volunteers always welcome, with local business and nonprofit partnerships, and with projects giving back to Sullivan County to allow kids to grow academically and with confidence personally."*

The stakeholders and the original board of directors of Rural Community Schools, Inc., as well as the current members believe the following statements to still be true:

- The values and characteristics of the smaller, close-knit rural community provide unique resources for nurturing children in their growth and education through a place-based approach.
- In a rural setting, members of the community function as an extension of any educational institution, providing support and encouragement for students and instructors.
- Educational success occurs when parents, teachers, and community challenge students to reach beyond their natural abilities or assumed potential to their very best.
- Parental involvement is essential to the success of any educational endeavor.
- Children more readily achieve educational success when placed in a caring environment where personal interaction with educators is maximized.
- All students should receive respect, encouragement, and a desire to grow and learn throughout their lives.
- An individualized curriculum affords each student his or her best opportunity for maximizing educational success.
- Service to one's community is essential to a well-rounded education.
- Training and appreciation in music and the arts are necessary components of a well-rounded education.
- Persons elected to manage a school should wisely invest financial, parental, and community resources to provide students with an education that is balanced, complete, and of high quality.

Anyone who cares about this school and its community knows that the most gratifying aspect is the kids. To see these kids grow physically and emotionally, to see them accomplish learning, and to eventually see them become our peers, our neighbors, our co-workers, our friends and perhaps even our relatives will be what this is all about. And it has become evident that the RCA kids have become the Salutatorians and Valedictorians of their high schools – just like the former Graysville School was before our charter.

We can do a better job of promoting our mission statement with signage in classrooms, signage on the outside of our school, and on our website and other social media accounts.

And that will begin with our charter renewal. Since taking the IDOE marketing class, we have hired a professional who is re-vamping our website, our current social media accounts and now several more social media accounts. We are using digital as much as possible to influence our users and to remind this second generation of RCA families that we are different. We are focusing more on kids and their achievements while utilizing our stakeholders to make presentations that are informative.

## **2. Describe the school's assessment system and how it is used to improve instructional decision-making, support student learning and implement professional development.**

Our assessment system is based on three specific, formal assessments.

1. All students are given the NWEA test, three times a year (fall, winter, and spring). Grades K-1 are tested in both Reading and Math, and Grades 2-8 are tested in Reading, Math, and Language. This test has been specifically chosen so that student growth and student performance on proficiencies can be tracked from fall to winter, winter to spring, and ultimately from fall-spring within a school year. The results from this assessment are shared with parents at the fall and winter conferences. Over the last year, results were also shared with students in various grade levels, particularly the middle school level (grades 5-8).
2. Students in grades K-8 are given the Reading Assessment from AimswebPlus, three times a year (fall, winter, and spring). This battery of tests assessed specific reading skills (letter naming, letter sounds, sight words-in grades K-1, and reading comprehension, reading fluency, and vocabulary in grades 2-8). Based on students' scores, students may be monitored every 1 or 2 months, to track growth and performance based on national percentiles. AimswebPlus is also used to test students in math areas in grades K-4. Students in grades 3-8 are given the ILEARN test, a summative accountability assessment given by the state of Indiana at the end of every school year. Students in all grades are tested in the areas of ELA and Math. Students in grades 4 and 6 are also tested in science, and students in grade 5 are also tested in social studies.

Beginning in the year 2021-2022, teachers are designing classroom assessments that assess specific, grade level standards with emphasis on the level of difficulty and level of complexity needed to master each standard. This information will be used to keep student achievement on Indiana Academic Standards a focus for instruction.

## **3. Describe how the school uses other data (qualitative and quantitative) to evaluate the effectiveness of the academic program.**

All students in kindergarten, first, and second grade are screened in all six subsets (phonemic awareness, alphabet knowledge, sound-symbol relationship, decoding, rapid naming, and encoding) during the academic year. New this year will be if the teacher of a student in third grade or higher notices difficulty in the six screened subset, the student shall receive a universal screener. If a student is determined to be at risk or at some risk for dyslexia after a screening we administer, the level 1 screening will be given with parent permission. The information we receive from administering the universal screeners can show us the effectiveness of our phonics program, Orton Gillingham.

