



**Updated Proposal to Charter
For a Virtual Charter School
Located in Indianapolis, IN**

Submitted to the
Ball State University
Office of Charter Schools
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

General Information Sheet.....	i
Executive Summary	iii
Overview and Definitions	6
Clear and Well Articulated Mission	7
Solid Governance Structure	10
Participation by Parents and Others	12
Administrative Management.....	17
Contracting with an Educational Management Organization (EMO)	20
Strong Educational Program	23
Qualified and Dedicated Teachers	34
Serving Students with Special Needs	36
Health and Safety	40
Increasing Student Achievement	42
Student Enrollment	45
School Climate and Student Discipline	48
Student Attendance	50
Sound Financial Management.....	52
Appropriate Technological Support.....	52
Appropriate Facilities.....	55
Transportation	56
Satisfactory Reporting Relationships.....	57
Attachments	58

General Information Sheet

Name of Proposed School: Indiana Connections Academy (INCA)

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Brief Description of Proposed School (*for media distribution*):

Indiana Connections Academy is a pioneering virtual public charter school whose mission is to maximize academic achievement for students in grades K-12 throughout the state of Indiana who need an alternative to the traditional classroom. INCA fulfills its mission by reaching students for whom a cutting edge virtual educational model that combines highly personalized learning, certified teachers, a rigorous, proven curriculum, 21st century technology tools, and rich community experiences provides the best pathway to school success. The school values its ability to provide these students with everything they need to thrive in a virtual environment: top-quality curriculum; specially trained, highly qualified teachers; a powerful Education Management System; essential technology tools; and very real connections linking school, family and community.

Address of Proposed School : 6640 Intech Boulevard, Suite 250, Indianapolis, IN 46278 Local School District (where school will be located): Indianapolis Public School District will be location for school staff headquarters (or within five miles of district boundaries), but students

will be located throughout the state of Indiana.

Date School Plans to Begin Operation : August 5, 2011

Date School Plans to Have Students in Attendance : August 22, 2011

If the services of an Educational Management Organization (EMO) will be used, indicate which

EMO: Connections Academy of Indiana, LLC

Have you/will you file a proposal to charter this school with other sponsors? No

If yes, please list the sponsors

Executive Summary

Indiana Connections Academy (INCA) is a pioneering K-12 virtual public charter school whose mission is to maximize academic achievement for students throughout the state of Indiana who need an alternative to the traditional classroom. As a high-quality, highly accountable virtual charter school, INCA aspires to expand from Indiana Connections Academy Virtual Pilot School (INCA-VPS), a successful virtual pilot school under the Indiana Department of Education, to a virtual charter school to meet the proven demand of Hoosier families who want to benefit from this important new form of public education. INCA expects to establish its headquarters in Indianapolis, the location of its current pilot school facility, and in close proximity of its proposed sponsor, Ball State University, where its school staff may take full advantage of its guidance and where the school can be used as a model for virtual schools in the state. The school proposes to open its virtual charter school doors in August 2011.

The Virtual Public School Model

INCA represents an innovative approach to public education for the 21st century. Working outside a traditional classroom under the guidance of certified teachers with whom they interact via technology following a Personalized Learning Plan, INCA students will engage in a rigorous, Indiana standards-aligned curriculum that is enhanced by technology, and tailored to their learning needs. Each INCA student will have a “Learning Coach” – a parent or another caring adult designated by the parents. In addition, students will have access to powerful learning software and communications tools, and their progress through the INCA curriculum will be closely monitored by a unique Education Management System (EMS) designed specifically for this K-12 virtual school. The INCA model features individualized instruction, parent involvement, accountability via online and offline assessments, high-quality teaching, technology-rich schooling, and proven curriculum, all provided within the guidelines for virtual charter schools established by the Ball State University Office of Charter Schools.

Meeting Unmet Student Needs

While most Indiana students are well-served in a brick-and-mortar setting, there are others for whom only an alternative like INCA – with its individualized instruction and flexible scheduling – will satisfy their learning needs. These students include: children who are far ahead of or far behind their peers in school, including students at risk of academic failure and those coping with social issues who may particularly benefit from personalized instruction; students in isolated rural areas, who may face long bus rides to and from schools that are unable to provide for their specific curriculum and instructional needs; young people pursuing artistic or athletic careers or career development opportunities that require a flexible schedule; children who are homebound due to illness or disability; students with special learning needs; Indiana Connections Academy intends to fully serve special education students, who can be expected to make up at least 12% of the Indiana Connections Academy student body based on the experience of other Connections Academy-affiliated schools; students entitled to a public school transfer option under No Child Left behind, but who do not have access to another higher-performing school because of geography, transportation or capacity barriers.

INCA anticipates a first-year enrollment of approximately 1,500 students statewide, growing to 2,000 in year two. Although maximum size in a virtual school is theoretically unlimited, INCA is

committed to responsible growth that puts the needs of students and service to their families first. Therefore, while the school will be responsive to student demand and could accommodate significantly larger enrollments, INCA does not expect to exceed 3,500 students in the first five years of the charter unless through the specific agreement of its Governing Board and sponsor.

A Unique Partnership

INCA's Governing Board is a non-profit Indiana corporation which includes professional educators experienced in non-profit organizations, the 21st Century Scholars program, community based programs, higher education, and a current INCA parent with extensive financial background. All are committed to continuing INCA from a pilot to a high-quality, highly accountable virtual K-12 public school in Indiana. They represent thousands of families who have been actively seeking a virtual public school opportunity in Indiana since 2004.

To achieve INCA's mission, the Governing Board will contract with Connections Academy of Indiana, LLC, a leading, fully accredited provider of high-quality, highly accountable virtual education solutions for students in grades K–12. CA serves educators, students and families with a range of education solutions, including: tuition-free public schools; full-time and part-time private school programs; hybrid and 'blended' programs that combine the best of online instruction with the best of face-to-face classroom teaching; and turnkey online courses. CA programs deliver superior, personalized educations for students, with the freedom and flexibility to learn anytime, anywhere. CA expects to serve approximately 40,000 students in the 2011-2012 school year. Nationwide, 96% of the parents surveyed agree the curriculum is high-quality and have children satisfied with the Connections Academy program.

Accredited and Research-Based

Although there are other national providers of virtual school services, the Governing Board prefers Connections Academy's strong teacher model, rich multimedia curriculum, and powerful Education Management System. In addition, the Governing Board believes it is important to choose an accredited program and so was impressed by the fact that Connections Academy was the first national virtual program of its kind to be accredited by the AdvancED (formerly named the Commission on International and Trans-regional Accreditation (CITA)), which was created in 1996 by the regional accreditation associations to provide customized accreditation protocols and standards for schools that cross the regions. In addition, several Connections Academy schools have now been accredited by both AdvancED and the regional accreditation agencies, including North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. The Connections Academy program is based on educational research. The primary building blocks of the Connections Academy instructional model – parent involvement, individualized instruction, and high-quality teaching – directly correlate to top student achievement. Furthermore, scholarly research, although limited in the kindergarten through twelfth grade range, does show positive outcomes for students in an online learning environment as evidenced in the report, "[Evaluation of Evidence-Based Practices in Online Learning: A Meta-Analysis and Review of Online Learning Studies](#)"¹, U.S. Department of Education (June 26, 2009)

¹ U.S. Department of Education Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development, Policy and Program Studies Service, Evaluation of Evidence-Based Practices In Online Learning: A Meta-Analysis and Review of Online Learning Studies, Revised September 2010, <http://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/tech/evidence-based-practices/finalreport.pdf>

Proven Print-Rich, Technology-Enhanced Curriculum

The Connections Academy curriculum selected by Indiana Connections Academy combines proven and rigorous print-based materials with the best in technology-enhanced learning such that a significant portion of the curriculum is delivered through the Internet and other electronic means in a developmentally appropriate way.

Since technology plays an important facilitating role in the INCA curriculum, each participating family will receive a loaned computer and an Internet service subsidy². All necessary software, training and technology support will be provided along with the computers.

