



**2014-2015**

## **CHARTER RENEWAL APPLICATION**

Oct. 1, 2014

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## ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

### ***Fall Creek Academy: Enrollment and Demographic Overview***

**Table One:** 2014-2015 Enrollment and Demographic Information

<b>2014-2015 ENROLLMENT &amp; DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION</b>		
	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Total Enrollment</b>	192	
Students on Waiting List	0	
<b><i>Gender</i></b>		
Male	96	50%
Female	96	50%
<b><i>Ethnicity/Race</i></b>		
White	5	3%
Black	174	91%
Hispanic	0	0%
Asian	0	0%
Native American	0	0%
Other	12	6%
<b><i>Special Populations</i></b>		
Students with IEPs	35	18%
English Language Learners	0	6%
Homeless Students	3	2%
Eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch	*	89%

\*FCA is participating in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). All FCA students receive free lunch and breakfast.

**Table Two:** Enrollment Over the Length of FCA's Charter Contract

	<b>Year One '12-'13</b>	<b>Year Two '13-'14</b>	<b>Year Three '14-'15</b>
<b>Total Students</b>	472	487	191

**Table Three:** Attendance By Grade and Charter Year

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Year 1 '12-'13</b>	<b>Year 2 '13-'14</b>	<b>Year 3 '14-'15</b>
Kindergarten	94%	91.5%	
First Grade	93.9%	92.4%	
Second Grade	95.5%	93.1%	
Third Grade	91.8%	89.0%	
Fourth Grade	94.8%	92.7%	
Fifth Grade	95.9%	94.7%	
Sixth Grade	95.8%	95.5%	96.9%
Seventh Grade	96.2%	94.1%	96.8%
Eighth Grade	92.2%	91.3%	82.9%
Ninth Grade	93.8%	90.1%	88.9%
Tenth Grade	94.3%	89.0%	94.7%
Eleventh Grade	92.7%	92.8%	93.4%
Twelfth Grade	95.4%	95.5%	86.2%
<b>All Grades</b>	<b>94.2%</b>	<b>92.4%</b>	<b>91.4%</b>

**Table Four:** Profile of SPED Students Each Year of FCA's Charter

<b>Disability Type</b>	<b>Year One 2012-2013</b>		<b>Year Two 2013-2014</b>		<b>Year Three* 2014-2015</b>	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Autism Spectrum	2	.4%	4	.8%	3	1.6%
Cognitive Disability	11	2.3%	9	1.8%	4	2.1%
Emotional Disability	11	2.3%	8	1.6%	6	3.1%
Language or Speech Impairment	11	2.3%	30	6.2%		
Specific Learning Dis.	31	6.6%	43	8.8%	16	8.4%
Other Health Impaired	11	2.3%	8	1.6%	3	1.6%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>16.3%</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>21.4%</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>16.8%</b>

\*Complete SPED Classification data not yet available for '14-'15 school year.

**Table Five:** English Language Learners Each Year of FCA's Charter

	Year One '12-'13		Year Two '13-'14		Year Three '14-'15	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>ELL Students</b>	5	1.1%	7	1.4%	0	0%

**Table Six:** Homeless Students Each Year of FCA's Charter

	Year One '12-'13		Year Two '13-'14		Year Three '14-'15	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>Homeless Students</b>	n/a		n/a		3	<1%

**High-Ability Students** Each Year of FCA's Charter

*\*FCA has not enrolled or identified any students as "high-ability" over the past 2.5 years of its charter.*

**Table Eight:** Academic Profile Each Year of FCA's Charter

The chart below provides an overview of FCA's academic performance over the last two years. We discuss these results in more depth in Sections II and III of our Renewal Application.

	AYP	PL 221	A-F	NWEA Reading Growth	NWEA Lang. Arts Growth	NWEA Math Growth	ISTEP Profic. Math	ISTEP Profic. ELA	ISTEP Profic. Math & ELA
SY '12-'13	n/a	n/a	F	n/a	n/a	46.2%	51.4%	56.7%	50.8%
SY '13-'14	n/a	n/a	F	n/a	n/a	n/a	44.9%	52.2%	45.8%
SY '14-'15									

\* FCA does not have '13-'14 NWEA growth target data due to technology problems during testing administration.

***Changes and Transitions at Fall Creek Academy***

In February 2012, Charlie Schlegel, the Principal/Superintendent of an Indianapolis charter school, agreed to step down from his role as a day-to-day leader and serve in a part-time capacity as the Academic Partner for two struggling charter schools. Both *Fall Creek Academy* (FCA) and *Fountain Square Academy* (FSA) had served Indianapolis for several years through charters from the Mayor's Charter School Office.

In the fall of 2011, both FCA and FSA sought new charters through Ball State's Charter School Office. Initially denied new charters, the schools' Board proposed to Ball State an alternate arrangement in which FCA and FSA would contract with its current operator - Greater Educational Opportunities Inc. (GEO)- to manage operations and enlist the *Challenge Foundation Academy* (CFA) and specifically Charlie Schlegel to serve as the schools' Academic Partner. In late June 2012, GEO withdrew from this arrangement - at which time, CFA assumed responsibility for overseeing both schools' operations and academics.

The organization that started solely as FCA and FSA's **Academic Partner** is, today, the *Community Charter Network* (CCN). For legal purposes, CCN and Fall Creek Academy are the same entity, share

tax identification numbers and are governed by the same Board of Directors, operating under the same Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws.

As CCN has evolved and developed into its current team of five leaders, the group has also sought over the last 2.5 years to transform both *Fall Creek* and *Fountain Square Academy* into stronger performing schools. We have implemented best practices from CFA when applicable; yet, our team had less knowledge of the challenges of serving middle and high school students, particularly within a “turn-around” environment.

Today, in addition to managing *Fall Creek Academy*, CCN also provides academic and operational support to *Avondale Meadows Academy* (formerly the *Challenge Foundation Academy*), *University Heights Preparatory* (formerly *Fountain Square Academy*), and *Vision Academy*, a replication of CFA’s best practices now in its first year of operation. The specific services CCN provides each of these schools are detailed within a Memorandum of Understanding, renewed annually. A copy of CCN’s MoU with each school is available through FCA’s CSapphire account.

### **Campus and Leadership Transitions**

Over the course of its three-year charter agreement, FCA itself has gone through several different changes. In June 2012, FCA elected to move its high school students to module-buildings on the grounds of Ivy Tech’s Meridian St. Campus. We had advised that separating the middle school students from the high school students would help improve the culture and organizations of both segments of this K-12 school. With more space, we also elected to increase the size of our middle school, opening a second third, fourth and fifth grade class in hopes of eventually hosting two classes at each grade.

Although the module-based high school campus (with a covered central hallway) proved helpful in readily accessing Ivy Tech’s facilities, we had hoped in time to develop a more permanent high school option; yet, after two years in the module campus, including one an especially snowy, cold winter, the FCA Board elected to move the high school students back to the Fall Creek’s Capitol St. building. The need for more permanent space high school, combined with other factors outlined later in this application, required that FCA narrow the number of grades served - moving from a K-12 school to a 6-12 school.

This year, FCA serves just under 200 students, grades 6-12. Approximately 60% are in high school age. Just over 65% of ‘14-’15 students attended FCA last year; however, FCA retained over 80% of its students, entering grades 9-12, including 90% of its returning high school students. On whole, 90% are eligible for free/reduced lunch; three quarters live within 1.5 miles of FCA. Throughout the changes in FCA, we have found the demand for small, safe schools serving students in the middle and high school grades is as high as ever in the neighborhoods near downtown Indianapolis.

In addition to changing locations, *Fall Creek Academy* has also changed leaders frequently. In fact, the students and families who have been with FCA four or more years have met five different principals. Rick Hunt served as FCA’s principal from May 2011 through June 2013. That spring, FCA’s Board approved hiring two principals. Agnes Aleobua assumed leadership of FCA’s High School. Hanno Becker took over as principal of the K-8, Capitol Avenue building.

In an effort to improve organization and behavior management, Becker agreed to move into a Dean’s role at FCA’s K-8. Kevin Handley, an experienced former charter school principal from Richmond, IN, agreed to take over as principal of the K-8 campus. This year, FCA employs two principals. Handley serves as co-principal, primarily responsible for culture and operations. Aleobua is the principal in charge of academics and instruction. We believe that the consistency of steady leadership, combined

with the tighter focus on serving middle and high school students within more appropriate, less crowded facility will help FCA's staff and its students build the kind of positive, achievement-oriented culture quality schooling requires.

### ***FCA Mission, Vision and Academic Results***

Throughout its transition and changes to its grade configuration, FCA has maintained a steady focus on serving students from low incomes - many of whom do not grow up in homes with a tradition of post-secondary success. The school's Mission Statement and Core Values reflect its deep commitment to helping first-generation college students get a head start on post-secondary educational success.

#### **Fall Creek Academy Mission Statement**

Fall Creek Academy will provide all students with a rigorous experience putting them on track to graduate high school with an Indiana Academic Honors diploma and an Associate's Degree and providing them a path to get into and through college with the ability to become leaders in a global society.

#### **FCA Core Values**

High Achievement  
Community  
Compassion  
Respect  
Integrity  
Safety

As we work tirelessly to turn FCA into a high performing school that our students and families deserved, our team is equally motivated by the alarming gap in quality seats at the middle and high school grades. According to a recent study, fewer than 150 of the 1,441 high school students in our area attends a high-performing school. With our location just to the east of this area, we feel a strong obligation to work especially hard at ensuring students and families in these neighborhoods know of the educational opportunities *Fall Creek Academy* provides and, in turn, help to ensure that a greater share of these students attends a high quality school.

*Fall Creek Academy*, in short, is in midst of a transformation. We are beginning to establish strong and consistent leadership and a laser-focus on academics and supportive behavioral and cultural expectations and interventions for our students. While FCA has experienced inconsistent performance on academics, we are confident that we are creating a new history. We have a committed network team, dedicated and talented leaders and staff, supportive community partners and engaged students and families. We are striving to improve our curriculum and pedagogy so that we are able to see a dramatic improvement in our student growth. We are ready to recognize our mission for serving our students and families with a college preparatory education.

## ***Looking Back: The Record and Analysis of Performance***

As described in the previous section, our team assumed responsibility for *Fall Creek Academy* under some relatively difficult circumstances. Across the country, charter and traditional school operators have sought innovative ways to significantly improve or “turn-around” under-performing schools. In its twelfth year of existence, FCA lacks a strong history of academic success or financial stability. CCN and its leaders agreed to assume responsibility for FCA and find ways to significantly improve academic achievement. On some measures (like ECA proficiency), achievement has improved; on other measures (like ISTEP), results have not improved. However, we do believe we have made progress and building momentum with the recent changes we have made and the leaders we recruited.