Utilizing SAEBRS we are able to screen students to determine if they are considered at risk in the area of Social, Emotional, or Academic. We are able to take this information and



determine which employability skills to focus on for the nine weeks. Students are provided one on one guidance to improve the areas that they are considered at-risk in. This information is also used to help guide a conduct score to determine if the student is growing in that area.

**4. Describe how the school leadership implements a continuous improvement process that provides clear direction for improving student learning.**

Continuous improvement is at the heart and soul of this school's leadership team. School Leaders define an areas of focus for the year and provide opportunities for professional development in key areas. Focus areas for the school year are created to ensure priority of time, financial allocation, and organizational support. In addition to a year-long focus areas, the leadership team provides time for staff during the school day to gather together and review data collected during benchmark assessments and progress monitoring. This data is used to inform instructional decisions for individual students. The school leadership participates in data meetings at each level in order to keep a pulse on school-wide student growth and achievement. Classroom observations and evaluations are another way we improve student learning. Observation forms focused on quality student engagement practices are scored and shared with teachers.

During the summer of 2021, RCA contracted with two individuals from our service center who would lead professional development in the area of curriculum mapping and assessment development for teachers in grade kindergarten-8th grade. This need became apparent as we tracked student data in NWEA and ILEARN. We noticed that student growth was high, but we had a low number of students meeting proficiencies. We asked our coaches to assist with the creation of standards-based instructional calendars to ensure 1.) high priority standards were given priority within the school year and 2.) all standards were covered prior to the end of the ILEARN assessment for grades 3-8. 3.) instruction was paced or given an allotment of time for each standard in order to teach to the depth required. During these sessions, reading level expectations were also discussed so that teachers were aware of what level a student should be reading by the end of the school year. Coaches are returning to RCA throughout the school year (one time per month) to work with teaches on writing assessments for semester 2 and for semester 2 in SY2022)

**5. Describe how leadership and staff supervision and evaluation processes have resulted in improved professional practice and student success.**

NWEA is one of our benchmark assessments given three times per school year. Three years ago, our building-wide focus was learning how to interpret NWEA scores and how to use the information from the tests to impact instruction in the classroom. The format of the teacher evaluation was also changed from an "all or nothing" score to a rubric and included some best practices in the classroom. One practice that was added was "teaches whole group in direct instruction." Creates small groups to reinforce skill or teach at the students' level". Also included in the evaluation was "Uses data from NWEA to place students in small groups and uses the learning continuum for skill instruction, and assesses performance on the skills". From there, teachers began to use small group instruction during the day to focus on specific skills as shown on the NWEA reports. Students were made aware of their target areas and worked on improving skills over time. Based on observations and data, instructional practice in the classroom improved to meet the targeted needs of students and our overall growth score increased, showing the impact this shift made in our growth scores.

### *C. Needs of Learners*

#### **1. Describe the systems in place to monitor the progress of individual students and facilitate communication between interventionists, classroom teachers and parents regarding the needs of individual students.**

Progress monitoring of individual students happens during benchmark assessments (three times a year) and intermittently during progress monitoring. The classroom teacher, assistant, interventionist, SPED Director, and CAO convene and analyze the data for each classroom. During this time, instructional decisions are made and communicated to parents. Parents are often given specific tasks to complete with students at home to help develop a skill. Communication between interventionists also has a greater opportunity to occur organically as the location of the interventionist's classroom was moved in close proximity to the classroom teachers she serves.

Results of benchmark assessments are mailed to parents, but also communicated to parents during the parent teacher conferences scheduled in the fall and again in February. The Leadership team decided to have parent teacher conferences for all students in February. It was important to share the results of the benchmark assessments and compare the results with those from the fall. It gave staff another chance to educate the parents on how to read the assessment results and placed another level of accountability on the whole team (teachers, parents, and students) as parents were being kept informed of student progress during the year. The interventionist also attended parent teacher conferences in order to share her notes on students.

Students are given opportunities to participate in the high ability program based on scores from the CogAT and Torrance Test of Creative Thinking (TTCT) Figural. This program was started in 2018 and all students were tested in both areas. This ensured a baseline of student data, in order to select students who would qualify for High Ability within our student population. Since then, students in grades kindergarten, 2nd grade, and 5th grade are tested as well as new students to RCA.