Community Connections and Socialization

Real connections are an important component at Indiana Connections Academy so students have the opportunity to participate regularly in both face-to-face and virtual community activities. Face-to-face activities include regular field trips and community outings facilitated by the Indiana Connections Academy Community Coordinators – parent volunteers whom Indiana Connections Academy supports in organizing such activities for families who live nearby.

Field trips anticipated for Indiana families include visits to the State Capitol in Indianapolis; Conners Prairie; Children Museum of Indianapolis; Evansville Museum of Arts History and Science; Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore; Elkhart Environmental Center; and many of the Indiana Natural Parks located throughout the state. Technology-based activities range from a school newspaper to chess club to teacher-led threaded discussions. Since all of the collaborative online activities and communications tools are restricted for use only by members of the Indiana Connections Academy community, parents can feel comfortable that their children are experiencing this technology safely within the “walled garden” of Indiana Connections Academy.

360-Degree Accountability

INCA’s robust Education Management System will allow the school to gather, analyze, and report a vast array of data, from demographic and enrollment information through detailed daily tracking of student progress to teacher and administrator data visualization and performance reporting systems.

An Effective Business Plan

INCA’s commitment to educational excellence is matched by its strategic use of resources to provide a sound, robust, and sustainable business plan. With conservative enrollment projections and a fiscally responsible budget, this business plan enables the Governing Board to take advantage of the significant infrastructure and financial stability provided by its anticipated partnership with Connections Academy while maintaining clear authority over the operations and performance of the school.

An Indiana Charter School Whose Time Has Come

As it has in the brick-and-mortar charter arena, Indiana has the opportunity to build upon the lessons learned by the two-year virtual pilot program. By insisting on quality, accountability, and sound business planning in any virtual charter it might authorize, the Ball State Office of Charter Schools will set the standard for virtual public education in Indiana. INCA stands ready to rise to that challenge.

² Assumes the school's funding remains at the anticipated current levels.

Overview and Definitions

INCA is proposed as an innovative K-12 virtual public charter school whose mission is to maximize academic achievement for students throughout Indiana who need an alternative to the traditional classroom. Working under the guidance of Indiana certified teachers with whom they interact via technology following a Personalized Learning Plan, INCA students will engage in a rigorous, Indiana standards-aligned curriculum that is rich in print, enhanced by technology, and tailored to their individual learning needs.

This INCA Charter Proposal uses several unique terms, which are defined as follows:

- *Learning Coach*: A parent, extended family member, or similarly qualified adult designated by the parent/guardian who works in person with each Indiana Connections Academy student under the guidance of the Indiana-licensed professional teacher. At the high school level, the Learning Coach is less involved with daily instruction but serves an important supervisory role for the student.
- *Education Management System (EMS)*: The platform for organizing and managing the entire Indiana Connections Academy educational environment, this proprietary, secure web-based software delivers every assignment and tracks every activity (whether online or offline), monitoring completion of individual lessons as well as mastery of discrete skills and knowledge. Parents and students must access the online Education Management System to organize, document, and interact in the learning experience, ensuring Indiana Connections Academy an unprecedented level of time-on-task detail.
- *Personalized Performance Learning™*: This is the Connections Academy instructional model proposed for use by Indiana Connections Academy, which includes a “Personalized Learning Plan” developed collaboratively by the teacher and Learning Coach for each student to maximize his or her achievement.
- *Curriculum-Based Assessments*: The Connections Academy program selected by Indiana Connections Academy uses curriculum-based assessments (CBAs) as a quick and effective way to gather, through telephone conversation, additional information on students’ understanding of concepts. Teachers conduct two types of CBAs: diagnostic curriculum-based assessment (DCBA) to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses in student mastery of concepts, and verification curriculum based Assessment (VCBA) to gauge authentic student learning of concepts previously graded as successfully completed with scores of B or higher.
- *Student Status/Escalation Process*: The Connections Academy system tracks and reports ongoing student attendance progress based on the objective numeric data generated by the EMS including student contact with Indiana Connections Academy teachers, time-on-task, and completion of lessons and assessments. The student’s status (On-Track, Approaching Alarm and Alarm) is displayed on the Learning Coach and teacher home pages for instant identification of potential problems.
- *LiveLesson®*: This innovative web conferencing tool allows Indiana Connections Academy teachers to work synchronously (in real time) with small groups of students using voice over IP, chat, electronic whiteboard, and shared web surfing; based on Adobe® Connect™.

- *Teachlets*[®]: Highly interactive, asynchronous tutorial “movies” at the beginning of many lessons show students the concepts they will need to complete the lesson. Teachlets are created in Flash[®] (an industry-standard web animation protocol) to provide maximum media impact for minimum bandwidth.
- *WebMail*: The proprietary private email system included in the EMS. Because this system is “closed,” Indiana Connections Academy students, Learning Coaches and teachers may only use it to communicate with each other, and are protected from spam, contact from strangers, and other mainstream email issues.
- *StarTrak*TM²: This integrated rating system allows every Indiana Connections Academy student (along with every Learning Coach) to rate each lesson from a low of one star to a high of five stars. Ratings are used by curriculum staff to identify areas of needed improvement as well as curriculum approaches that work especially well.
- *School Handbook*: A complete description of all policies and procedures is captured in the School Handbook, which consists of a general portion (applicable to all Connections Academy-affiliated schools) and the Indiana Connections Academy Supplement, which details policies specific to this school state. The 2011-12 General and Indiana Supplemental School Handbooks are included in Appendix S. .

Clear and Well Articulated Mission

Provide a mission statement that justifies the need for the school in terms of the community and the target student population the school intends to serve. An organization’s mission statement should communicate the essence of the school.

Indiana Connections Academy (INCA) will be a pioneering K-12 virtual public charter school whose mission is to maximize academic achievement for students throughout the state of Indiana who need an alternative to the traditional classroom.

The INCA mission statement is included in the school handbook and the online training program for the teachers, parents and students.

List the measurable academic and non-academic goals the school will accomplish during its initial years of operation.

Academic Goals

- **Goal 1–Student Performance:** (mastery of concepts across all core academic subjects, measured on internal assessments, including quizzes, tests and portfolios): Students will average a 75% performance rate over the course of the school year. The performance rate, the average of all enrolled students’ weighted grade point averages, is reported each month to the Board.

Measurement: Data tracked in real-time for each student through EMS.

Timeframe: Reported monthly to Governing Board, aggregated annually for measurement of this goal.

- **Goal 2–Yearly Growth:** At least 60% of INCA students will demonstrate satisfactory yearly academic growth in Reading and Math in Year 1, increasing to 80% in Reading and 75% in Mathematics by Year 5.

Measurement: Longitudinal Evaluation of Academic Progress (LEAP)[®] pre- and post-testing for Grades K-2 coordinated with Scantron Performance Series for Grades 3-8.

For Grades K-2: A student will be deemed as having demonstrated “satisfactory academic growth” if she or he: gains 10 percentage points from pre-test to post-test on LEAP; has a LEAP post-test score of at least 75%;

For Grades 3-8: When administering the Scantron Performance Series test, students’ scale scores fall into one of four normative inter-quartile ranges that we have defined as Below Average, Low Average, High Average, and Above Average. For Grades 3-8 in Reading and Math, an INCA student will have demonstrated “satisfactory academic growth”:

- if the pre-test score is Below Average or Low Average, the student moves up one or more levels;
- if the pre-test score is High Average, the student maintains a level of High Average or moves up to Above Average;
- if the pre-test score is Above Average, the student maintains a level of Above Average.

Timeframe: LEAP and Scantron will be administered at the beginning and end of each school year; results analyzed and reported annually.

- **Goal 3–Achievement Scores:** Indiana Connections Academy students will perform as well as or better than the Indiana statewide public school average on the ISTEP+. The school intends to meet the benchmarks defined by the Indiana Department of Education for Adequate Yearly Progress (“AYP”) beginning in Year 1 and will meet statewide ISTEP+ averages by Year 2. By Year 5, the school will aim to exceed statewide averages on required tests.