Over the scope of our current charter, FCA’s ISTEP English/Language Arts (ELA) and Math performance has remained well below the standard established in BSU Academic Framework expectation. The specific proficiency rates among students, grades 3-8, are displayed in Figure I.

**Figure I: FCA’s Overall ISTEP Proficiency**

Schools meeting BSU’s standard must achieve at least 80% math and ELA proficiency, as determined through each year’s ISTEP.

Grade	Subject	Year 1 '12-'13	Year 2 '13-'14
Overall	ELA	53.8%	49.5%
	Math	50.8%	45.9%

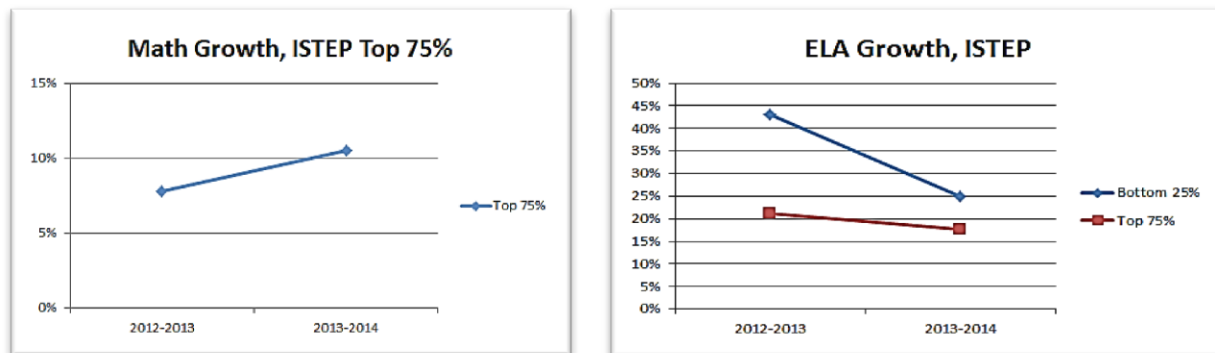
Changes in FCA’s Leadership and staff transitions have contributed to FCA’s poor performance in middle school. The absence of continuity in FCA’s leader and essential teachers has created many shortcomings in strong instruction, a supportive learning culture and consistent family engagement—all of which help improve academic results.

However, it is worth noting that among students who attended FCA in both year one and year two of this turnaround, results are improving. In fact, twice as many eighth graders attending FCA for the second straight year passed the Math ISTEP as scored proficient as seventh graders. Just 15% of these same eighth graders passed the ELA ISTEP *as seventh graders*; yet, 39% of these students passed the ISTEP ELA as eighth graders.

In short, these students grew, despite the significant changes around them. Unfortunately, there growth was, in effect, drowned out by the number of new students, who, on average, had attended nearly four different elementary and middle schools prior to joining us at FCA.

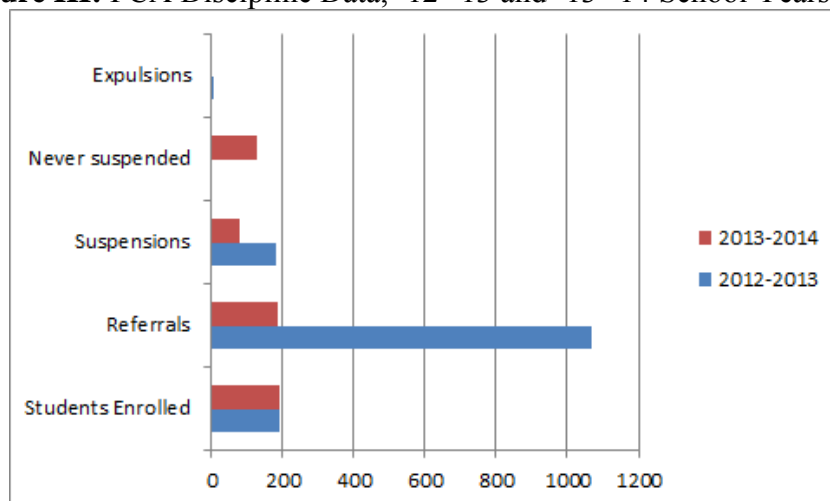
**Figure II:** Over the last two years, the percentage of middle school students within the top 75% achieving high growth improved. ELA growth among all middle school students dropped.





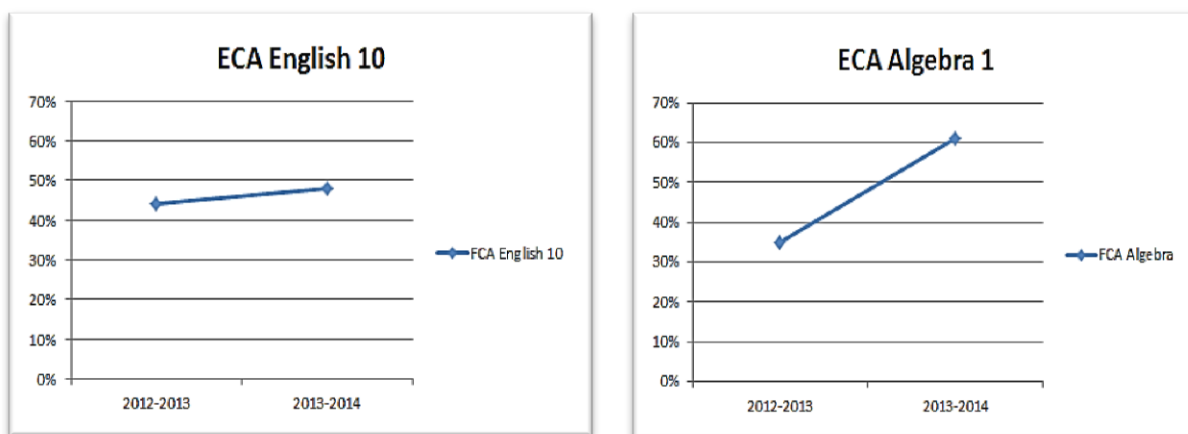
Despite the introduction of a new principal and an entirely new staff, FCA did make its greatest improvement in its high school. Agnes Aloebua, FCA High School principal, led the development of a strong school culture, recognizing that building a strong, stable foundation of support and expectations- essentially a respectful, learning culture- would, in time, help produce improved academic outcomes. The high school adopted new tools, like *LiveSchool* to help implement consistent behavior systems. This year, FCA added a Dean and tools like Behavior Contracts and Positive Rewards to help reinforce better choices. Figure III below displays through data measurable ways in which culture within the high school is improving.

**Figure III: FCA Discipline Data, '12-'13 and '13-'14 School Years.**



As one might expect, the academic results at FCA's High School also improved. Overall, proficiency rates among English 10 and Algebra students increased last year, as determined through the End-of-Course Assessments administered across the state. We attribute the improvement primarily to the improved instruction, especially in Algebra, where proficiency rates grew nearly 20 percentage points to 61%. On the English 10 exam, 48% of students achieved proficiency - four percentage points or one more student than the previous year.

**Figure IV:** ECA Proficiency Rates in English and Algebra during the '12-'13 and '13-'14 school years.



It is equally important to point to the growth that these high school students had made since their eighth grade ISTEP. In fact,

- Among those ninth graders enrolled at FCA last year, only 35% scored proficient on the Math ISTEP as eighth graders; 59% passed the Algebra ECA last month.
- Among tenth graders enrolled at FCA since eighth grade, only 25% scored proficient on the ELA ISTEP as eighth graders; 50% passed the English 10 ECA last month.

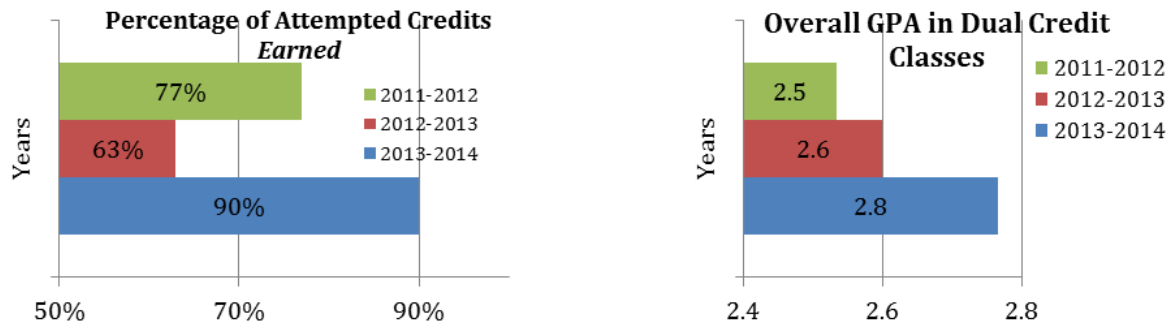
Another area of strength not well reflected in state-wide measures of achievement is our current high school students' progress in earning college credits. Ms. Aleobua and her team prioritized improved performance among FCA students enrolled in college-level courses at *Ivy Tech*, across the street from FCA's main campus. A successful dual credit program is a critical part of our plans described in the next section. In time, we hope a significant percentage of students earn as much as an Associate's Degree while still in high school, paving the ways towards post-secondary success.

The High School Faculty worked closely with eligible students to prepare them for college courses and providing them the support they needed, once enrolled. Consequently, this year, nearly half of FCA HS students (including two ninth graders) earned at least three college credits at *Ivy Tech*. This year, FCA students earned a dual credit grade point average of 2.8, including six A's and thirteen B's. Figure V on the next page relays students' progress over the last three years at FCA.

Lastly, students only receive college credit if they earn a C or better in the course. This year, 90% of our students who enrolled in a dual credit course earned at least a C and, thus, received college credit. Equally important, none of FCA's students withdrew from an *Ivy Tech* course midway through the course, as is relatively common in college classes. This was a significant improvement over previous years, when as many as a quarter of FCA students withdrew midway through the course.

### Figure V: FCA Students' Progress in Earning Dual Credits

Demonstrated in the figures below, FCA students earned a higher percentage of credits attempted than in previous years as well as higher overall grades in the college-level courses they took.



In the end, none of us is entirely satisfied with the level of achievement at FCA. Upon reflection, two factors stand out as particularly important to FCA's continued improvement, particularly in its middle school. For one, FCA has experienced a rate of staff turnover. Some was necessary; yet, with some departures, we also lost important institutional knowledge and familiarity with the students, their families and long history of FCA's place in the Fall Creek community. Lost knowledge, coupled with a large portion of new student faces in middle school classrooms, limited our capacity to build a strong, organized culture focused on helping students grow.

In an effort to learn from previous years' challenges, we prioritized this year the disaggregation of student level data including attendance history to ensure that no student is going unnoticed. We have also developed a team of academic interventionists and scheduled extra time for math and language arts to lend our middle school students, specifically, the support that they need.