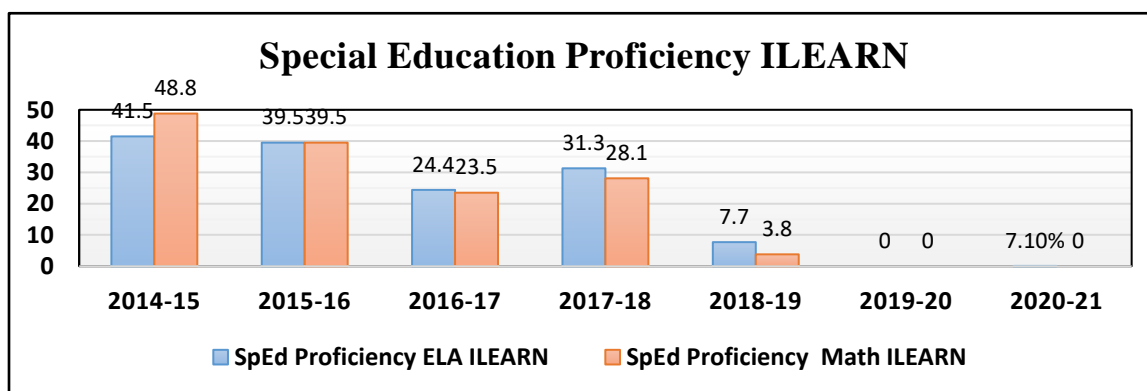
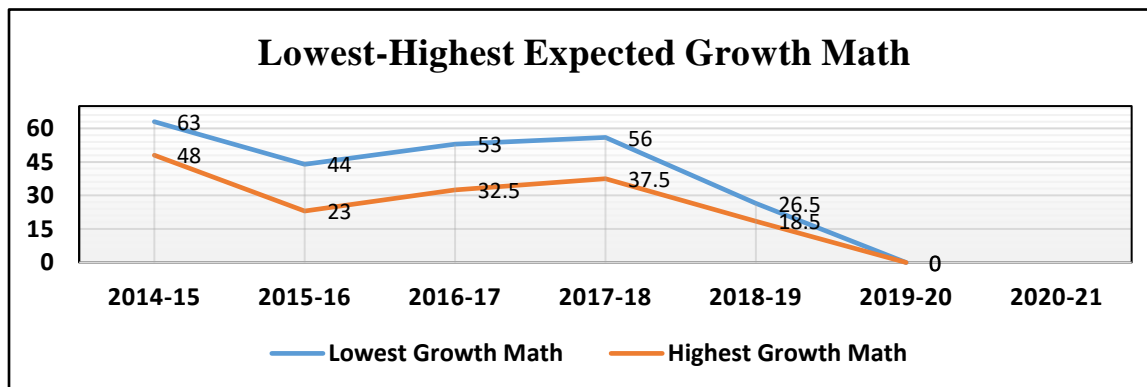
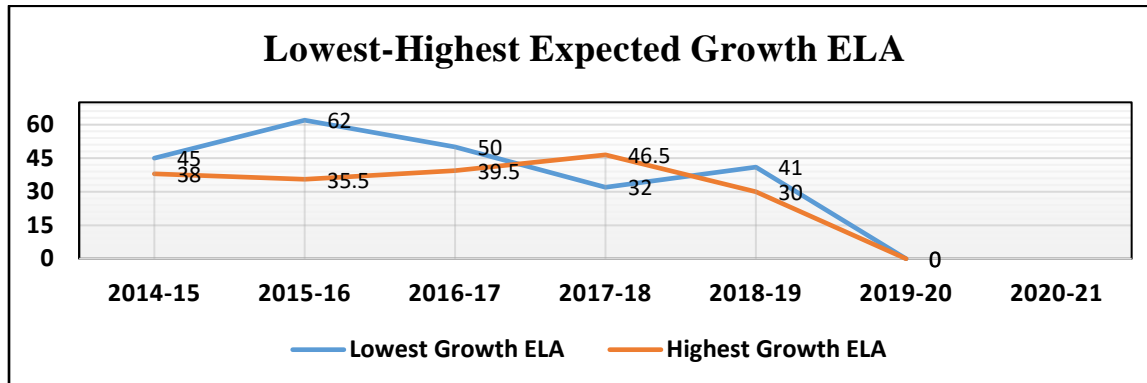
#### **2. Explain how the school supports diverse learners.**