Measurement: ISTEP+ Proficiency Tests and No Child Left Behind.

Timeframe: Assessments administered as defined in “Improving Student Achievement” section below; results analyzed and reported annually.

Non-Academic Goals

- **Goal 4–High-Quality Teaching:** INCA will provide its students with excellent, highly qualified teaching focused on the needs of each learner.

Measurement: 90% of teachers are rated “effective or highly effective based on Connections Academy’s 4-point employee rating scale; 100% of teachers pass the teacher orientation course with a score of 80% or better; 100% of the teachers will be Highly Qualified as defined under No Child Left Behind. As documented by data in the EMS, at least 90% of parents each year will express satisfaction with their children’s teacher on the annual Parent Satisfaction survey (conducted by a third party with publicly reported results).

Timeframe: Employees are evaluated annually; Data regarding teacher qualifications is maintained continuously and the Governing Board is provided Staffing Reports at each meeting; Parent Satisfaction survey results are reported by June of each year.

- **Goal 5–School Community:** INCA will create a measurable sense of community within the virtual school environment.

Measurement: By the end of the **third** month of the start of school, the school will have Community Coordinators in place and families will have the opportunity to participate in at least one (1) field trip per month during each school year; in the annual Parent Satisfaction survey (conducted by a third party with publicly reported results), respondents will rate school events at least a 3.0 on a 4 point scale.

Timeframe: Data regarding Community Coordinators and field trips are reported monthly to the Governing Board; Parent Satisfaction survey results reported by June of each school year.

- **Goal 6–Family Satisfaction:** INCA families will rate their school highly and be satisfied with their children’s school experience.

Measurement: Parent satisfaction will measure at least 3.0 in overall program satisfaction on a 4 point scale in an annual Parent Satisfaction survey (conducted by a third party with publicly reported results).

Timeframe: Parent Satisfaction will be given in the Spring and survey results reported by June of each school year.

In addition to these academic and non-academic goals, INCA has several operational / management goals, summarized below and explained in detail in the “Administrative Management,” “Sound Financial Management,” and “Appropriate Technological Support” sections.

- **Transparent School Results:** INCA school staff and Governing Board will be provided with regular access, including a monthly summary report, to the real time results of key operating metrics for the school including Attendance and Participation metrics:
- **Attendance** (as logged by the Learning Coach and verified by the teacher): Students will average a 95% attendance rate over the course of the school year. Attendance is recorded electronically with appropriate controls in the EMS and verified as accurate and legitimate by teacher professional judgment based on actual student work products. The attendance rate is reported each month to the Board.
- **Participation** (completion of lessons, assessments and portfolio items in timely manner and at an appropriate pace for a particular student): Students will average an 80% participation rate over the course of the school year. The participation rate is reported each month to the Board.

- ***Timely Delivery of Learning Materials:*** INCA will ensure that 95% of families will receive their learning materials within 10 business days of completing the enrollment process.
- ***Fiscal Responsibility:*** INCA will operate in a fiscally responsible manner and will be financially sound. The school will maintain a positive fund balance.
- ***System Reliability:*** The INCA technology system will maintain a 99.999% reliability record.

Solid Governance Structure

Describe the organizing group and explain how this group is qualified to serve as Organizer for this school. Describe the primary purpose of the organizing group aside from its relationship with this school. If the organizing group is affiliated with other schools or educational programs, list each program and school.

INCA's organizing group is the Governing Board of Directors ("Governing Board" or "Board") of Indiana Connections Academy, Inc., an Indiana non-profit corporation. The corporation was formed in June 2005 for the sole purpose of seeking a charter for, launching, and operating a virtual charter school serving families across Indiana. (See Attachment Y for Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws) The corporation was originally awarded federal 501 (c)(3) designation in 2008 when INCA's original charter was approved by BSU. Due to a lack of organizational activity, it was terminated and the school is applying for reinstatement at this time. INCA expects the IRS to reinstate its federal 501(c)(3) status prior to the end of the 2011-2012 school year. The original IRS determination letter is included in Attachment Y. The Governing Board members represent a diverse array of experiences and qualifications, from professional educators with non-profit and community based experiences to a parent with financial expertise (see list of members and roles, below). Together, the members of the Governing Board are committed to continuing the successful INCA pilot to a high-quality, highly accountable virtual K-12 public school in Indiana.

Describe the role the organizing group will play in the on-going operations of this school. List the specific responsibilities the organizing group will have in the on-going operations of the school.

As described above, the INCA organizing group is the Governing Board, which upon securing a charter will oversee the operation of the charter school and be legally accountable for its operations. The Board sets policy and hires contractors, including those which may provide management, curriculum, technology and instructional services. Additionally, the Governing Board is responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the financial and programmatic accountability systems fulfill INCA's obligations to the Ball State University Office of Charter Schools as its authorizer and to the State of Indiana.

The Governing Board shall adopt all policies regarding the curriculum, instructional, and business practices of the school, which will then be carried out by the school staff and vendors. The operating structure of the school will be similar to a traditional educational environment, with a school principal who will supervise administrative staff and teachers who implement the curriculum according to the policies and procedures approved by the Governing Board. The principal will also act in an information and advisory capacity to the Governing Board, and will be responsible for implementing board policies in the day-to-day operation of the school. Under

the Governing Board's direction, business matters, including development of budgets, creation of financial systems, and fiscal and student attendance reporting, will be carried out by the education management organization. However, all financial matters resulting from school operations, along with the detail of all expenditures, are reviewed and approved by the Governing Board during their regularly scheduled meetings. The need for new policies may be suggested by parents, the school staff, the education management organization, or others, but development of those policies will be the responsibility of the Governing Board with advice from its counsel. The Governing Board will meet regularly (preferably at least 10 times per year) in open, public session to fulfill its duties, and may from time to time create subcommittees or task forces to carry out special tasks.

Provide an organizational chart that shows the relationship between all parties involved in the development and on-going operation of the school.

See Attachment F.

List the name and address of each board member who is now or is expected to be involved in the development and on-going operation of the school. Describe the authority and responsibilities of each board member.

See below.

List the qualifications of each board member. Explain why each member was selected and how those qualifications will contribute to the success of the school.

The original list of INCA board members is still current. It includes the following three members: For detailed resumes, see Attachment G.

Jerry Windle, Board Chair and INCA parent, 5950 Gladden Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46220, graduated Magna Cum Laude from Oregon State University with a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Education – 3.82 on a 4.0 scale and has been on active duty and currently in the Naval Reserves, receiving top honors along the way. Mr Windle has held top management positions with companies such as Eli Lilly and Company, HealthCare REIT, as VP of Operations Property Management Division; Neuroscience Consultants as Director of Ancillary Services and Organizational Development; and ultimately to his opening his own Practice and Risk Management Company. His experience in staff hiring, contract negotiations, management training, leadership seminars, and finance are all skills he brings to the INCA Board. Mr Windle's son, who attends INCA-VPS, is a US Junior National Diving Champion and is currently training at the US Diving National Training Center in Indianapolis.

Seana Murphy, Board Vice Chair and Secretary, 3916 N. Broadway, Indianapolis, Indiana 46205, graduated from DePauw University in 1991 and moved on to complete a Master's in Theological Studies from Christian Theological Seminary in 1994 where she studied the Christian Ethics with a focus on the philosophy of Personalism. Prior to working with the Twenty-first Century Scholars Program, Seana directed community based and led youth programs in the Mapleton Fall Creek neighborhood, Indianapolis. Working with the SSACI and Twenty-first Century Scholars staff, Seana wrote and received a U.S. Department of Education Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs grant which expanded the Twenty-first Century Scholars Program's ability to address post secondary education access issues from both financial and academic achievement standpoints. Through the work of 14 Twenty-first Century Scholar Regional Support sites and the support of various community

foundations including the Lumina Foundation for Education, Ball Brother's Foundation, Hendricks, Scott, Wayne, and Knox county community foundations, the Twenty-first Century Scholars program has worked to establish a systemic approach to early intervention and college readiness. Recently, Seana transitioned from being the State Director, Twenty-first Century Scholars Program to become the Assistant Vice Provost for Admissions and Enrollment Management for Ivy Tech Community College. Her experience with federal grants, non-profit organizations and foundations will be invaluable to the Board.