In the end, we are deeply committed to the community currently served at FCA and to proving that, with sufficient time and the right supports, our students are capable of great things. We believe that we have the team, the program and the partnerships our students need. In the Looking Forward section later in this application, we describe in more detail how we believe these resources will enable us to continue the positive momentum started in FCA's high school this year.

### **Financial Performance**

Over the past 2.5 years, *Fall Creek Academy* has consistently and diligently met all financial obligations. We worked to spend responsibly while also ensuring that our students and teachers have access to all necessary resources. We set our budget based on anticipated income from basic grant and other funds, which generally fluctuate with enrollment.

This year, we made significant changes to FCA, most notably its grade configuration. We set ambitious enrollment goals entering this year yet fell 30% short of these goals on Sept. 1. As we might have in other years, we reduced expenses proportionally to ensure that our budget remains balanced. We have posted in CSapphire both our original budget for 2014-15 as well as a revised budget that reflects our actual enrollment. Our Board reviewed and approved both budgets.

The most substantial cuts in our reduced budget were in personnel, but our rent fees also decreased substantially. *Ivy Tech Community College*, the owner of FCA's facility, waived rent such that we are able to allocate our resources to those which most impact student achievement. Also notable, we

renewed this year a line of credit with National Bank of Indianapolis, allowing us to borrow up to \$350,000 at a time. This has been primarily been used to bridge a gap in the timing between our payroll expenses and basic grant deposits from the state. We consistently repay our line of credit, in full, on a monthly basis.

From July 2012 through June 2013, FCA contracted with Bookkeeping Plus Inc. to manage FCA's accounting and finance related business. This year, we began working with the Charter School Management Corporation (CSMC) to manage our finances and state compliance. FCA Business Manager, Principals, and CCN's Chief Operations Officer work in close collaboration with CSMC to ensure the financial health of Fall Creek Academy.

We carefully monitor our financial position through several structures.

- **Weekly Recaps:** Our Principal, Business Manager, and Chief Operations Officer review cash position on a weekly basis, approving payment of all invoices.
- **Monthly Finance Meetings:** Each month, Principal, Business Manager, and Chief Operations Officer meet with CSMC's Account Manager to review the prior month's financials, identify and review variances, and ensure all agree on the school's financial position.
- **Board Finance Meetings:** CCN's Chief Operations Officer and Superintendent meet monthly with the Board's Finance Chair to review the prior month's financials, review variances and address any questions of our Finance Chair.

*Fall Creek Academy's* financial performance against each of the criteria included in Ball State's Financial Performance Framework varies. FCA's Financial Health report is included in Appendix A. Below is a summary of several areas we have not met standard and have prioritized for improvement.

- **Unrestricted Days Cash (Ind. 1c):** Currently, we have nearly 40 days of cash on hand. However, we do not anticipate a great increase in this number for the current fiscal year. We have a balanced- but-lean budget and intend to monitor each dollar spent very closely. Consistent with the direction of our Board, we have also chosen to allocate every possible resource on the immediate academic needs of our students and do not anticipate building significant cash reserves this year. Improving academic results continues to be our top priority.
- **Enrollment Variance (Ind. 1d):** As noted, our enrollment variance is just over 70%, substantially lower than the 95% target for metric 1d of the performance framework. We attribute this to a variety of factors, most notably the change from a K-12 to a 6-12. In addition to losing students at the elementary grade levels where we often had the highest enrollment, we lost some families who were drawn to our K-12 model because all of their students could be on the same campus. However, the variance was greater than we anticipated and we've had to adjust expenses accordingly.
- **Total Margin (Ind. 2b):** Our Three-Year total margin is -1.1%; yet, the margin has improved considerably since FY12, when it was -5.5%. During the first two years of our charter (FY '13 and FY '14), FCA has maintained a margin of 0.71%, a substantial improvement over previous years. Although the FY14 Margin is slightly negative (-0.19%) and thus places FCA in the "does not meet" category, we believe that the budget reductions and program changes that we have made this year will enable us to make the necessary improvements to the school's academic program without jeopardizing the long-term financial health and sustainability of our school. In time, we expect these changes to significantly increase our enrollment and retention of students and, thus, our primary source of funding - the basic grant.

## ***Financial Plans***

*Fall Creek Academy's* projected budget for the next two years (FY '16 and FY '17) is included in Appendix B. These budgets anticipate the addition of 30-40 students to our enrollment totals each year - 240 in 2015-16 and 270 in 2016-17. Based on frequent discussions with families and knowledge of the interests in stronger schools within the neighborhoods around us, we are confident in the demand for stronger schools and believe, as FCA grows stronger culturally and academically, the school will attract more and more students. Future Title I and Title II allotments will decrease, on account of a reduced enrollment. We have also budgeted conservatively and anticipate our basic grant income will drop to \$7800 in FY '16 and \$7500 in FY '17. Currently, FCA receives \$8,080 per student in basic grant. We also anticipate our rent increase to \$20,000 in FY '16 and \$100,000 in FY '17.

As mentioned, our enrollment targets are 240 and 270 for the next two years. Though FCA will need to enroll a small number of students to fill openings at other grades, we plan to focus our recruitment efforts on attracting students and families to join us at sixth and ninth grade – two points at which students traditionally commit to a new school. Over the past two years during which we have had to make many different changes in staff and program at FCA, our retention rate of eligible students has hovered just over 70%. We will anticipate similar levels of student retention into our recruitment goals, even as we work to increase significantly the number of students who stay with us throughout their middle and high school years. We know from our analysis that students are best served and academic habits most effectively nurtured when we're able to serve students and their families for at least three consecutive years.

We have very purposely limited our enrollment projections to 11-14% of total enrollment. For one, our current facility can effectively accommodate up to 300 students. Even more, we believe a strong, supportive school culture to be one of the most important aspects of a great school. Adding just 30 spots during the next two years will enable our team to effectively build a learning community in which all students are known well, included in the life of the school and held accountable for both conducts and academic progress. Our experience tells us that there is ample demand for a high-quality, small-school environment without the enrollment restrictions of many of the magnet schools in our area.

If we are successful in our quest for renewal, we plan to employ an enrollment team already in place that is comprised of students, parents, teachers and administrators to build FCA's name and reputation in the surrounding community. We have already initiated relationships with a broad range of community-based organizations and neighborhood associations nearby and are developing a small musical group to perform at various meetings and events. We think student performances, like these, as well as our Enrollment Team's participation in various community and religious events will be critical to building awareness of our middle and high school programs and support for our overall mission.

Like most schools, *Fall Creek Academy's* budget depends heavily on student enrollment. As we work to improve academics, we also intend to allocate appropriate staff and financial resources towards student recruitment. Nonetheless, if, despite our best efforts, we fall short of our enrollment goals, we are prepared to make difficult spending decisions. Taking responsibility for FCA three years ago has afforded our team a broad range of important experiences - one of which includes adjusting spending if faced with lower than expected enrollment.

Lastly, we have included in CSapphire a range of finance-related documents, as requested.

## ***Organizational Performance***

### **Educational Program:**

FCA implemented the essential terms of its educational program as defined in the current charter agreement. As discussed earlier in this our application, the FCA Board did chose in Feb. 2014 to narrow the number of grades served - moving from a K-12 school to a 6-12 school. This decision was based on:

- The limited size of our facility and its capacity to adequately serve no more than 300 students.
- The significant limitations of a temporary, modular facility for high school students.
- The great need among local providers for schools serving middle and high school age students of all backgrounds and academic ability.
- The growing number of quality traditional-district, public charter and private elementary school options nearby.
- The challenge we were experiencing improving academic support for students at both the elementary and secondary level.

The '14-'15 school year is the first in which we have served solely students in grades 6-12. With well under 300 students in the building, we are now able to adequately serve middle and high school students, providing them relatively separate classrooms, small instructional spaces and common areas appropriately equipped with resources to meet their learning needs.

In attempts to provide our middle and high school students a more appropriate environment, we elected to move our high school into a modular campus, adjacent to Ivy Tech Community College's Meridian Street Campus. While the space afforded ready access to Ivy Tech, the space presented many hardships for our high school students and staff, especially during the winter months.

Bringing the high school students back into FCA's main building has not only presented our high school with a more suitable facility, it has also improve the academic coherence of our middle and high school programs and allowed our Middle and High School Faculty far greater opportunity to collaborate and learn from each other. In the end, early indicators suggest that the changes we've made to FCA's grade configuration will result in significantly high achievement levels in the grades we serve and better prepare all students for post-secondary success.

### **Serving Special Populations:**

In the spring of 2014, FCA significantly revised its policies and procedures in Special Education to ensure better support for students with special learning needs and tighter accountability across the range of services we provide special populations. During the '12-'13 school year, we identified two students who were not assessed for English Language Proficiency, as indicated on their Home Language Survey.

During the '13-'14 school year, a the Indiana Department of Education found FCA did not meet the time requirements dictated in the IEP of a student who joined the school mid-year. Both issues were eventually resolved; however, these instances also challenged our administrative team to strengthen our policies and procedures in identifying and supporting students with special learning needs. This year, FCA has an experienced administrator responsible for the implementation of these policies and procedures and reinforcing with our team their importance in serving students with special learning needs.

## **Financial Management and Oversight**

During the '12-'13 and '13-'14 school year, FCA contracted with *Bookkeeping Plus* (BKP) to provide financial oversight and day-to-day accounting support. A well-regarded accounting firm with ample experience working with charter schools, BKP provided excellent service to FCA and helped ensure we followed General Accepted Accounting Principles and met all relevant deadlines and submission requirements. FCA received just two comments, in total, on the last two years' audits – both of which were addressed through adjustments to our internal procedures.

### **Accounting:**

This year, FCA and CCN's accounting services are provided by the *Charter School Management Corporation*, an independent bookkeeping firm that serves several Indiana charter schools; *Fitzgerald-Isaac LLC*, an accounting firm that also serves a large number of Indiana charter schools, is our auditor.

Working with the school's COO, CSMC provides oversight and reporting services. Among the reports that CSMC prepares are semi-annual reports to the *Indiana Department of Education Office of School Finance* (Form 9) and semi-annual reports to *Ball State University Office of Charter Schools*. In addition, CSMC provides information for the preparation of the school's tax return filing with the *Internal Revenue Service* (Form 990) and for the school's personal property tax filing. The school's tax return and personal property tax filing with the Internal Revenue Service is prepared by *Fitzgerald-Isaac LLC*.