Rural Community Academy is committed to providing high-quality instruction and appropriate supplemental services to student with diverse learning needs. RCA's Special Education department work to develop and implement Individual Educational Plans (IEP) with students and partners with general education teachers to ensure that students are receiving the appropriate accommodations or modifications. Staff meetings are often used to teach/review various types of accommodations and modifications that can be used with students, special education law, accessibility to curriculum and assessment. Classroom teachers often plan with the SPED Director for the upcoming week to facilitate instructional needs of students and prepare for pull-out time if needed. The SPED Director may also co-teach in the classroom or create learning centers for students.

STEM class is offered to all students in grades K-8 once a week at RCA. This class engages students and equips them with critical thinking, problem solving, creative and collaborative skills, and ultimately establishes connections between the school, work place, community and the global economy. Recently, RCA was accepted into the Amazon Future Engineer program. Starting with the 2021-2022 school year, students in 6th grade will be immersed into this curriculum, and each year it will expand one grade level. Regarding ELL, we have one student; however, her parents opted her out of the program.

Social emotional learning (SEL) helps students of all ages to better comprehend their emotions, to feel those emotions fully, and demonstrate empathy for others. These learned behaviors are then used to help students make positive, responsible decisions; create frameworks to achieve their goals; and build positive relationships with others. With SEL we are able to meet all students where they are, regardless of socioeconomic status, race, gender, religion, etc. The goal is to provide all students with these foundational skills to improve their academic success and overall well-being.

3. Which subgroup(s) show a trend toward increasing performance, and which toward decreasing performance? Please support with data.



#### **4. Describe persistent or closing achievement gaps between demographic groups, and strategies being used to address those needs. Please support with data**

After desegregating data from the 2020-2021 school year and doing a needs assessment, Rural Community Academy recognizes that there are many student needs. In addition to the needs associated with a student population comprised of students from rural communities with low socioeconomic status and a high percentage of students with disabilities, there has been significant learning loss due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

According to Dr. Jenner at the Indiana Department of Education, the results of a study focused on the educational impact from the pandemic, there is evidence that students have experienced significant learning loss in the areas of math and reading. There is reason to believe that other academic areas have been impacted as well, but students across the state of Indiana have marked learning loss in math and reading.

Dr. Jenner recognizes that it will take multiple years to make up the learning loss and that the effort must be intentional. Rural Community Academy examined our past and present teaching practices in addition to our student data while developing a strategic plan to address learning loss and focus on student growth in the areas of reading and math.

There is a sense of urgency and it is very clear that Rural Community Academy needs to be aggressive and focused on addressing the learning needs of our students. Moving forward, every student will receive targeted interventions as part of their daily school schedule focusing on increasing math and reading skills. The program chosen for the targeted interventions is called i-Ready.

The Indiana version of the i-Ready program developed by Curriculum and Associates is designed to start with obtaining a baseline to see where students' current academic performance lies and what their individual learning needs are. i-Ready is a comprehensive assessment and instruction program that empowers educators with the resources they need to help all students succeed. By connecting Diagnostic data and Personalized Instruction, i-Ready reduces complexity, saves educators time, and makes differentiated instruction achievable in every classroom. i-Ready:

- Provides user-friendly dashboards and clear reports with actionable data that give teachers a foundational understanding of students' strengths and areas of need
- Enables educators to confidently determine each student's on-grade level proficiency based on state and national standards
- Delivers online lessons that provide tailored instruction and practice for each student to accelerate growth
- Supports teachers with in-the-moment resources for remediation and reteaching at individualized, small group, and whole-class levels of instruction
- Is research-based and proven to work—students who use i-Ready Personalized Instruction make remarkable learning gains

The i-Ready Assessment suite illuminates student learning through research-backed measures of performance, including an adaptive Diagnostic, Growth Monitoring, and Standards Mastery. With i-Ready Assessment, educators can:

- Pinpoint students' strengths and what they need to work on to reach (or exceed) grade-level proficiency

- Access an easy-to-use dashboard and robust reports to monitor student growth and inform instruction
- Seamlessly connect assessment results to i-Ready Learning instructional resources

i-Ready Learning is a collection of rigorous reading and mathematics instructional resources designed to address every student's learning needs, accelerate growth, and enable all students to access grade-level learning. i-Ready Learning gives educators the ability to:

- Deliver precise instructional pathways that are guided by i-Ready Assessment data
- Engage students through motivating, personalized instruction, learning games, and other resources
- Address learning gaps, provide scaffolded supports, challenge above-level students, and prepare all students for state and national standards

In addition to the i-Ready diagnostic assessment and individualized learning paths that will be utilized to address student learning loss as well as ways to help high-ability students accelerate their learning, Rural Community Academy is adding the Ready Reading and Ready Math program to our curriculum.