Carl Heck, Board Treasurer, 5663 Carrollton Avenue, Indianapolis, IN, 46240, a 2005 Butler grad with a B.S. degree in finance, he received the Enrique Camarena Lifetime Achievement Award, which recognizes his volunteer efforts for drug-prevention in Indiana, while attending Butler. He was named Assistant Athletic Director for Facilities and Events at Butler University in March of 2007. He returned to his alma mater after serving as the Lead Accountant for the Traffic Safety Division of the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute where he managed a \$35 million budget. In his current position at Butler, Mr. Heck coordinates and communicates all scheduling of Butler University athletic facilities and events and works closely on the oversight of student-athlete financial aid. Mr Heck was actively involved in politics as a student, and he served as the State Chairman of the Indiana Federation of College Republicans during the 2004 election. He further served on the Bush-Cheney '04 Indiana Campaign Leadership Team and on the National Board for the College Republican National Committee. Mr. Heck is a 2006 graduate of the Indiana Leadership Forum and he resides in Indianapolis. Mr Heck's background in finance and demonstrated leadership skills provide strong qualifications for serving on the Board.

The Board anticipates adding additional board members who offer other specific skills to the Board.

Describe how the board will develop policies and make decisions about the school. Describe how the responsibilities and authority of the school's administrative staff will be differentiated from that of the board(s) of the school.

See answer to question above regarding the role the organizing group will play in the ongoing operations of the school.

Participation by Parents and Others

Provide details about how parents and others not located at the school's facilities will participate in the education of the students. Include cooperative learning opportunities, meetings with teachers and others involved in student instruction, field trips and study sessions.

Parent/Learning Coach participation in daily student learning: Parent involvement is a centerpiece of the INCA concept. Whether a parent's role is as a Learning Coach working daily with one or more students, or as someone providing insights and guidance to a Learning Coach, all parents/guardians will be intimately familiar with their child's progress on a day-to-day basis at INCA. The Education Management System ensures that all parents have access to complete, real-time data about their children's learning, and that the human infrastructure of the school – the principal and teachers – places the highest premium on supporting the role of parents. The school offers ongoing training and support to help Learning Coaches carry out their important role while making optimum use of the available technology tools and professional teacher

support to do so. The opportunity for meaningful, intensive involvement in their children's education is part of what draws families to schools like INCA. Research among participating families in similar schools across the country indicates a high level of satisfaction in this regard. On the most recent Connections Academy Parent Satisfaction Survey, more than 96% of parents agreed their children were satisfied with the program and 94% would recommend the program to other families.

Parent involvement in overall school quality: In addition to involvement focused on their own children's learning needs, INCA parents will have multiple opportunities to shape the overall school experience. They can volunteer to serve as Community Coordinators (see Definitions on page 5), arranging field trips and other face-to-face activities among INCA families who live nearby. They may be selected to serve as a parent member of the Governing Board, or serve on ad hoc groups convened by the Governing Board to focus on particular issues such as community partnerships and neighborhood outreach. Additionally, parents and students can provide feedback on the school's curriculum through the -StarTrak rating system on each lesson.

Special projects in the community: In addition to facilitating field trips and outings, Community Coordinators often develop group projects, typically with a charitable or community service goal, for students to participate in face to face as well as virtually. For example, during the 2009-10 school year at another Connections Academy school, Community Coordinators organized Oregon Connections Academy to help in local recycling programs, volunteer in hospitals, and assist in Haitian disaster relief. INCA Community Coordinators will have the support and encouragement from INCA staff to coordinate local projects for their students including park clean-ups, walkathons, and community celebrations as examples of the many opportunities students have to learn skills while serving the greater good.

Cooperative learning through field trips and outings: Parents, Community Coordinators, community members and teachers all have multiple opportunities to collaborate on face- to-face learning activities with students during field trips and other outings. As an example, MTS Minnesota Connections Academy (MTSMCA) last year hosted 50 major field trips (see list below) over the course of the school year, all of them attended by students both from the immediate region and statewide. Teachers attending the field trips typically work with location staff and parents to provide structured learning activities on site. The INCA principal and faculty will initiate face to face opportunities within the first two months of the start of school.

Sample of Field Trips – MTSMCA 2009-10 :

- Studied the prehistoric past at the Stearns History Museum, the geologic past on the lava flows near Lake Superior, and frontier life at Fort Snelling.
- Explored the principles of physics and sharpened their math skills at the Science of Snow Tubing event and the University of Minnesota's Physics Circus.
- Learned about endangered species, indigenous plants, and the environment at the International Wolf Center, National Eagle Center, and the Ney Nature Center.
- Explored the galaxies at the Hibbing and Rochester Planetariums.
- Deepened their appreciation of literature, music, and dance at professional productions of Othello and The Nutcracker.

Describe how the school will ensure that parents, students, and others involved in the education of students are sufficiently knowledgeable of the educational program requirements, and can assist in ensuring student participation and the authenticity of student

work.

The school provides ongoing training and support to help Learning Coaches, whether they are technology novices or technology natives, carry out their important role while making optimum use of the available technology tools and professional teacher support to do so. In addition to an online Learning Coach orientation, teachers are proactive in working with a Learning Coach, if needed. Learning coaches and teachers work in partnership to ensure student participation, performance and authenticity. Teachers have also been additionally trained to identify student performance and authenticity.

Parents are always welcome at the principal office of Indiana Connections Academy for additional training and support. The principal may also offer training sessions for groups of parents around the state should the need arise. However, the EMS has been designed for parents, students and teachers to use regardless of their technological experience.

The unique EMS designed specifically for this K-12 virtual school also provides a suite of very powerful, easy-to-use tools to ensure that all stakeholders can be involved in meaningful ways. For example, for parents and Learning Coaches, these tools include a scheduler and planner for setting and keeping track of daily assignments; a personalized “to do” list and a snapshot view of the student’s progress (with attendance, participation, and performance status) that appear prominently on each individual’s homepage; an online gradebook that is updated in real time; and many others. Students have their own to do list, planner view, gradebook, and more.

Describe how the school will meet the requirements of Section IV (d) of these Guidelines.

- (1) ***A list and brief description of the courses of instruction the student will receive. The list shall be updated annually for each grade level in which the student is enrolled.***

Updated course descriptions are available on the website for parents of all prospective and returning INCA students.

- (2) ***A detailed description of the instructional and other activities to be offered both online and through in person contact with the school’s teachers and staff.***

Once the student is fully enrolled, as part of the course selection/course placement process, the parent/Learning Coach (and the student, as age appropriate) will have access through the EMS to complete course descriptions, including “course trees” detailing the scope and sequence of all lessons (see Attachment M). An icon next to the lesson on a course tree indicates if it is exclusively an online activity. All other lessons are a combination of both online and offline. The school principal, teachers and community coordinator will all work together to inform the parents of additional activities including in-person assessments, field trips, community outings, virtual group projects, online bulletin boards/forums, book chats, teacher-led discussions, and student clubs ranging from chess to yearbook.

(3) ***The manner in which attendance will be reported and work will be authenticated.***

Parents are instructed on the attendance policy and procedures during the EMS orientation and training. Teachers work with the parents, as needed, and the information is also located within the School Handbook, which the parents will receive prior to the first day of school.

(4) ***A list of all formal tests the student will be required to take and the dates and locations where the test will be administered.***

Parents will have access to the school calendar and other assessment information within the EMS. A complete listing of the formal tests students will be required to take, along with the dates and locations where the tests will be administered, will be maintained in the virtual library.