All external reporting is reviewed by one or more of the school's administrators. The semi-annual reporting to *Ball State University Office of Charter Schools* is reviewed and submitted by the school's Treasurer. The school's personal property tax filing is reviewed and signed by the school's Treasurer. The school's Form 9 submission to the Indiana Department of Education Office of School Finance is reviewed and signed by the school's Superintendent, the President of the School's Governing Body, and by the school's Treasurer. The school's tax return filing to the Internal Revenue Service is reviewed and signed by the school's Treasurer and is submitted to every member of the school's Board for review before it is filed.

### **Purchasing:**

The school's anticipated expenditures are outlined in the school's budget. The budget is approved by the school's Board, and the school's administrators are then authorized to do the purchasing for the school within the framework of the budget. Either the school's Business Manager or the school's leadership authorizes small purchases and ongoing expenses. The school's administrators discuss larger purchases before they are made. This is appropriate because all expense vouchers and checks require the signature of both the school's Business Manager and the school's administrator.

Major expenditures or expenditures that are based on a contract generally require specific Board approval. These would include expenditures for school meals, transportation, legal services, and insurance. Negotiation of contract terms before a contract is brought to the Board for approval can be done by the networks Chief Operations Officer, and frequently involves both administrators. Contracts are also typically reviewed by legal counsel. All vouchers and checks for purchases require the signatures of both the school's Chief Operations Officer and Treasurer. All purchases are reported to the school's Board of Directors monthly on a report that is reviewed, discussed, formally approved and signed by all Directors present at the meeting.

### **Payroll**

The school's anticipated payroll expenditures are also outlined in the school's budget. The school's budget is approved by the Board, and the school's Business manager and administrators are then

authorized to manage payroll expenditures for the school within the framework of the budget. The school has in place starting salary guidelines for all classes of employee. Variances from these starting salary guidelines are reported to the Board. Annual salary increases are subject to Board approval. Payroll is done semi-monthly by the school's Business Manager, and pay is based on each employee's approved salary or hourly pay.

### **Audits**

Annual audits of the school are conducted by Fitzgerald-Isaac, LLC. Audits are conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and include auditing requirements of the Indiana State Board of Accounts. Audit results are discussed with the school's Board President, Superintendent, and Chief Operations Officer, and the final audit report is provided to all of the school's Board members, the school's lender(s), and to Ball State University Office of Charter Schools. The final audit report is also posted online at the Indiana State Board of Accounts website.

### **Contracted Services**

The criteria for selection of service providers includes availability, demonstrated success in providing the specified services, and pricing. All of the school's current service providers have worked with the school for several years. However, performance and pricing of current service providers relative to other potential providers is regularly reviewed. Selection of new service providers is done in accordance with regulatory requirements, and all contracts with service providers are reviewed by school's counsel and are subject to Board approval.

The school has contracted with the following service providers:

- Aramark Food Service Department to provide school breakfasts and lunches
- Easter Seals Crossroads Easter Seals to provide Speech-Language Pathology, Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy Services
- Student Transit to provide school bus transportation
- CSMC to provide bookkeeping services
- Spectrum Technology, Inc. to provide support for the school's technology
- Hazzard Institute, Inc. to provide psychological testing
- Fitzgerald-Isaac LLC to prepare annual federal and state tax filings
- Curlin & Clay, LLC to provide legal services
- Healthnet, School based health clinic

### **Governance and Reporting**

*Fall Creek Academy* has met all of its governance and reporting obligations. There were minimal instances in which compliance documentation was submitted late or incomplete, and FCA was proactive in ensuring any concerns regarding documentation submission were addressed. With the addition of a Chief Operations Officer in September 2013, the school's leadership team implemented a new process to ensure that FCA submitted complete compliance documentation by its deadline, which indicated the ability to mid-course correct.

FCA's Board complied with Indiana Open Door Law and all public access policies, which include conducting transparent meetings that are open to the public. Public meeting notices are posted appropriately and visibly. Board meeting minutes are accurate and clear.

Throughout the length of this charter, four individuals have resigned from the UHP Board due primarily to other time commitments. During this time, the Board has also added a member, who is also a parent of a student at *Fall Creek Academy*. Currently, the UHP Board has five total members - four of whom have been on the Board throughout the length of the charter.



In August 2013, the FCA Board officially adopted the name the *Community Charter Network* (CCN). Through memoranda dictating the terms of its services, CCN assumes responsibility for the management of University Heights Preparatory Academy, Avondale Meadows Academy and Vision Academy, alongside its responsibility for the management of Fall Creek Academy. Unlike a traditional Educational Service Provider, CCN is actually the same entity as FCA; yet, in effect, it sells its services to the other charter schools mentioned above. This arrangement allows CCN/FCA to attract and retain talented leaders and, whenever possible, bundle services in ways that maximize efficiency and expertise.

### **Students and Employees**

Fall Creek Academy materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations and provisions of the charter agreement relating to the rights of students. Although it also complies with laws, rules and regulations relating to school attendance, FCA has not yet met its attendance goals. The rates of school attendance by grade in each of the last two years are presented below.

The teachers and staff at FCA meet credentialing requirements, and the school complies with all applicable laws, rules and regulations relating to employee rights. We conducts background checks for each employee and volunteer/parent chaperon prior to their first day of service.

### **School Environment**

FCA has a designated, trained School Safety Specialist, who regularly reviews safety procedures and precautions with the staff. The school maintains adequate occupancy records and is inspected annually to ensure it meets all health and fire safety requirements. During the past two years, FCA partnered with *LearningWell* to provide our school with full-time nursing service and ensure full compliance with relevant health laws. This year, FCA maintains a similar arrangement with *Healthnet* (a division of IU Health), which operates school-based clinics in schools across the city. Lastly, Fall Creek Academy follows all relevant laws regarding student and family privacy, appropriately secures testing materials and transfers records upon request from other schools or institutions.

## ***Looking Forward: Plans for the Next Charter Term***

*Fall Creek Academy* is excited to look ahead to our future as a 6-12 charter school serving our priority neighborhoods and greater Indianapolis community. We strive to be an excellent educational option for our students and families, and desire to contribute to the creation of a larger population of underserved students going to and persisting through college.

Over the next five years, FCA aims to focus intently on measures to increase significantly student achievement. There are four overarching priorities we believe will help get us there:

1. Building and Sustaining a positive, supportive school culture
2. Recruiting, developing and retaining smart, talented, committed and effective personnel
3. Employing Rigorous and Deliberately Structured and Supported Instruction
4. Engaging Parents, Families and Community Partners to Support our College Mission

### ***Academic Data and Educational Strategies***

Analysis of our academic performance has indicated improvement is needed within our middle school programming as well as in our overall proficiency on state assessments. (See Looking Back re: Indicators 2.1 and 2.2). Ultimately, improvement in these areas will yield an increase in our A-F accountability grade as well (Indicator 2.3a). We believe by making the above priority areas our next

steps during this charter term, we will see dramatic academic improvements and begin to fulfill our mission to students and families.

### ***Positive School Culture***

Students learn best within a safe, predictable and positive environment. They must be surrounded by adults who convey in their words and actions an unfailing confidence in young people to achieve and provide them with a supportive, positive yet rigorous learning environment. If we are to achieve our mission of sending our students to and through college, the adults around them must expect excellence and have uncommon supports in place to attain an uncommon level of achievement. Thus, in reality, a positive school culture starts not with the students but with the teachers, administrators and office personnel that position the school to create and hold each other accountable for results.

Strategies: The culture of our school is centered on the belief that every student at FCA can and will graduate from college. Academic excellence is our primary goal. We believe that behavioral excellence is a strong determining factor in academic excellence. Our high expectations for student behavior directly correlate to our high expectations for success in academics and in life. In order for our students to achieve at the highest level, we know that students must be empowered to learn in an environment that is safe, positive, supportive, and rigorous. Further, for our students to achieve their full potential academically, they must make positive choices and demonstrate behavioral excellence.

Our student empowerment system is all about ensuring that students succeed without any exceptions and without any excuses. This system employs a “whatever it takes” attitude to help our students succeed and grow, ensures that we celebrate our successes, and allows our students the opportunity to give back to our community. Students will be able to understand that their choices and actions lead to logical outcomes, and students will feel empowered to make decisions that will lead to future success.

In order to reach our goal of enabling the implementation of effective intervention and support so students can reach their full potential academically, emotionally, and socially, we must do the following:

- 1) Help students achieve academic success by increasing time for instruction and reducing incidents of making poor choices.
- 2) Help students achieve social success by teaching priority civic behaviors – respect, responsibility, safety, and community
- 3) Adhere to a system that enables a 4 to 1 ratio of positive attention to corrections

The programs in which we use to deploy behavioral excellence are:

- Success Rewards and Demerit Marks – Behavior Incentive Program
- RISE (Restoring Individual Student Excellence) – Behavior Support Program
- Top Scholars – Academic Incentive Program
- Office Hours (last hour of school day and after school)– Academic Support Program

Additionally, to encourage academic excellence, we hold College and Career Days/Service Learning twice a semester with students. Students are given the opportunity to interact with college/career representatives from the surrounding areas and engage in small group discussions pertinent to college and career success. School wide service learning will take place each semester that will allow our students to give back to our surrounding community.

### ***Talented, Effective Personnel***

Although it may be helpful to have some turnover each year, we know that our strength and stability as an organization rests on our capacity to retain our best team members. It is the responsibility of the principal and the network team to identify these “irreplaceables” and work to recognize their strengths, celebrate their impact and include them, as appropriate, in the development of our school (TNTP, 2010). In establishing teacher retention as an essential priority, we intend to highlight the importance we place on developing and retaining great teachers.

Strategies: FCA’s leadership team and the Chief Academic Officer have been trained on the RISE evaluation system. FCA also adopted the evaluation platform, Standard for Success this school year as a way to manage evaluations and observations of teachers and staff. We also enlisted the help of The New Teacher Project to assist us with inter-rater reliability and the coaching of our teachers. The Network Support Team will also meet regularly to identify high performers, review evaluation results and coordinate retention strategies.

Beginning this year, FCA expanded their leadership team to include a Director of Instruction (DOI). Our DOI coordinates the support and development of teachers and helps teachers use a variety of different formative and summative assessment tools to measure student achievement. The DOI also manages content experts in each subject area, who, in turn, ensure the overall alignment, rigor and continuity of our Humanities, Science, Math and Writing curricula and overall standards of achievement. The Director of Instruction leads teacher coaching, support, and professional development, as well as the evaluation of teacher performance. Please see Appendix E for a detailed outline of our professional support system.

Also this year and with plans to continue through the next charter term, FCA has an early dismissal each Friday at 2:00pm to allow time for professional development of our staff. Early dismissal allows the team to focus more closely on their reflection and development. During this time, grade level teams will rotate through meetings focused on developing strong instructional strategies and practices. They will convene as a Professional Learning Community (PLC), during which they will normalize rubrics and assessments, perform item analyses, etc. Finally, the teams will have planning time during which grade level teachers and departments can facilitate lesson and unit development.