Ready Reading's rigorous yet supportive content is proven to make today's demanding standards reachable for all students. Its complex, authentic texts engage students in opportunities to practice close reading strategies across a variety of genres and formats. Ready Reading instruction uses a consistent Read, Think, Talk, Write model in which teacher-led discussion and small group collaboration are central to student achievement. Lessons scaffold to build students' confidence as they develop important critical thinking and analytical skills. Students are immediately engaged by the variety of real-world source texts, from literature and poetry to blogs and news articles.

Ready Reading supports students and teachers with a wealth of on- and off-grade level resources. The program:

- Develops sound skills and strategies for reading comprehension
- Supports a balance of on-grade level and differentiated instruction
- Provides in-the-moment teacher support to guide teachers and help them build students' reading habits
- Connects instruction to the standards across K–8 for a coherent path within and across grades

Along with the Ready Reading program, our early learners in grades K-3 will be receiving phonics instruction daily using the Orton Gillingham approach. Older students who also need intense phonics instruction will receive instruction through the Orton Gillingham approach as well.

The essential curricular content and instructional practices that characterize the Orton-Gillingham Approach are derived from two sources: first from a body of time-tested knowledge and practice that has been validated over the past 80 years, and second from scientific evidence about how individuals learn to read and write; why a significant number have difficulty in doing so; how having dyslexia makes achieving literacy skills more difficult; and which instructional practices are best suited for teaching such individuals to read and write.

Students in grades 2-5 will receive additional support in writing using the Ready Writing program. Through Ready Reading and Writing, learners of all levels become active participants in their own learning, fortified by deep knowledge and reasoning skills that stay with them in the years ahead. The Ready Reading and Writing program is evidence-based and covers Indiana College and Career Readiness Standards for reading and writing. The texts that students will read incorporate non-fiction and informational texts that prepare students for the type of reading that they will encounter when they participate in Indiana standardized assessments.

The Ready program combines technology resources with printed materials and students will be exposed to a diverse population of characters that are very engaging. Rural communities are frequently inhabited by a very homogenous population, thereby restricting students' opportunities to interact with individuals from different backgrounds, races, cultures, or ethnicities. The Ready program will be a tool that will help expose the students to our multicultural world.

Rural Community Academy determined that a strong standards-based approach: Ready Indiana Mathematics will be used because it is 100 percent fully aligned to the Indiana Academic Standards for Mathematics. Significant connections between the standards across grade levels: Ready Indiana Mathematics lessons build on prior knowledge, making connections within and across all strands and across all grade levels, allowing educators to facilitate cross-grade-level discussions and make the best instructional decisions.

Ready Indiana Mathematics, helps teachers create a rich classroom environment in which students at all levels become active, real-world problem solvers. Through teacher-led instruction, students develop mathematical reasoning, engage in discourse, and build strong mathematical habits. The program's instructional framework supports educators as they strengthen their teaching practices and facilitates meaningful discourse that encourages all learners. Ready Indiana Mathematics, includes:

- An instructional design that allows students to take ownership of their learning
- Rigorous practice opportunities that build students' conceptual understanding and procedural fluency
- Support and resources for digital learning

Although it is extremely important for all of our students to master grade-level standards and obtain a level of proficiency on state and local assessments, this year we must focus on addressing the learning loss that has resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure that our students are demonstrating large scale growth. It is very likely that it will take multiple years for our students to close the gaps in their learning but with an aggressive, strategic approach that focuses on every student's individual needs in addition to the implementation of rigorous evidence-based instruction aligned to the Indiana Academic Standards, Rural Community Academy is confident that our students will experience significant growth and an increase in proficiency levels in both reading and math which will have a positive impact across all curricular areas.