(5) ***The manner in which the parent will be notified of the time and place of the meetings with school officials during the school year.***

As stated above, once the student is fully enrolled, the parent will be encouraged to go through the EMS orientation and training. Upon completion of that training, parents will have full access to the EMS and the virtual library which will contain information, including the manner in which the parent will be notified of the time and place of the meetings with school officials during the year.

(6) ***The address of the Charter School's physical facilities, the Charter School's Transportation Plan for transporting students to its physical facilities (developed under I.C. 20-24-3-4(b)(3)(O)), and the name, work telephone number and e-mail address of the school administrator and other school personnel.***

As noted above, this information will be provided in the EMS. In addition, the contact information for the school administrator and the address of the school's physical facilities will be listed on the public website.

(7) ***A list of any extracurricular activities provided by the Charter School and a general description of how the student may become involved during the school year.***

The Community Coordinators will share local information that will be of interest to INCA families in each geographic area. In addition, clubs and activities will be offered for grades K-8 and high school.

Indiana Connections Academy students in grades K–12 are expanding their educational horizons while interacting with other local INCA students, as well as Connections Academy students from across the country. During the 2010-11 school year, INCA-VPS students in grades 1-8 had the opportunity to participate in the following clubs and activities:

Elementary

- Arts and Crafts Club
- Book Club
- Chess Club
- Elementary School Science in the Kitchen
- Environmental Club
- First in Math®
- Pen Pals
- Poetry Corner
- Poetic Forms and Language I
- Quiz Bowl
- Robotics Club
- Student Literary Magazine

Middle School (and High School when approved)

- Arts Club
- Arts and Crafts Club
- Book Club
- Broadcast Club
- Chess Club
- Debate Club
- Environmental Club
- Innovators Club
- First in Math®
- Middle School Science in the Kitchen
- National History Day Club
- Pen Pals
- Poetry Corner
- Poetic Forms and Language II
- Quiz Bowl
- Robotics Club
- Student Advisory Council
- Student Leadership and Service Club
- Student Literary Magazine
- Student Newspaper

Students are informed of these clubs and activities through their teacher, school announcements and on the school message boards.

(8) *The names of the student’s teachers, and the manner in which each teacher can be contacted by the student or parent.*

As noted above, the names and contact information of the student’s teachers will be in the EMS.

(9) *A list of all services that will be provided to the student by the Charter School, including without limitation, special education services under state and federal law.*

As noted above, these services will be listed in the Virtual Library of the EMS.

(10) *Copies of policies relating to computer security and privacy, truancy, absences, discipline and withdrawal or expulsion of students. This shall include a copy of the Charter School’s discipline plan included in its proposal pursuant to I.C. 20-24-3-4(b) (3) (P).*

As noted above, these policies will be provided to each family through the School Handbook and will be maintained in the Virtual Library of the EMS.

11) *Detailed information on:*

(I) *The Charter School’s professional staff, including the number of staff personnel, their education level and experience.*

As noted above, the INCA website will provide this information prior to the first day of school. In addition, this information is reported to the Governing Board at each of its monthly meetings through the School Staffing Report.

(ii) *The Charter School’s historic performance on the ISTEP and other formal tests and assessments, if available.*

The INCA annual report will provide historic performance information on assessments, including the ISTEP and other standardized testing, as available.

(12) *Information regarding the proper usage of equipment and materials and the process for returning equipment and materials supplied to the students by the Charter School. A parent shall acknowledge either in writing or electronically, the receipt of this information.*

The School Handbook and Acceptable Use Policy, which the parent must sign, will contain this information

(13) *A description of the school calendar, including the time frame that will constitute a school year and a school week, the days on which instruction will occur, holidays and term breaks.*

The school calendar will be in the Virtual Library in the EMS.

Describe the types and frequency of communications between the school and students, parents regarding student participation, achievement, and appropriate behavior. As noted above, EMS data about student participation and achievement is updated continuously and displayed prominently for students and parents. Depending on the need of the learner, teacher contact –via telephone, LiveLesson[®] session, and WebMail – with the student and Learning Coach may be as frequent as several times a day, and at minimum once every two weeks depending on student age. Teachers do not wait to be contacted; they are proactive participants in their students’ learning plans. In addition, Indiana Connections Academy families are always welcome to visit the school office/teaching center during business hours to meet with their teachers in person.

Administrative Management

Describe how the school will be managed. Submit an organization chart that reflects the administrative structure of the school including all administrative positions.

INCA’s operating structure will be similar to a traditional educational environment, with a school principal who will supervise administrative staff and teachers who implement the curriculum according to the policies and procedures approved by the Governing Board. The principal will also act in an information and advisory capacity to the Governing Board, and will be responsible for implementing board policies in the day-to-day operation of the school. The principal will also serve as the liaison to Ball State University Office of Charter Schools and to the general public. Under Board direction, business matters, including development of budgets, creation of financial systems, and fiscal and student attendance reporting, will be carried out by

the education management organization. The need for new policies may be suggested by parents, the school staff, the education management organization, or others, but approval of those policies will be the responsibility of the Governing Board with advice from its counsel.

See Attachment H for Administrative Structure Organizational Chart.

The Indiana Connections Academy principal will be employed by Connections Academy and work under the direction of Connections Academy's Vice President of Schools.

Describe the qualifications of each administrator. Define the roles of each administrator and how the roles are differentiated from those of the board(s).

Principal: INCA's instructional leader will be the principal. The qualifications for this critical position are as follows:

- The INCA principal will possess an appropriate administrative credential and/or relevant work experience in online learning leadership.
- A minimum of three years of management or administrative experience is required.
- A former principal or master teacher is ideal.
- The prospective principal must be technology literate and have good communication skills.
- Must be able to build consensus and INCA teachers to teach, students to learn and parents to engage in their child's learning while following the mission of the school.

The principal's compensation will be performance based as described in the proposed Performance Management System and Individual Employee Performance Evaluation sample (see Attachment I). The Governing Board will have the right to review and approve new principal hires and request a replacement as described in the EMO agreement.

As noted above, the Governing Board shall adopt all policies regarding the curriculum, instructional, and business practices of the school, which will then be carried out by the school staff and vendors. The operating structure of the school will be similar to a traditional educational environment, with a school principal who will supervise administrative staff and teachers who implement the curriculum according to the policies and procedures approved by the Board of Directors. The principal will also act in an information and advisory capacity to the Board of Directors, and will be responsible for implementing board policies in the day-to-day operation of the school. Under Board direction, business matters, including development of budgets, creation of financial systems, and fiscal and student attendance reporting, will be carried out by the education management organization. All personnel decisions including hiring, firing and evaluations concerning the principal and the teachers will be approved by the Board of Directors.

The Assistant Principal will assist the principal in supervising the overall school operations of a virtually managed, instructional program. The Assistant Principal will help manage teachers, ensuring that each child successfully completes his/her instructional program.

Requirements:

- Prior school leadership experience
- Advanced degree in education or related field is preferred
- Prior teaching experience
- Excellent communication skills, both oral and written
- Demonstrated ability to work well in fast paced team environment
- Very technologically proficient (especially with Microsoft OS and MS Office and programs)

The Guidance Counselor will virtually assist students and parents with course selection and scheduling processes. Additionally, the Guidance Counselor will work with teachers to identify and address students at risk or in crisis and will be the main point of contact for these issues. The Guidance Counselor will become an expert on course and credit requirements and work with the CA placement team to establish and enforce counseling and placement processes for all high school students. The Guidance Counselor will also advise the Curriculum Department on course and graduation requirements.

Requirements

- Degree in School or Guidance Counseling, preferably a Master's
- Minimum 3-5 years of counseling experience in a high school setting
- Excellent communication skills, both oral and written
- Technologically proficient (especially with Microsoft OS and Office products)

The Administrative Assistant is responsible for daily administrative tasks of the school such as answering phones and email, receiving visitors, assisting the principal and teachers with administrative tasks, filing and other duties as assigned.