Progress Monitoring: To assess teacher performance we will use Indiana’s RISE Instructional rubric, and employ an evaluation cycle that includes 3 long observations (50+ minutes) and 3 short observations (15-20 minutes). The RISE rubric focuses on Instruction, Planning, and Classroom Environment, and each teacher is responsible for setting student learning objectives (SLOs) as a way to measure their impact on student achievement. To monitor teacher retention, we will use two counts. One will be a simple count of the number of teachers with us in May who return the following August. The other count will be of those teachers who stayed with us and left, who was rated effective/highly effective according to our evaluation system. We will present this data to the CCN Board annually as well as discuss and use it in our leadership team meetings. Please see FCA CSapphire file, for further details on our evaluation and retention plans.

### ***Rigorous and Deliberately Structured and Supported Instruction:***

We will employ a structured school environment that allows students to feel confident taking academic risks. We fully endorse learning from academic mistakes, and we will reward students who do so. We intend to teach our students and reinforce through our language and daily rituals the importance of respecting and appreciating the diversity of perspectives and ideas, and strengths and challenges in every classroom. In staffing our school, we desire teachers who embrace the challenges of teaching students with diverse learning needs. As experienced educators, we know well the challenges of teaching students of varying skill levels. We will support our teachers in this endeavor with effective tools to measure the academic proficiency of each learner, determine his/her skills in

relation to grade-level standards, tailor instruction to this student's needs and vision, and then follow his/her growth over the course of his/her time with us.

Teachers will utilize the gradual release method of instruction to model academic expectations, support student understanding and mastery, and allow for independent practice and assessment, commonly referred to as "I Do – We Do – You Do." Teachers will also employ the inquiry-based method of questioning and discussion for topics and genres that are best supported by this form of instruction. This method provides the venue for students to think critically and articulate thoughts and critiques.

Strategies: All academic decisions made are informed and justified by data. We believe that decisions regarding grouping of students, RtI decisions, and even the previously created scope and sequence of our curriculum should be driven by student data. We will use data from our assessment schedule to guide our decisions in regard to each student's education.

While our expectations are high, we know from experience that our students enter our school at every grade level and some lack the gateway and requisite skills needed for success at that grade. Employing a Response-to-Instruction system (RtI) ensures that no student's needs go unnoticed or unattended to. This structure is used primarily as a means to organize, govern, and monitor the progress of each student, including those with special learning needs. On whole, RtI focuses squarely on a student's academic performance and growth, as opposed to simply his/her learning profile or suspected disability. We will use RtI in determining how we identify students with special academic needs, allocate resources to help them grow, and assign individuals to intervention groups based upon academic performance.

Our Academic Interventionists provide intensive interventions focused on improving the reading, writing and computation abilities of students at an accelerated rate both during and after school. All students are able to access this line of support; however, students who have been identified as needing academic interventions are required to attend sessions both during and after school. To help ensure the intervention curriculum is meeting the needs of the students, we intend to adopt Read 180, a proven reading remediation program that supports an increase in phonemic and phonological awareness in struggling readers. And most recently, we adopted Accelerated Math to help support our students who lack the basic math skills necessary for entry into Algebra.

All teachers will keep a data tracker for each of their classes. Data trackers will be used to track mastery of standards (from assessments) as well as a tool to monitor re-teaching and/or reviewing of standards that students have struggled with. Teachers will discuss these in their weekly data meetings.

Lesson plans are submitted each week and must include standards and objectives, checks for understanding and plans for assessments. Standards and objectives will be displayed in all rooms. Lesson plans provide teachers with a format of gradual release to use as a structure for presenting instructional content. Through the use of structured planning templates we are ensuring that good instructional practices are taking place and that students are receiving equitable instruction from class to class.

Our middle school students are receiving two periods or 100 minutes a day of ELA and Math instruction 5 days a week. Teachers are expected to utilize the gradual release of instruction framework as well as include reading and/or writing into each day's lesson.

**Progress Monitoring:** Multiple times a school year, we will assess all students through formal tools - such as NWEA (6-8), Achieve 3000 (6-12) and Acuity Readiness Forms - as well as informal means, like classroom observations and teacher or parent reports. During RtI meetings, a *Student Study Team*, consisting of staff members with expertise in special learning needs as well as the classroom teacher and an administrator, will review the performance of every student (by grade) and organize students into one of the three tiers, found in Appendix C.

In most cases, students will progress through these tiers, based on performance. For instance, our Student Study Team may decide, based on assessment data and in consultation with parents, to assign a student (reading below grade level) to Tier II; he/she will then receive targeted interventions associated with this tier and his/her performance will be tracked regularly.

Every four weeks, the grade level team will assess the progress and achievement this student has made toward his/her established goal and determine whether or not he/she needs to be moved to another tier in our system. If the interventions prove to be ineffective or the student is not making sufficient progress, the Student Study Team will adjust or implement a different set of interventions. The team may also consult with the student's parents and recommend further evaluation to determine whether the learner's needs warrant an individual education plan (IEP) or related services.

Teachers meet each Friday for a 2 hour professional development, where they are able to collaborate with peers as well as receive feedback on how their lessons went the previous week. Additionally, teachers analyze data and plan under the guidance of the DOI the instruction for the upcoming week.

***Maximized Parent and Community Engagement:***

We know that each student needs as much adult support as they can receive. We intend to invest in the parents of each student as a major stakeholder in their education. We will use parent newsletters, mass and individual phone calls, email, parent conferences, and daily or weekly teacher communication to ensure that parents are well informed and have opportunities to be actively involved with the school. Similarly, we will continue to build our community partners so that our external stakeholders, like College Summit and P.E.E.R.S., become a richer part of our students' support systems both in and out of the classroom.

**Strategies:** Parent conferences will be required a minimum of twice each school year. We believe deeply in the importance of partnering with parents in helping our children achieve learning goals. This partnership is most effective when we keep parents abreast of the strategies teachers are using to support their child and encourage growth. Parents must also appreciate their responsibility in supporting students at home. Parent-Teacher Conferences are one of the most important places to attend to this partnership and we expect to work especially hard and track closely the percentage of parents who attend conferences to discuss their children's educational goals. Teachers will complete and send home a bi-weekly report on each student's progress. Additionally, parents are able to access their child's academic and discipline progress at any time through the Power School parent portal.

**Progress Monitoring:** We intend to employ our own feedback tools to garner responses from both the student and the parent/guardian about the students' experiences at Fall Creek Academy and their familiarity with the goals and progress of their child. We plan to share the results regularly with our families through the school's website as well as our monthly newsletter. The purpose in regularly sharing parents' feedback with the broader community is not only continuous improvement but also to help our families feel equally invested in FCA and our students' progresses. We will also be sharing parents' feedback with our Board.

Along with these four priorities, we know that we must employ a more delineated definition of the English and math programming at both our middle and high school. Below we outline our intentions for further definition and refinement of these critical content areas:

***In English & Language Arts:*** Students must demonstrate mastery in informational and literary text, writing, listening and speaking, language and presentation skills using multiple forms of expression, as determined by Indiana Standards and College Board Standards for College Success. By reading, interpreting and analyzing through writing and collaborative discussion, students will encounter poetry, fiction, non-fiction, sayings and phrases as a daily part of their English/language arts program. FCA will fulfill this definition through the *SpringBoard* English Language Arts program for grades 6-10. At each middle school grade, reading growth will be demonstrated and monitored using assessments such as NWEA, Acuity Readiness and *Achieve 3000*.

At the high school level, assessments such as *Acuity* Predictive, *Achieve 3000* and *Accuplacer* will be used to determine a student's reading achievement and growth. To support and assess writing, FCA will also adopt *SpringBoard's* Writing Workshops. The workshop modules will be utilized in grades 6-12. *SpringBoard's* Writing Workshops are closely aligned to Indiana writing standards, and help to prepare students to write well in a variety of writing modes that are key to college readiness and to success on high stakes assessments such as end-of-course assessments and the SAT.

***In Mathematics:*** Students must demonstrate a strong understanding of mathematics concepts and topics outlined in the Indiana State Standards and College Board Standards. We define "strong understanding" as 80% mastery of the Enduring Understandings (also known as power standards) at the respective grade level. To be successful, students have to know how to identify and use rational and irrational numbers, use functions and apply the knowledge of functions and statistics to everyday life, and demonstrate advanced problem solving skills. FCA plans to utilize *SpringBoard* in grades 6-8, Algebra and Geometry. Math proficiency will be measured using the NWEA and *Acuity* Readiness Forms in middle school and *Acuity* Predictive and *Accuplacer* in high school.

***For College and Career Readiness:*** To ensure that our tenth grade students are equipped with the tools they need to empower their own learning once they are enrolled in dual credit courses, we currently and will continue into the new charter term offering Ivy Tech's College Readiness Course (CRC). CRC is designed to help students become academically prepared in reading and writing for college level work. All students in this class will take the *Accuplacer* assessment prior to starting the "My Foundations" lab.

Academic preparation in reading and writing will be measured by the successful completion of the "My Foundations" lab assignments in reading and writing. It will also be measured by the students' *Accuplacer* post-test scores. If students test at college ready, they can then apply to Ivy Tech's dual credit courses. Students who are not ready for dual credit, are then enrolled into the preparatory program My Foundations Lab (MFL). MFL prescribes students with modules to complete that are designed to build their skills so that they can later test college ready.

## ***Educational Plans***

***Vision.*** There are no proposed changes to our school mission.

***Educational Plan Modifications.*** While implementation will continue to improve and require refinements, no other substantial modifications to the FCA education program is planned.

***Academic Goals.*** Please see Appendix F for a detailed summary of our goals.

### ***Financial Plans***

FCA's projected budget for the next two years (FY '16 and FY '17) is included in Appendix B. These budgets anticipate the addition of 30-40 students to our enrollment totals each year - 240 in 2015-16 and 270 in 2016-17. Based on frequent discussions with families and knowledge of the interests in stronger schools within the neighborhoods around us, we are confident in the demand for stronger schools and believe, as FCA grows stronger culturally and academically, the school will attract more and more students. Future Title I and Title II allotments will decrease, on account of a reduced enrollment. We have also budgeted conservatively and anticipate our basic grant income will drop to \$7800 in FY '16 and \$7500 in FY '17. Currently, FCA receives \$8,080 per student in basic grant. We also anticipate our rent increase to \$20,000 in FY '16 and \$100,000 in FY '17.