#### Optional Student Demographics Performance Attachments

- ✓ Academic Performance Framework
- ✓ aimsweb Reading



- ✓ aimsweb Math
- ✓ eleot Environments

#### **IV. Stakeholder Diagnostic (need surveys of Students and Parents to answer)**

Recommended surveys to complete this diagnostic: Climate and Culture Surveys for Students and Parents, with option of customized questions

##### **1. Which area(s) indicate the overall highest and lowest levels of satisfaction?**

- Highest
  - 87% of parents felt the eLearning homework was just right
  - 96% of parents felt the eLearning live lessons were just right
  - 75% of parents were comfortable with technology
  - 100% of parents were happy with teacher communication
  - 82% of parents were happy with progress in reading
  - 89% of parents were happy with progress in science
  - 93% of parents were happy with progress in social studies
  - 100% of parents understand the academic reports of K-4 students
  - 71% of parents know the standardized letter grade RCA earned last year
  - 71% of parents read the school's weekly communication letter
  - 96% of parents like the weekly telephone calls regarding update
  - 96% of parents understand Google Classroom
- Lowest
  - 39% of parents felt SpEd or Title were not sufficient
  - 50% of parents know their child's grade in the student management system

##### **2. Which of the above reported findings are consistent with findings from other sources (e.g. surveys, observations, anecdotal, third party reviews), please explain.**

These findings are from surveys; we also do a lot of offensive contact with parents when things are of concern or we feel we need their input. Whenever an opportunity presents itself (such as parent picking up a child or entering the office) administration takes the time to talk with parents about how they feel regarding their child's education.

##### **3. What are the implications and/or challenges related to any negative stakeholder perceptions?**

We feel every negative comment means we need to address the issue or provide training to parents to make them more comfortable such as above – talking with every parent of Title or SpEd or offering some training on the student management system. A lot of our questions were open-ended so we follow up on their suggestions – some of which are good. Some of our surveys are not identifiable.

##### **4. How will survey findings inform school improvement plans? What actionable steps will be taken based on survey results?**

We need to follow through with parent concerns or we will lose students. And we need to keep surveying.

#### ***Optional Stakeholder Diagnostic Attachments.***

- ✓ Attachment – IV. Survey – Admin & RCA by Parents
- ✓ Attachment – IV. Survey – Distance Learning

- ✓ Attachment – IV. Survey – General Information
- ✓ Attachment – IV. Survey – Internet
- ✓ Attachment – IV. Survey – Teachers by Parents Graph-Questions
- ✓ Attachment – IV. Survey – Teachers by Students Graph-Questions

## V. Organizational and Financial Diagnostic

### A. Organizational

The OCS will review and verify the organizational documents submitted through CSAPPHIRE during the renewal process (see above for the specific list of required CSAPPHIRE submissions and updates). It is important for each school to upload the school's most recent version of each of the required documents in order for the OCS to make appropriate decisions related to Organizational Performance.

Along with the required CSAPPHIRE submissions, provide any organizational related evidence, supplemental data, or contextual information. Submissions may include evidence of current compliance in areas for which the school was found previously to be non-compliant or other updates relevant to previous school findings.

#### 1. Provide a reflection of the school's governance and organizational performance over the past charter term. Describe any anticipated changes to the governance and management of the school, including but not limited to:

Board composition: remember that we elect members at general membership meeting with 2 parent representatives, 2 community representatives, 1 student representative	In 2016-18 good – experienced In 2018-20 not good – nepotism; several quit over term; non-attendance In 2020-22 very good – interested; involved; engaged
Board member roles	Currently input and attendance
Member recruitment	Determined at general membership meeting
Committee structure	N/A
Amendment to by-laws	Complete according to BSU; need approval
Changes to board policies	Social media needs changed; other policies in good shape with a few reviews

#### 2. Please specify whether the board intends to contract or terminate a contract with an education service provider (ESP)1. ☐ YES ☒ NO

- (OPTIONAL) If Yes, describe the relationship between the school governing board and the service provider, specifying how the governing board will monitor and evaluate the performance of the service provider, the internal controls that will guide the relationship, and how the governing board holds the operator accountable for specific academic, operational or financial outcomes from the agreed upon contract.
- (OPTIONAL) If Yes, please describe any anticipated changes to service contract or provider over the next charter term, including, but not limited to, intentions to terminate your contractual relationship with your management organization. If terminating,

describe in detail the plans for carrying out the primary operational and educational activities for which the service provider had been responsible.