Requirements:

- Proficiency with Microsoft Office tools and web-based applications is essential.
- Ability to multitask in a fast paced environment.
- Good interpersonal skills and attention to detail.
- Excellent communication skills, both oral and written.
- High degree of flexibility.
- Demonstrated ability to work well in fast paced team environment.

Complete the Staffing Matrix years 1-5 showing each position.

See Attachment C

Indicate where each of the administrators will be housed.

INCA has established the Administrative Office/Learning Center for the school at 6640 Intech Boulevard, Suite 250, Indianapolis, IN, where all of its administrators and its entire school staff will work together daily. INCA is located in the northern part of the city so that its school staff may take full advantage of the guidance of its proposed authorizer, Ball State University. See Attachment D for the layout and description of the Administrative Office/Learning Center.

Provide details on the personnel policies of the school.

Before the beginning of the school year, the Governing Board will adopt its own personnel policies as needed following all state and federal laws. INCA will be an equal opportunity employer and conduct all business activities, including hiring, without regard to age, color, gender, disability, marital status, national origin, citizenship status, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status or other legally protected category. INCA will prohibit harassment, sexual harassment or retaliation in the workplace, whether committed by managers, co-workers, customers/students, or third parties. INCA expects the highest standards of ethics and will set specific policies regarding gifts and conflicts of interest. The Indiana Connections Academy Employee Handbook is included in Attachment I.

Upon approval by the Governing Board, INCA employees will participate in a performance management system which will incorporate individual and school goals utilizing goal setting with defined measurement of those goals, as reviewed at least twice yearly by the supervisor and employee. An overall employee and school performance rating will provide an opportunity for merit increases and bonus opportunities amongst the employees. An overview of the proposed Performance Management System is also shown in Attachment I.

The Governing Board will contract with Connections Academy to act as the human resources agent for the Charter School. Compensation will be recommended to the Board by Connections Academy for open positions based on national experience and local insight. Connections Academy strives to offer competitive compensation that recognizes performance. Total compensation is a combination of numerous items: including base salary; health benefits; recognition programs; optional 401(k) program; life insurance; paid time off; disability plans; and incentive compensation. See the Connections Education Benefits Guide 2011 in Attachment I.

Contracting with an Educational Management Organization (EMO)

If the school intends to enter into a contract with an Educational Management Organization (EMO), state the name of that organization and information about the EMO's primary contact. An EMO is an organization contracted to provide significant administrative management, financial management and/or curriculum/instructional services.

The Governing Board plans to enter into a contract with Connections Academy of Indiana, LLC, "Connections Academy" upon passage of the law to allow virtual charter schools. Connections Academy of Indiana, LLC is part of the successful national provider of virtual public school curriculum, technology and management services, Connections Education LLC, ("Connections Education") that currently partners with charter schools, school districts, and state departments of education in Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nevada, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Wisconsin and Wyoming. Connections Academy was the first nationally recognized virtual school program that is first of its kind to be accredited by AdvancED – the leading trans-regional accreditor (formerly called The Commission on International and Trans-Regional Accreditation (CITA)). See the EMO Agreement, Attachment J, which, once executed, will take effect upon award of the charter.

Pat Laystrom, Senior Vice President of State Relations for Connections Education is a graduate of Indiana University and INCA's main Connections Academy contact. Ms. Laystrom began

her career 25 years ago in the classroom and since that time has focused on bringing innovative educational solutions to K-12 educators. As the Senior Vice President of State Relations, she and the State Relations team focus their efforts on establishing partnerships to create new virtual/online schools under the the Connections Education umbrella. In addition, she has held senior management positions with leading educational companies including AHA! interactive, Scholastic New Media, and Educational Resources, a national distributor of educational technology and professional development programs.

Susan Stagner, Vice President of State Relations for Connections Education, has more than twenty years of diverse education, business, and technology experience. She began her career in engineering and subsequently held positions in program management, consulting and Internet strategy. Ms. Stagner has served for the last ten years in senior leadership roles in public virtual school administration assisting in the launch of both Indiana Connections Academy and Hoosier Academies. She is a graduate of the Ohio Superintendent Leadership Institute and is a member of the Board of Directors and co-founder of the Ohio Alliance of Public Charter Schools. Ms. Stagner holds a B.S. in Electrical Engineering from the University of Detroit and an M.B.A. from the University of Michigan-Dearborn

Describe the selection process used to identify the EMO and state the reasons the EMO was selected.

The INCA Governing Board has selected Connections Academy of Indiana, LLC (“Connections Academy”) based on its prominence in the field of virtual K-12 public education. The original founding board did extensive research on available virtual programs and contacted Connections Education individually to urge development of a virtual/online school in Indiana under the Connections Education umbrella. Several members held a meeting with Connections Education representatives in Indianapolis in December 2004 to take a closer look at the company’s curriculum, instructional philosophy, and technology system. Based on those discussions, Connections Academy was formed for the purpose of establishing a virtual/online K-12 school in Indiana. A pilot program was launched in partnership with Indiana Department of Education, and several of the parent members of the Board enrolled their children in a Connections Academy pilot program to experience the curriculum first-hand. The current Governing Board has followed Connections Academy over the past several years as it established the Virtual Pilot Program through the IN Department of Education and are now hopeful for a statewide charter school which will make it available to all students throughout the state. Although there are other national providers of comprehensive virtual school services, the Governing Board prefers Connections Academy’s strong teacher model, rich multimedia curriculum, extensive teacher professional development and powerful Education Management System.

Describe the rights the school will have in relation to:

- ***Ownership and use of the school facilities***
The INCA Board will select, secure and be responsible for the school facilities. Connections Academy will provide its expertise on identifying suitable locations and assist the Board in the selection and set up process.
- ***Ownership and use of the curriculum and instruction materials***
The INCA Board plans on contracting with Connections Academy for its school services, including the curriculum and instruction materials. Those materials remain the property of Connections Academy except for materials that are both directly developed and paid for by the charter school or were developed by the EMO at the direction of the organizer with charter school funds dedicated for the specific purpose of developing such curriculum or materials.
- ***Selection and supervision of employees at the school***
The Governing Board will select the school principal, who will be employed by Connections Academy and supervised by both the Governing Board and Connections Academy. The Governing Board shall annually evaluate the principal and shall provide the results of that evaluation to Connections Academy. INCA teachers will be employees of Connections Academy and will report to the principal. Connections Academy will be responsible for recruiting, training, and assigning teachers, and will also serve as the payroll agent for all employees.

In the attachments, include the signed contract for the EMO listing the specific services the organization will provide.

The Professional Services Agreement (contract) is shown as Attachment J.

Describe the school's contingency plan for continuing operations in the event the services of the EMO are terminated.

In the event the Agreement with CA is terminated by either party for any reason, CA shall assist and cooperate with the Governing Board in the transition of the provision of Educational Services from CA to the Governing Board or another service provider so as to minimize the disruption to Students.

Verify that the school and EMO will adhere to the requirements of the Office's Policy on Contracting with Educational Management Organizations.

INCA and Connections Academy of Indiana, LLC will adhere fully to the requirements of the Ball State University Office of Charter School's Policy on Contracting with Educational Management Organizations.

In an Attachment, provide the following information about each Education Management Organization (EMO) that will contract with the school.

See Attachment K for requested information about EMO.

Strong Educational Program

Provide a description of the educational program the school will utilize, including any previously developed or published curricula. The description must indicate specific instructional activities of the educational program to be conducted on-line and in other settings.

INCA proposes to use the Connections Academy curriculum, which aligns to the Indiana Academic Standards but was developed specifically to promote academic achievement in a virtual learning environment. The Connections Academy curriculum combines proven and rigorous print-based materials with the best in technology-enhanced learning such that a significant portion of the curriculum is delivered through the Internet and other electronic means in a developmentally appropriate way.

For a complete curriculum overview, see Attachment L.