As mentioned, our enrollment targets are 240 and 270 for the next two years. Though FCA will need to enroll a small number of students to fill openings at other grades, we plan to focus our recruitment efforts on attracting students and families to join us at sixth and ninth grade – two points at which students traditionally commit to a new school. Over the past two years during which we have had to make many different changes in staff and program at FCA, our retention rate of eligible students has hovered just over 70%. We will anticipate similar levels of student retention into our recruitment goals, even as we work to increase significantly the number of students who stay with us throughout their middle and high school years. We know from our analysis that students are best served and academic habits most effectively nurtured when we're able to serve students and their families for at least three consecutive years.

We have very purposely limited our enrollment projections to 11-14% of total enrollment. For one, our current facility can effectively accommodate up to 300 students. Even more, we believe a strong, supportive school culture to be one of the most important aspects of a great school. Adding just 30 spots during the next two years will enable our team to effectively build a learning community in which all students are known well, included in the life of the school and held accountable for both conducts and academic progress. Our experience tells us that there is ample demand for a high-quality, small-school environment without the enrollment restrictions of many of the magnet schools in our area.

If we are successful in our quest for renewal, we plan to employ an enrollment team already in place that is comprised of students, parents, teachers and administrators to build FCA's name and reputation in the surrounding community. We have already initiated relationships with a broad range of community-based organizations and neighborhood associations nearby and are developing a small musical group to perform at various meetings and events. We think student performances, like these, as well as our Enrollment Team's participation in various community and religious events will be critical to building awareness of our middle and high school programs and support for our overall mission.

Like most schools, Fall Creek Academy's budget depends heavily on student enrollment. As we work to improve academics, we also intend to allocate appropriate staff and financial resources towards student recruitment. Nonetheless, if, despite our best efforts, we fall short of our enrollment goals, we are prepared to make difficult spending decisions. Taking responsibility for FCA three years ago has afforded our team a broad range of important experiences - one of which includes adjusting spending if faced with lower than expected enrollment.

Lastly, we have included in CSapphire a range of finance-related documents, as requested.

## ***Organizational Plans***

### **Governance and Management:**

*Fall Creek Academy* does not anticipate any significant changes to its governance structure or Board. Currently, FCA and the Community Charter Network are the same entity and use the same tax identification number. As mentioned previously, CCN oversees FCA's educational and operational progress and also supports, in exchange for a fee, three additional charter schools. The terms of these agreements and the specific services provided are detailed in a Memorandum of Understanding with each specific school. Copies of the memoranda are included in Appendix D.

Currently, the CCN/FCA Board consists of five individuals – four of whom have been with the school for the length of its existing charter. Our newest Board member is an FCA parent and well-respected and accessible among our families. Should we earn a new charter, the CCN/FCA Board will look to add two additional members to its board. Currently, the Board seeks to enhance its legal and fundraising expertise as well as its connections to the Mapleton-Fall Creek, Crown Hill and Meridian-Highland neighborhoods near our building. The Board seeks to enhance its expertise in each of these areas with the addition of two new members, should it earn a new charter.

### **Evaluation of Administrators**

The Board and Superintendent is committed to ensuring the success of the school by ensuring the school selects and retains effective leadership, as our school leaders have a tremendous impact on both teacher effectiveness and student learning. In order to remain compliant with Public Law 90 and to increase our leadership effectiveness, the Board and Superintendent are committed to using the RISE Indiana Principal Evaluation as a model for annual leadership evaluation. The Superintendent under the direction from the Board of Directors will conduct fair, credible and accurate annual evaluations to differentiate the performance of our school leadership and to support their professional growth. Please see our CSapphire document, Fall Creek Academy Staff Evaluation Plan for specific details on administrator evaluations.

### **Transportation:**

*Fall Creek Academy* currently provides transportation to our students, grades 6-8, through school bus, provided by *Student Transit*. We also provide, as needed, Indy Go passes for our older students. We do not plan to alter this practice in the future, unless circumstances demand an alternate approach. We consistently explore ways to operate most efficiently, including the resources we allocate towards transportation. If, upon further analysis, we find alternative ways to ensure our students may travel to school safely, we will certainly study those options more closely.

### **Facility:**

In July 2012, Ivy Tech Community College purchased Fall Creek Academy's facility from the Greater Educational Opportunities (GEO) organization, which previously served as the school's landlord and Educational Service Provider. Currently, FCA maintains a "triple-net" lease on its building. Yet, in an effort to better accommodate FCA through its transition to serving solely middle and high school students, Ivy Tech agreed to allow FCA to use the school facility rent free for the year. Even more, the Ivy Tech Foundation agreed to pay to repaint and carpet the FCA's building in time for the current school year.

Fall Creek Academy does not have any formal plans to substantially alter its current facility. Currently, FCA serves just over 200 students within 32,000 – a third of which is included in our gym/cafeteria. We believe that we can effectively serve between 280-300 middle and high school students in this space. Should FCA earn a new charter, we expect to grow to serve up to 280 students by 2016-2017.



We will begin to explore more seriously alternative spaces to support up to 450 students, should we reach our '16-'17 enrollment goals.

With growth and a larger facility in mind, CCN/FCA entered into a lease agreement, in Dec. 2013, on a 1.8 acre plot of land on the corner of Capitol Ave. and West 28<sup>th</sup> St., currently occupied by a vacant grocery store. Should we earn a full charter, the CCN/FCA Board and management team will explore more deeply the possibility of building a new facility on this site; however, apart from the lease, the Board has made no formal commitments to an alternate facility. The lease on this vacant grocery store and accompanying parking lot does allow us to terminate the agreement should FCA fail to be approved for a new charter.

### **Educational Service Providers.**

FCA did not contract with an education service provider and do not intend to do so in the future.

## **An Operations-Oriented Conclusion**

In July 2014, FCA adopted a new Student-Information-System (SIS), *Powerschool*, the third system the school has employed to store grades, courses and other student information in just 18 months. We highlight what outsiders might identify as a relatively inconsequential aspect of a school's operation, because it explains why FCA's data is not nearly as organized or easily analyzed as we wish it were. Even more, the story of this school's various SIS tools also presents a metaphor for our experience thus far in develop FCA into the rigorous yet supportive school our students and families deserve.

- **Year One:** We inherited a Student-Information-System that required considerable time to understand and assess. Within months, it was clear that this SIS was not adequate for our needs or well-regarded among the school's staff members; yet, without the capacity to change tools mid-year, we elected to continue to utilize this system, with limited to no support from its manufacturer, which has since gone-out-of business. In short, we had inherited a challenging SIS and school situation, and our team (which at the time was just two people) was well into our first year before we understood just how many challenges we faced.
- **Year Two:** After considerable research, we elected to adopt a new SIS system, *Harmony*. Highly regarded among other charter schools, *Harmony* continues to provide strong service to those with experienced in its use. However, our team rushed its implementation. Many of our teachers and support staff were still very early in their career, and few were familiar with teaching – let alone SIS systems. Without much experience with *Harmony*, FCA and CCN's administrative team lacked the resources to train and support the upfront learning and investment a good SIS requires. In short, our team made important mistakes, complicated by the challenges of a school striving to turnaround years of underperformance.
- **Year Three:** With many tough lessons behind us, we elected to adopt in June 2014 *Powerschool*. Its implementation has gone remarkably well. Over the past year, we have hired counselors and administrators in key roles who have ample knowledge and experience with *Powerschool*; they have been especially important in supporting our newest staff members. Even more, we have invested this year in contracting with outside expert in *Powerschool*, who helps ensure our team has entered the necessary information and files all of the school's compliance reports for the state. Finally, we believe that we have not only found a good system but we have also accumulated the knowledge and experience to implement it well and work through the inevitable challenges that accompany the ambitious task of the school turnaround we agreed to two and a half years ago.

What is the connection? Few would ever suggest schools are not complex and turning around underperforming schools is not difficult. Yet, like high quality Student Information Systems, good ones just seem to work.

Two and a half years ago, a core group of committed Board Members and school leaders took on a complicated challenge. Like FCA's SIS system, it required several months to truly assess the situation. Urgent to improve, our team set out in year two with plans to identify and employ lots of new tools and resources, including a new SIS. Unfortunately, we also encountered many challenges. Some were inherent in the difficult work of improving high-poverty schools; others were the result of poor implementation and our own inexperience, even in operational systems as seemingly simple as a student information system.

Finally, in year three, we believe that we have the knowledge and support necessary not just to use our new SIS well; that still seems simple in comparison. We submit this application to renew FCA's charter so that we have the time and opportunity we truly need to leverage the experience we gained, build upon the relationships and presence we've established in Mapleton-Fall Creek and Highland neighborhood and truly prove for our students and families the power of a great education.

## Appendix A: FCA Financial Health Report

### *Fall Creek Academy Financial Report*

The “Financial Health” report below illustrates our performance along key financial ratios. The report is updated after the close of each month. Figures reflected below are accurate as of 8/31/2014.



## Financial Health Report

CCN - Fall Creek Academy

Data as of 8/31/2014

Financial Ratio	Formula	Current	Target
Current Ratio (Liquidity)	(Current Assets) / (Current Liabilities)	3.84	>1
Cash Ratio	(Cash) / (Current Liabilities)	140.47%	>100%
Defensive Interval	(Cash + Securities + AR) / (Average Expenses past 12 months)	2.16	> 3 months
Debt Ratio	(Total Liabilities) / (Total Assets)	30.94%	< 33%
Asset Ratio	(Current Assets) / (Total Assets)	23.07%	> 90%
Cash on Hand	(Cash)	\$55,152.97	\$50,000.00
Days Cash on Hand	(Cash) / ((Average Expenses past 12 months) / (30.4))	39.95	> 45
Cash Reserve Ratio	(Cash) / (Budgeted Annual Expenses)	1.92%	> 10%
Savings Indicator	((Last Closed Revenue) - (Last Closed Expenses)) / (Last Closed Expenses)	-0.19	> 0

Financial Ratio	Description
Current Ratio (Liquidity)	Ability to pay short-term obligations
Cash Ratio	Ability to meet short-term obligations with cash
Defensive Interval	Possible months of continued operations if no additional funds received
Debt Ratio	Proportion of debt relative to total assets
Asset Ratio	Proportion of liquid assets relative to total assets
Cash on Hand	Assets immediately convertible to cash for purchase of goods and services
Days Cash on Hand	Possible days of continued operations using current cash
Cash Reserve Ratio	Ratio of cash to annual expenses expressed as a percentage
Savings Indicator	Increase or decrease in the organization's net assets as a percentage of expenses

### Input Values as of 8/31/2014

Cash	\$55,152.97
Securities	-
AR	\$35,321.50
Current Assets	\$150,796.41
Total Assets	\$653,564.50
Current Liabilities	\$39,264.24
Total Liabilities	\$202,220.75
Last Closed Revenue	\$198,379.04
Last Closed Expenses	\$245,761.13
Budgeted Annual Expenses	\$2,865,446.55
Average Expenses past 12 months	\$41,964.18
Average monthly payroll expenses	\$174,282.33