**3. Describe the current condition of the school's facility, and its capacity to serve students. Discuss any anticipated changes in facilities needs and/or location, which includes any changes to lease terms and/or building plan. If the facility is leased, how does the board oversee the terms of the lease agreement?**

The building is in good shape. We are using stabilization funding to replace ceiling tiles, install new water fountains and install air ventilation systems in each classroom, office, and food services area. We have repainted selected rooms of the facility each year. Regarding the lease, our sister non-profit (community) owns the building and neither can exist without the other; therefore, the lease is general and only requires follow-thru of payment.

**4. If any organizational deficiencies or findings were noted in any of the annual independent audits, prior notices of deficiencies, onsite reviews, or prior renewal letter, please note such deficiencies and how they were remedied.**

Please see SBOA Findings chart below

## SBOA FINDINGS 2015-16 through 2019-20

Findings	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20
			New Leadership		
<b>CASH RECEIPTS AND DEPOSITS</b>	X	X			X
<p>The School receives payments for various purposes. In our sample of cash receipts transactions from throughout the year, we noted instances where the payment received was not deposited timely.</p>					
<b>CREDIT CARD USAGE</b>		X			X
<p>The School uses credit cards to purchase supplies and other materials for school purposes. In our sample of credit card statements from throughout the year, we noted instances in which the school failed to use state required accounts payable vouchers.</p>					
<b>PAYROLL COMPLIANCE</b>			X		
<p>The School has part-time employees who complete timecards to keep track of hours worked. From this sample of part-time employees, none of the timecards tested contained a supervisor's signature.</p>					
<b>MINIMUM INTERNAL CONTROL STDS</b>			X		
<p>It was determined that the School was not in compliance with the minimum internal control requirements. The standards were adopted, but personnel did not receive training.</p>					
	Approved staff has been trained				
<b>ADM TESTING</b>					X
<p>Enrollment documents required to be maintained by the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) include, at a minimum, birth certificates, enrollment application, and proof of residency for each student. The School uses a third party to assist with enrollment and documents to be obtained at enrollment. The process used did not result in maintaining consistent and complete enrollment records..</p>					
	New procedures now in place				
<b>REQUIRED REPORTS</b>				X	
<p>We reviewed both biannual Form 9 reports with the ending cash balance per the Form 9 agreed to the ending cash balance, individual funds did not reflect actual activity in those funds during the year. We noted negative balances in funds that did not appear to relate to awaiting reimbursements on cost-reimbursement grants.</p>					
	Corrected				
<b>CAPITAL ASSETS</b>				X	
<p>The School did not perform an inventory of its capital assets during fiscal year 2019.</p>					
	New admin	Corrected			

**5. If applicable: If the school will provide transportation, describe the transportation arrangements for prospective students. In addition to daily transportation needs, describe how the school plans to meet transportation needs for field trips and athletic events.**

We started our transportation program many years ago when gas prices rose to over \$4 per gallon and we were losing students. We currently have three buses which are all over 10 years old which we have purchased from the local school corporations with the input of the owner of the company who services virtually all county buses. We have inspections every six months and they always pass because of the mechanical upkeep performed on them. Each year we graph the location of our students to create bus pick up and drop off locations that make sense and run two buses daily. We request staff to select their activities with at least two classes running on alternate years to utilize the bus for field experiences; we do not utilize buses for athletic events.

**6. Required: How will the school comply with the McKinney-Vento Act, which requires all public schools to transport homeless students, even if general transportation is not provided?**

Sullivan County is, fortunately, one of those rural areas where we do not have Homeless Children and Youth. We work with the Department of Family Services, CASA of Sullivan County, Hamilton Center and others to determine if any of our students are homes. When you are in a small rural community such as ours, that is something that you learn about as you know your families. The new residency requirements do help to determine if there is a possibility of something awry or of concern. We do provide training to school staff including teachers, paraprofessionals and school support staff annually with the new requirements provided by our McKinney-Vento Liaison. We recognize that rights of the Act regarding homeless student services, including transportation.