Indiana Connections Academy has selected the Connections Academy program because its instructional design and curriculum development are guided by principles which correspond directly with the mission and philosophy of the school while also embodying national best practices in online educational design:

- Curriculum fosters breadth and depth of understanding in each subject area
- Content is aligned to national and state standards
- Curriculum is supported by quality, reputable, recently published textbooks and/or proven instructional resources and materials
- Content and assessments are accurate and unbiased
- Content is current, relevant and provides real-world applications
- Content is appropriate for the learner (age, ability, background, reading level, learning style)
- Instructional design is adaptable and flexible to meet individual needs of Learning Coaches and students
- Instructional design provides students with opportunities to improve learning skills using technological tools (e.g., virtual labs and instruments, Teachlet tutorials, business software, online calculator, WebQuests)
- Navigation is intuitive and age-appropriate
- Scope of course is appropriate with regard to amount of content, length of course and lessons, and course requirements
- Lesson introduction is effective and presents lesson objectives, accesses prior knowledge, sets expectations and motivates
- Background information effectively prepares students to access new content, skills and strategies
- Curriculum includes opportunities for developing problem-solving and critical thinking skills
- Curriculum includes opportunities for collaboration and independent study
- Curriculum includes opportunities to develop oral and written communication skills
- Curriculum incorporates timely and appropriate feedback to students.

INCA plans to use the rigorous, high-quality Connections Academy curriculum that integrates 21st century versions of leading textbooks with engaging online resources. The curriculum was

selected for its fit with Indiana Academic Standards and virtual learning best practices. Following are highlights of the proposed INCA curriculum.

Elementary/Middle School Curriculum: The INCA program of instruction has the ability to be individualized, personalized and delivered in a non-traditional environment to give our students the best pathways to success. INCA has selected the Connections Academy K-8 curriculum, which is aligned to the Indiana Academic Standards. This curriculum integrates a wide variety of materials including textbooks, lesson plans and other content from a variety of leading publishers including Houghton Mifflin®, Zaner-Bloser®, the Calvert School® and others. In addition to high-quality print materials, the Connections Academy curriculum also features technology-based content from “best of breed” providers such as, BrainPop®, World Book®, SkillsTutor™, Compass Learning®, and United Streaming®, Grolier Online® as well as the nationally recognized Hooked on Phonics® and Hooked on Math® programs. The curriculum will be updated regularly, with INCA Governing Board approval, based on a rigorous analysis of student performance as measured by state testing results and internal assessments.

The Connections Academy curriculum integrates a variety of proprietary and highly effective technology tools such as Teachlets® – online animated tutorials developed by Connections Academy to introduce challenging topics and provide interactive practice – and LiveLesson® sessions, which provide for real-time web conferencing with small groups of students using voice over IP, chat, electronic whiteboard, and shared web surfing. (See Definitions above for more details.)

Foreign language instruction begins early at INCA, with Spanish and French available to students in grades K-8. Advanced middle school students also have the option to take French, German, Latin, Mandarin Chinese or Japanese. Language courses integrate proven-effective online materials with a unique audio feature that allows teachers to hear and grade actual student speech. Courses may also include LiveLesson instruction for maximum student-to-teacher and student-to-student interaction.

The INCA program of instruction encourages connections with parents, family and the community and offers unique electives such as Home Life, which combines provides fun skill-building projects in which the whole family or people from the community can participate. These activities include cooking, crafts, sewing, home maintenance, family outings, and genealogy. New Home Life modules are added regularly, such as The Name of the Game: Discovering and Designing Board Games and What it Means to Be Green: Creating a Positive Impact on the Environment.

The Connections Academy K-8 technology literacy course, Educational Technology and Online Learning, provides not only a comprehensive set of technology skills ranging from basic productivity tools to Web page development, but also reinforces national and state academic standards, online study skills, and Internet safety.

An interactive Connections Academy course called Frog and Toad Quest provides students an opportunity to monitor frog and toad populations across the state and around the nation. This online project joins Connections Academy students with scientists from the National Wildlife Federation and U.S. Geological Survey as they monitor amphibians, collect, and analyze data on their activities.

High School Curriculum: INCA will provide a balanced, challenging high school experience focused on students pursuing paths that lead to success, whether via a college major or a career choice. Their personalized path is monitored along the way by the student, parents, teachers and guidance counselor. The Connections Academy curriculum selected by INCA provides a comprehensive high school program with three levels of academic coursework: Basic, Standard or Honors/Advanced Placement courses. While all are designed to meet Indiana Content Standards and provide students a rigorous curriculum, the three levels will enable differentiation based on student needs and career goals. INCA students work with their guidance counselors to determine appropriate course level placement. The Connections Academy high school curriculum consists of more than 165 courses, including a wide variety of electives and intensive foreign language instruction from Spanish through Mandarin Chinese.

The Connections Academy high school program involves more online experience than the K-8 program, as appropriate for secondary school learners. Connections Academy's high school program includes substantial teacher-directed instruction through synchronous and asynchronous e-learning tools. The Indiana Academic Standards-aligned high school curriculum integrates digital versions of textbooks from major publishers enhanced by multimedia, interactive material, communication/conferencing tools, and team projects. In addition, students will have offline assignments, projects, novels and practice work. For a complete overview of the high school curriculum, please see Attachment L and [online](#).

Connections Academy high school courses typically include extensive use of Teachlets[®], the highly interactive, asynchronous tutorials that incorporate graphics, video, and audio to show students the concepts and ideas they will need to complete the lessons. Along with the use of LiveLesson[®], Teachlets[®] dramatically increase the effectiveness of the secondary school instructional model. In addition to Teachlets[®] and LiveLessons[®] (see Definitions above for additional details), the Connections Academy high school courses incorporate graded asynchronous online discussions which are required for all students. This tool creates important opportunities for collaboration and interaction among students.

With nearly 20 Advanced Placement courses at their fingertips, INCA students will get a leg up on college. Across the country, students enrolled in Connections Education affiliated schools have exceeded the national average on performance on Advanced Placement exams. According to the 5th Annual AP Report to the Nation, 57% of American students scored 3 or higher on AP exams, while 78% of Connections Education students scored 3 or higher. Of these Connections Education students, 41% of those scored 4 or higher on their AP exams.

The quality INCA virtual high school program also includes a host of services and procedures to address credits, transcripts, and guidance counseling. Careful monitoring of students' high school program from all the stakeholders helps students meet both their academic and non-academic goals. It is important for students to start early on planning for graduation and post-secondary education or the world of work. Without early planning, students run the risk of missing crucial courses that might thwart their plans or aspirations. This careful shepherding of students through the high school planning and completion process has produced excellent results: Connections Education-affiliated schools have sent graduates to the nation's leading colleges and universities, including Harvard, Amherst, Vassar Williams, Wellesley, Bryn Mawr, Bowdoin, Pennsylvania State University, Ohio State University, and hundreds of other colleges. Almost 75% of Connections Academy graduates go on to post-secondary education, with the remaining 25% entering the military or careers upon graduation.

The entire K-12 INCA curriculum will be updated regularly to conform to state standards and student needs, with major changes subject to approval by the Governing Board.

In addition to working with the curriculum materials described above, INCA students will have the opportunity to participate regularly in both face-to-face and virtual community activities. Face-to-face activities include field trips and community outings facilitated by the INCA Community Coordinators – parent volunteers whom INCA supports in organizing such activities for families who live nearby. Examples of these face-to-face activities include visits to museums and science centers; trips to the county seat and the state capitol; and tours of local business and industry. Community Coordinators work closely with INCA teachers to meet the needs of all students, including those with special needs, so that all have opportunities to participate. INCA’s technology-based activities include real-time LiveLesson activities, virtual group projects, online bulletin boards/forums, book chats, teacher-led discussions, learning-focused WebMail, and student clubs ranging from chess to yearbook. All of the collaborative online activities and communications tools are restricted for use only by members of the INCA community; parents can feel comfortable that their children are experiencing this technology safely within the “walled garden” of INCA.