## Appendix B: FCA Two-Year Budget Projections

### 2 Year Budget Projections Fall Creek Academy

Last Revised:

	<u>2015-2016</u>	<u>2016-2017</u>	<u>Comments</u>
<b>Student Count</b>			
6th Grade	35	35	
7th Grade	30	35	
8th grade	30	30	
9th grade	40	45	
10th grade	35	45	
11th Grade	35	40	
12th Grade	35	40	
Total	240	270	
ADM	240	270	
<b><u>Income</u></b>			
Basic Support	1,872,000	2,025,000	Assumes \$7,800/pupil in 2015-16 and \$7500/pupil in 2016-17
Common School Loan	-	-	
Student Lunch Revenue	186,878	214,909	
Contribution Income	-	-	
Facility Grant	-	-	
Federal Grants	262,268	294,840	Reduced based on decreased enrollment
Interest Income	144	166	
Other Income	613,543	705,575	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>2,934,833</b>	<b>3,240,490</b>	
<b><u>Expenses</u></b>			
<b>Instructional Expenses</b>			
Salaries & Wages	680,413	748,454	Both Salary and Benefits increases by 5% for FY16 and 10% for FY17 to account for growth in staff and small salary growth
Payroll Taxes & Benefits	268,225	295,047	
Supplies/Materials/Equipment	24,792	24,792	
Professional Services	50,300	50,300	
Training Expenses	9,096	9,096	
Other Expenses	10,704	10,704	
Total Instructional Expense	1,043,529	1,138,393	
<b>General &amp; Administrative</b>			
Salaries & Wages	766,605	843,266	
Payroll Taxes & Benefits	160,854	176,940	
Supplies/Materials/Equipment	56,495	56,495	
Professional Expenses	237,385	237,385	
Community Relations	13,020	13,020	
Other Expense	25,800	25,800	
Total General & Administrative Expense	1,260,159	1,352,905	
<b>Facilities Expense</b>			
Supplies/Materials/Equipment	39,900	39,900	
Rent/Leasehold Improvements	21,000	100,000	Rent increases back to full payments in 2016
Professional Services	94,568	94,568	
Utilities/Property Tax	67,969	67,969	
Insurance Expense	15,204	15,204	
Total Facilities Expense	238,641	317,641	

**Technology Expense**

Supplies/Materials/Equipment	28,188	28,188
Professional Services	73,944	73,944
Total Technology Expense	102,132	102,132

**Debt Service**

Debt Service Payments	5,400	5,400
Total Debt Service Expense	5,400	5,400

**Other Expense**

Transportation Expense	75,000	75,000
School Lunch	177,357	177,357
Other Expenses	31,240	41,496
Total Other Expenses	283,597	293,853

<b>Total Expense</b>	2,933,459	3,210,324
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<b>Net Income</b>	1,374	30,165
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<b>Ending Cash Balance</b>	1,374	31,540
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## Appendix C: FCA's Response to Instruction Model

### Fall Creek Academy **Response To Instruction**

*"Over every blade of grass, an angel whispers, 'Grow.'"*

<b>Tier One</b>	
<i>Tier one includes classroom supports that benefit the growth and development of <b>all students</b>. Teachers may adjust or tweak these supports to address the academic and behavioral needs of specific students or groups of students; yet, they occur within regular classroom level systems and supports for young learners.</i>	
<b>Academic:</b>	<b>Conduct/Behavior:</b>
Regular Classroom Systems and Practices Skills Grouping (Reading Grps., Differentiated Math Activities, etc.) Partner Reading	General Classroom Rules and Management Teacher-Initiated Conduct Contracts and Incentives Spec. Programs Addressing Classroom and School-wide Concerns

#### **Universal Screener:**

NWEA Results  
Acuity Predictive  
Benchmark Assessment Results  
Behavior and Counseling Referrals  
Teacher Referrals (proposed during RTI Mtgs)

30 minutes per day in  
addition to Core

<b>Tier Two</b>	
<i>Tier two includes special supports and interventions designed to address the specific needs a subset of students within a small group setting. These students are generally below or significantly above grade level, or they have distinct behavior needs. They receive special support through small group interventions outside of core academic time.</i>	
<b>Academic:</b>	<b>Conduct/Behavior:</b>
Parent Involvement/ Home Support Plans Small Group Intervention After-school Academic Boost Programs Monday Club Enrichment Opportunities	Parent Involvement/ Home Support Plans Small Group Counseling Behavior Contracts and Special Incentives (Managed through Counselor)

#### **Monitoring and Assessment Data:**

Progress in T2 Interventions  
RAZ & PASI/PSI Screeners  
Response to Counseling, Behavioral Contracts,  
Student-Support Team Assessments

Two 30 min. instruct. blocks per  
day in addition to Core

<b>Tier Three</b>	
<i>Tier three includes individualized supports and interventions designed to address the specific needs of students in a special setting. T3 students are significantly behind, or they have distinct behavior needs that require significant individualized attention. Along with tailored T2 supports, T3 students received individualized assistance in class as well as outside core academic time with our Intervention Specialists. T3 students may or may not have a diagnosed learning disability.</i>	
<b>Academic:</b>	<b>Conduct/Behavior:</b>
Specialized Daily Interventions Targeted Skills Grade Retention Special Classroom Accommodations Modified Curriculum (Based on IEP Goals)	Individual Daily Counseling Check-ins Special Contracts, Incentives etc. Behavioral Adjustment Plan Therapeutic Family Counseling

#### **Monitoring and Assessment Data:**

Progress in T3 Interventions,  
GEI's and Child Study Team  
SPED Assessment

## **Appendix D: CCN/UHP Memorandum of Understanding**



### **MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT**

BETWEEN UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS PREPARATORY ACADEMY AND COMMUNITY CHARTER NETWORK  
EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2013

In the interest of supporting the continuing success and development of academically strong and financially-stable schools in our city, the Community Charter Network (“CCN”) and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Charter School Inc. at Fountain Square dba University Heights Preparatory Academy (“UHP”) have come to the following agreement and understanding to work together.

WHEREAS, the Community Charter Network is organized to support a select group of local charter schools in achieving outstanding academic and operational results through its provision of leadership coaching, operations management, teacher development and curriculum guidance;

WHEREAS, UHP is governed by a Board that works in an effort to deliver high quality, efficient service to its students, their families and the broader community and seeks CCN’s assistance to facilitate this exchange in best practices.

WHEREAS, UHP seeks both academic, operational and organization support to help ensure UHP provides the strongest possible program for its students and families;

WHEREAS, UHP seeks to meet their operational and business demands in the most cost-effective manner possible and believes there are potential efficiencies in partnering or aligning with other local charter schools, connected through CCN.

WHEREAS, UHP has developed expertise in specific academic and cultural systems that can support the development of other schools CCN supports and requests assistance in sharing these strategies effectively;

WHEREAS, the leadership of UHP desire further support and assistance in making logical, effective and strategic long-term adjustments to their respective programs in order to adapt to an evolving charter school environment; and

WHEREAS, UHP desires to engage CCN for such purposes;

NOW, THEREFORE, UHP and CCN agree as follows:

## UNDERSTANDINGS AND COMMITMENTS

### RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMUNITY CHARTER NETWORK

- CCN will provide a framework for and guide UHP in the development of academic, financial, operational and community goals through which the parties will monitor the school's progress.
- In assisting UHP with the development of their respective programs, CCN, including its Superintendent, Chief Academic Officer and Chief Operations Officer, will:
  - Monitor data profiling UHP's enrollment, attendance, and academic performance and identify and develop helpful tools through which to analyze and present this material;
  - Guide UHP leaders in the evaluation of existing curricula's coherence and alignment with the Indiana State Standards , as well as in the process of acquiring additional curricular resources to support student achievement;
  - Support the UHP's management of its operational needs, including, but not limited to, its contracts with various vendors (technology, accounting, and facility management), its human resources systems, and compliance practices.
  - Build a broader marketing plan through which UHP communicates its service to students and families within an increasingly competitive charter school market.
  - Assist, upon school leaders' requests, UHP in the evaluation of staff members and its hiring/rehiring decisions.
  - Monitor anticipated staff openings and assist the school in the recruitment, assessment and hiring of high quality teachers and administrators.
  - Monitor UHP's performance along the metrics identified within Ball State's Performance Framework, the schools' authorizer.
  - Identify various fundraising and grant opportunities through which UHP can attain additional resources to support its academic program.
- CCN will report monthly, throughout the term of this agreement, to the UHP Board of Directors regarding UHP's progress, its support for the schools and the status of other schools supported through the *Community Charter Network*.
- CCN will convene regular meetings with UHP's leaders to develop and coordinate common operational systems, sources of professional development and leadership strategies to improve student achievement.
- The individual primarily responsible for discharging CCN's duties under this Agreement is Charlie Schlegel.

### RESPONSIBILITIES OF UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS PREPARATORY ACADEMY:

- UHP will cooperate with CCN throughout the term of this agreement (as defined below) to identify, monitor and progress towards mutually agreed-upon performance goals. In its cooperation with CCN,
  - UHP will identify specific academic, financial, operational and community goals through which the schools will monitor their continued success during the '13-'14 and '14-'15 school year;
  - UHP will regularly collect data and monitor progress towards specific performance goals as well as other improvement priorities focused on critical areas for growth; and



- Based on its progress, UHP will work with CCN to identify specific strategic decisions that shape the school's long-term strategies for growth and achievement.
- By Oct. 30, 2013, UHP will develop specific, measurable school-wide annual goals, based on assessment data and diligently work in good faith to develop among both schools' faculty and the Board of Directors a broad understanding of and investment in these goals. Goals for the 2014-2015 school year will be completed by Oct. 30, 2014.
- UHP will assess its progress towards the goals developed under CCN's guidance and support. UHP's leadership team will meet with CCN's team at least monthly during the term of this Agreement to review progress and lend collegial support to other leaders serving in similar positions elsewhere among network schools.
- UHP's principal will meet with CCN at least twice per month throughout the term of this agreement to review the school's finances, assess its academic progress and assist in the implementation of network-wide systems that support student achievement and/or operational efficiency.
- UHP will share with CCN all necessary student performance data and produce regularly a revised summary of the school's progress towards specific academic and operational goals.
- UHP will collaborate regularly with CCN to identify operation and management issues that obstruct the achievement of mutually agreed-upon academic and operational goals. UHP commits to address such issues in good faith throughout the term of this agreement.
- UHP will collaborate with CCN in identifying common areas of support as well as special areas of expertise through which UHP might support schools in the CCN network.
- The individual primarily responsible for discharging UHP's duties under this Agreement is UHP's Principal.