Optional Organizational Diagnostics

- ✓ Organizational Performance Framework
- ✓ Board Assessment Tool
- ✓ Board Governance Training
- ✓ Board & School Leader Responsibilities

**B. Financial**

**1. In what ways does the board assure that financial resources provide adequate support for the school's overall program and to improve student achievement? Please reflect on the allocation, challenges, trends and any shifts in resources directed toward Student Academic Achievement, Student Instructional Support, Overhead and Operational, and Nonoperational (See Form 9).**

The board and the administration of RCA are FULLY aware of the financial deficits that have faced us from the ramifications of our unfortunate change in school leadership and its impact upon the loss of students to sustain us to remain open. And the board and administration of RCA are also FULLY aware of the financial opportunities we gained from such a devastating occurrence of a global pandemic. We have utilized those opportunities wisely to retain staff,

to update facilities to make students safe, to provide more student instructional support in the form of staff and to purchase programs to help us obtain more student academic achievement. All funding spent is approved by the board.

## VI. Financial Dashboard

### 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	5.76
1.b.	Cash to Current Liabilities	Cash divided by Current Liabilities	5.66
1.c.1	Days Cash	Cash divided by ((Total Expenses-Depreciation Expenses)/365)	127 Days
1.c.2	Unrestricted Days Cash	Unrestricted Cash divided by ((Total Expenses-Depreciation Expenses)/365)	\$0.00
1.d.	Enrollment Variance	Actual Enrollment divided by Enrollment Projection in Charter School Board-Approved Budget	118%
1.e.	Default		
2. SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS			
2.a.	Total Margin	Net Income divided by Total Revenue	
		Aggregated Total Margin: Total 3 Year Net Income divided by Total 3 Year Revenues	-9.9
2.b.	Debt to Asset Ratio	Total Liabilities divided by Total Assets	.17
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)	-191,446
2.d.	Debt Service Coverage Ratio	(Net Income + Depreciation + Interest Expense)/(Annual Principal, Interest, and Lease Payments)	13.86



<b>Financial Performance Framework – Data Points</b>	
Current Assets	275,334
Current Liabilities	47,768
Cash	270,185
Unrestricted Cash	270,185
Total Expenses	1,348,003
Depreciation	27,164
Enrollment Projection in Charter School Board-Approved Budget	100
Actual Enrollment	118
Default	No
Net Income	139,178
Total Revenue	1,487,180
Total 3 Year Net Income	-480,391
Total 3 Year Revenues	3,882,632
Total Liabilities	47,768
Total Assets	423,823
Year 1 Total Cash	461,631
Year 2 Total Cash	221,859
Year 3 Total Cash	270,185
Interest	0
Annual Principal, Interest, and Lease Payments	23,367

**Optional Financial Diagnostics:**

- ✓ Financial Performance Framework
- ✓ Balance Sheet 06.30.21
- ✓ Income Statement 07.01.20-06.30.21

## **Schedule of Attachments**

### **II. Executive Summary**

- ✓ Marketing Plan from IDOE Marketing Class with Nick Leroy - 16 segments
- ✓ Targets and Prospects
- ✓ Video of ad
- ✓ Video of ad 2
- ✓ RCA ad billboard, newspaper, flyer

### **III. Student Performance Diagnostic**

- ✓ Academic Framework
- ✓ eleot Environments
- ✓ aimsweb Reading
- ✓ aimsweb Math

### **IV. Stakeholder Diagnostic**

- ✓ Attachment – IV. Survey – Admin & RCA by Parents
- ✓ Attachment – IV. Survey – Distance Learning
- ✓ Attachment – IV. Survey – General Information
- ✓ Attachment – IV. Survey – Internet
- ✓ Attachment – IV. Survey – Teachers by Parents Graph-Questions
- ✓ Attachment – IV. Survey – Teachers by Students Graph-Questions

### **V. Organizational Diagnostic**

- ✓ Organizational Performance Framework
- ✓ Board Assessment Tool
- ✓ Board Governance Training
- ✓ Board & School Leader Responsibilities

### **V. Financial Diagnostic**

- ✓ Financial Performance Framework
- ✓ Balance Sheet 06.30.21
- ✓ Income Statement 07.01.20-06.30.21