### **General Provisions:**

The term of this agreement shall commence on July 1, 2013, and shall end on June 30, 2015; provided, however, that the term may be extended by written agreement of both parties. Either party, upon 30 days written notice to the other party, may terminate this agreement with or without cause. The termination of this agreement will require a majority vote of either organization's Board at a public board meeting. Reasons for termination may include, but are limited, to:

- a) A determination that CCN has provided support or guidance not commensurate with the fee the network team charges member schools for its assistance.
- b) CCN and its Board determine that UHP is unable or unwilling to assist in the collegial support and development of other schools in the CCN network.
- c) A decision by either party that CCN's assistance and support is no longer needed or is no longer aligned with the long-term goals and strategic decisions of UHP.

If either party decides to terminate this agreement, CCN and UHP agree to work closely together for, at least, the 90 days following termination to ensure the smoothest possible transition, minimizing any impact upon the schools' operations and educational program.

University Heights Preparatory Academy agrees to pay the Community Charter Network \$106,500 annually for services rendered during the term of this agreement. Payments will be made by each school in monthly installments of \$8,875, beginning July 1, 2013.

UHP and CCN shall indemnify each other (including the indemnified party's respective directors, officers, employees, and agents (collectively, the indemnified party's "Representatives")) and hold harmless each other (and each other's Representatives) from and against any and all liabilities, damages, losses, penalties, fines, costs, and expenses, including reasonable attorneys' fees, paid or


incurred in connection with any action brought against the indemnified party in connection with this agreement.

CCN shall not be liable for UHP's failure to meet any standards or obligations prescribed or imposed by UHP's charter sponsor.

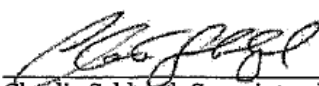
This agreement shall be construed and governed in accordance with the laws of the State of Indiana.

Both parties in this memorandum may communicate to either body proprietary, confidential and other information during the term of this agreement. Parties shall treat all such information as confidential, whether requested to do so or not, and shall take all such reasonable precautions to prevent the unauthorized disclosure of any part of such information to any person outside this agreement including, without limitation, taking all those precautions which either organization uses to safeguard its own confidential information.

**Agreed:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Rollie Dick, Board Chair

**University Heights Preparatory Academy**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Charlie Schlegel, Superintendent

**Community Charter Network**

## Appendix E: FCA's Professional Support System

### Professional Support System (PSS)

CCN's Professional Support System presents our educators, instructional leaders and network team with a clear system to track performance and development over time. It suggests a pathway for our educators that supports individual progress as well as guidelines through which we align salary with job performance. For our students to have access to the best possible instruction, our educators must access the best professional learning opportunities. They need to participate in experiences that equip them with the tools, habits and mindsets that enable them to be successful in both the classroom and our network.

PSS identified four critical aspects to the development of a strong faculty, including:

- **Educator Persistence:** Increase the retention of “irreplaceables” (TNTP, 2012)
- **Student Achievement:** Building on the correlation between highly effective teachers and improved student outcomes (Eric Hanushek, 2010-2014)
- **Alignment:** Consistently refine our PSS, based on real-time learning and instructional cultural data
- **Recruitment:** Attract more high-performing candidates to our schools through the development of career pathways for educators and instructional leaders.

PSS anticipates that, through relentless work ethic and a commitment to consistent reflection and refinement of practice, our educators will consistently improve their capacity to deliver strong instruction, cultivate safe and supportive learning environments and build solid family and community partnerships that enhance the school experience for each and every *Capitol* student.

There are four groups of educators within our Professional Support System: Novice, Developing, Proficient and Advanced.



**Novice:** Educator must meet performance expectations set forth in our evaluation tool (RISE). An educator can remain in the Novice group for a maximum of two school years before the school and network team will review a teacher's progress and long-term “fit.”

**Developing:** Educator must meet performance expectations set forth in our evaluation tool (RISE). An educator is expected to continue to grow and advance on to the next level in a reasonable amount of time before a review of “fit” will be conducted by the school and network team.

**Proficient:** Educator must meet or exceed performance expectations set forth in our evaluation tool (RISE). A Proficient educator may serve as a mentor to Novice and Developing educators as well as serve on instructional and/or cultural teams and committees.

**Advanced:** Educator must meet or exceed performance expectations set forth in our evaluation tool (RISE). As an Advanced educator one may, in addition to the roles for a Proficient educator, be considered and serve in roles beyond the classroom teacher, such as, but not limited to an instructional coach, director, content lead or mentor teacher.

CCN is committed to growing and developing its educators as they are the most critical team member in ensuring our students are receiving high quality, rigorous and relevant educations. To support our laser-focus on growth of our staff, we utilize three primary tools.

**Coaching, Feedback and Professional Development:** Every educator receives coaching, support and feedback from instructional leaders at the school level. Moreover, our novice teachers are paired with a mentor educator (Proficient or Advanced level) who can observe, coach and provide feedback on a daily and weekly basis. Educators engage in weekly professional development with their school team, and, when appropriate and relevant, are encouraged to seek outside professional development opportunities as well.

**RISE Rubric:** Our instructional and classroom culture expectations are outlined in the Indiana RISE rubric. Through our formal observation process, Instructional Leaders coach and give feedback as a part of the pre and post conference expectations.

**TeachBoost:** TeachBoost is a platform for which our educators, Instructional Leaders and network team are able to access observation data and ratings, feedback and meeting notes. Educators are also able to use this platform as a way to seek additional resources (videos, books for improving their practice.

## Appendix F: Fall Creek Academy Academic Goals

<b>Fall Creek Academy Academic Goals</b>			
<b>Measurable Goals</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>	<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>
<b>Percentage of students who have passed the ISTEP+ ELA grades 6-8</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>72%</b>
<b>Percentage of bottom 25% experiencing high growth exceeds 42.5%, ELA grades 6-8</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>52%</b>
<b>Percentage of the top 75% experiencing high growth exceeds 36.2% ELA grades 6-8</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>42%</b>
<b>Percentage of students who have passed the ISTEP+ Math grades 6-8</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>72%</b>
<b>Percentage of bottom 25% experiencing high growth exceeds 44.9%, Math grades 6-8</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>49%</b>
<b>Percentage of the top 75% experiencing high growth exceeds 39.2%, Math grades 6-8</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>51%</b>
<b>Percentage of first-time test takers passing Eng 10 ECA</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>75%</b>
<b>Percentage of first-time test takers passing Alg. ECA</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>80%</b>
<b>Graduation Rate</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>93%</b>

Goals have been established using previous years' data. Within three year, if met FCA will surpass students in similar schools as well as increase the OCS criteria for which we are "Meeting Standard".

## Appendix G: FCA State Accountability Grade

### Fall Creek Academy Elementary/MS Results

Below is the step-by-step breakdown of the Fall Creek Academy's standing on the A-F grading system that the state adopted in 2011.

#### English/Language Arts Grade

ELA Grading Criteria		2011-2012		2012-2013		2013-2014	
		Results	Points	Results	Points	Results	Points
<b>Step 1</b>	Assign an initial score based on the percentage of students who passed the ISTEP+	59.6%	0	56.7%	0	52.2%	0
<b>Step 2</b>	If the %age of bottom 25% who were high growth exceeds 42.5%, earn one point.	32.3%		43.3%	1	25.0%	
<b>Step 2A</b>	If the percentage of top 75% who were high growth exceeds 36.2%, earn one point.	25.3%		21.3%	0	17.6%	
<b>Step 3</b>	If the percentage of students who showed low growth exceeds 39.8%, subtract one point.	43.9%	-1	46.2%	-1	48.8%	-1
<b>Step 3A</b>	If the percentage of students who did not take the ISTEP exceeds 5.0%, subtract one point.	98.8%		98.8%	0	99.5%	
<b>ELA Total</b>			<b>-1</b>		<b>0</b>		<b>-1</b>

### Math Grade Calculations

Math Grading Criteria		2011-2012		2012-2013		2013-2014	
		Results	Points	Results	Points	Results	Points
<b>Step 1</b>	Assign an initial score based on the percentage of students who passed the ISTEP.	59.6%	0	51.4%	0	44.9%	0
<b>Step 2</b>	If the percentage of bottom 25% who were high growth exceeds 44.9%, earn one point.	6.7%		29.0%		12.5%	
<b>Step 2A</b>	If the percentage of top 75% who were high growth exceeds 39.2%, earn one point.	13.8%		7.8%		10.5%	
<b>Step 3</b>	If the percentage of students who showed low growth exceeds 39.2%, subtract one point.	58.1%	-1	52.1%	-1	63.8%	-1
<b>Step 3A</b>	If the percentage of students who did not take the ISTEP exceeds 5.0%, subtract one point.	98.8%		99.4%	0	97.7%	
<b>Math Total</b>			<b>-1</b>		<b>-1</b>		<b>-1</b>

### FCA's Final Elementary/MS Grade

**2011-2012: -2 = F**

**2012-2013: -1 = F**

**2013-2014: -2 = F**

## Fall Creek Academy High School Grading Results

Below is the step-by-step breakdown of the Fall Creek Academy's standing on the A-F grading system that the state adopted last year.

### High School A-F Grade

HS Grading Criteria		Results	Points	Results	Points	Results	Points
<b>Step 1</b>	Assign an initial score based on the percentage of first-time test takers who passed the Eng 10 ECA	55.0%	0	45.3%	0	48.4	0
<b>Step 2</b>	Assign a score based on the percentage of first-time test takers who passed the Alg. ECA	26.2%	0	44.2%	0	77.4%	2
<b>Step 3</b>	Assign a score based on the school's four-year Grad. Rate	94%	4	87%	3.5	87.5%	3.5
<b>Step 4</b>	Assign an advanced credit score based on the % age of four-year graduates who either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pass an AP or IB exam,</li> <li>• Earned 3+ college credits,</li> <li>• Earned an industry certification or</li> <li>• Earned credit in CTE pathway course (10%)</li> </ul>	0	0	0	0	14.3%	2
<b>Step 5</b>	Calculate the overall grade, based on the following formula: Eng. ECA (30%) +Alg. ECA (30%) + Grad Rate (30%) + Adv. Credit (10%)= Total Grade	0+0+1.2+0		0+0+1.1+0		0+.5+1.05+.4	
High School Overall Grade		1.2		1.1		1.95	

### FCA's High School Grade

**2011-2012: 1.2 = F\***

**2012-2013: 1.1 = F\***

**2013-2014: 1.95 = D**

**Note:** According to the DoE, schools with fewer than 30 students enrolled for 162 days or more and who have valid test results fit the "small school model." Schools assessed under the Small Model are assigned grades based on English/Language Arts and math proficiency only, and are not eligible for any bonus or penalty points. *Consequently, FCA did not earn additional points based on its graduation rate, as recorded in the state's Accountability System.*