Provide a scope and sequence with major units of instruction for each subject and grade the school would offer during its first five years of operation. Also provide a chart demonstrating strong alignment between the school’s curriculum and the Indiana Academic Standards and graduation requirements.

See Attachment M for the scope and sequence for each subject and grade. The INCA curriculum is fully aligned to the Indiana Academic Standards. See Attachment N for the Standards Alignment Chart.

In an attachment, provide a lesson plan in reading, mathematics, science, and social studies for each grade the school will offer in its first five years of operation.

See Attachment O.

Describe how the school’s educational program will increase student achievement as measured by identified tests/assessments.

INCA shall adhere to the same accountability measures, administer the same state assessments and follow the same proficiency measures as all public schools in Indiana, in addition to using its own internal assessment tools. INCA’s various assessments combine with top-quality curriculum and instruction to improve student achievement and maintain a high level of accountability. INCA shall use the following assessments to measure pupil progress:

- **Placement Process:** As part of the application process, INCA works with parents of incoming students to determine the appropriate grade level placement for each child. Students identified as potentially working significantly above or below grade level take a placement test.
- **Yearly Progress:** In the value-added model of academic growth upon which INCA is based, each student will demonstrate a year of academic growth for a year in school. Using its standards-based, technology-facilitated Longitudinal Evaluation of Academic Progress (LEAP[®]) pre- and post-test, as well as the Scantron Performance Series for Grades 3-8 test, INCA will gauge each student's academic growth over the course of the year. INCA prefers Scantron Performance Series because of its web-based platform instead of relying on a local area network. In testing students around the state, it is important to use tools that are reliable and consistent. The Connections Education family of schools has experience with the Scantron Performance Series and its ability to provide pre- and post-testing results demonstrating academic growth.
- **Ongoing Informal Assessments:** During each phase of their curriculum mastery, students will engage in several assessments that tap into all levels of student thinking. Such assessment activities include: scored daily assignments, daily "checks for understanding" requiring students to apply and integrate new skills in a thoughtful manner, and regular online quizzes to measure understanding of newly presented material.
- **Unit Assessments and Portfolios:** Each subject in the INCA curriculum is broken into logical units of study. Throughout each unit, students are required to complete a series of offline and online assessments. Offline assessments may include written compositions, science lab reports, short answers and essays, book responses, and a variety of work samples, which will make up a student's portfolio. These assessments require direct teacher evaluation. Online assessments for each unit typically include several quizzes and a unit test. While the quizzes are brief and frequent (occurring after every third or fourth lesson), the unit tests are more comprehensive and occur at the end of an entire unit. Online assessments provide families with immediate objective feedback, while offline assessments provide valuable reflection and expertise from INCA's certified program teachers. Student report cards and grades will ultimately include a balanced combination of quizzes, tests, work samples (portfolio items) and Learning Coach feedback.
- **Curriculum-Based Assessments:** Curriculum-based assessments (CBAs) are INCA's quick and effective way of gathering formative information on students' understanding of concepts. The mandatory regularly scheduled phone conversations between the teacher and student offer a valuable opportunity to conduct these assessments. Teachers conduct two types of CBAs: verification curriculum-based Assessment (VCBA) or diagnostic curriculum-based assessment (DCBA).
- **Baseline achievement data:** To the extent that state standardized test results are available for an incoming student, these results are integrated into that student's basic information in the EMS; likewise, results for state standardized tests that students take while enrolled at INCA are also included in the EMS, along with internal pre- and post-test data. This data will be used to track student progress from year to year and also within the year.

- ***State-Mandated Assessments:*** INCA is dedicated to meeting and exceeding all of Indiana’s goals and grade level requirements. At in-person, proctored locations, INCA students will participate in ISTEP+ proficiency tests. Results of these annual assessments will be reported through the authorizer and the Indiana Department of Education. For further details about ISTEP+ testing, see “Increasing Student Achievement” section, below.

In addition to the assessment methods described above, the INCA EMS gathers very granular data on every student’s performance every day. During each phase of their curriculum mastery, students will engage in many different types of evaluations, both formal and informal. Formal assessments include quizzes, unit tests, skills checks, portfolio items and graded discussions. Informal assessments include the variety of methods teachers use to gather ongoing feedback about student progress from both Learning Coaches and students, such as WebMail, LiveLessons[®], phone conversations, review of student work samples. Students should expect work to be graded, based on the assignment and format, from immediately to up to one week, with the average being 24-hour turnaround time. In addition to formal graded assignments, teachers continuously monitor student work via the EMS, noting performance on machine-graded quizzes and checks for understanding and reaching out to students via telephone Curriculum Based Assessments to verify student work and/or diagnose difficulties in mastering discrete skills and concepts. The EMS tracks teacher response time and teacher-student/teacher-parent communications, providing the school Principal with rich, actionable data on this key aspect of teacher performance.

Provide a school calendar and school day schedule for the first year of operation. Specify the date on which instruction will begin and the date on which instruction will end as well as each scheduled day during which supervised instruction will occur.

Instruction will begin on August 22, 2011 and end on May 24, 2012. A school calendar and sample of a school day are shown as Attachment P. The school calendar for INCA mirrors that of a traditional Indiana school, providing for a minimum of 180 days of instruction. In terms of schedule, INCA’s virtual school program and EMS planning tools allow flexibility and individualization, such that students may “attend school” any time during a given 24-hour period. Teachers, however, will work a standard school day, approximately 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

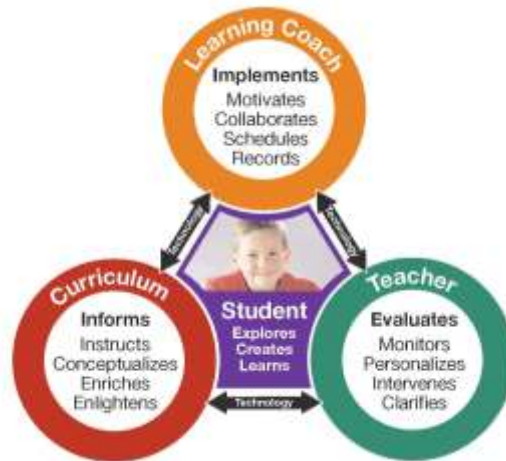
Indicate how the portions of the instructional program to be conducted on-line and in person meet the required portions in the Definitions section of these guidelines.

In keeping with the Definitions, INCA provides more than 50% but less than 100% of instruction through virtual learning, online technologies, or computer based instruction. At the same time, instruction is tailored to be developmentally appropriate for students of different ages and grades. For example, while well more than 50% of the lessons for K-1 students are provided online, much of the online material is aimed at the Learning Coach, while the students enjoy a mix of technology-based, print-based, and hands-on materials. As students mature, they spend more of their time online, with INCA high school students devoting much of their school day to online classes. All INCA students, regardless of grade level, also have ample opportunity to participate in face-to-face activities – including field trips, community-based enrichment and extracurricular activities.

Considering the school may enroll students from throughout the state, describe how the educational program will be delivered to students throughout the state. As part of this response, indicate how the school will ensure that all students, regardless of where they reside in Indiana, will have access to a high quality instructional program both on-line and in person.

INCA’s instructional model, known as Personalized Performance Learning, provides an individualized learning experience for every student regardless of where that student is located. This model provides a learning environment that is well supported by a partnership of parents and teachers and by a sophisticated technology component. Key aspects of the instructional model are as follows:

- The Personalized Learning Plan:** The centerpiece of instruction at INCA is the Personalized Learning Plan (PLP), which provides for individualized instruction tailored to the learning needs of each child. The PLP is an extensive document developed at the beginning of the school year by the Indiana-certified teacher in consultation with the student and the student’s parents/guardians. This PLP is built from a combination of baseline assessments of both academic skills/knowledge and learning modalities, information gathered from the parents, and input directly from the student. Learning needs that go beyond the purely academic (such as study habits and interpersonal skills) are addressed in the PLP as well. The PLP then guides the student’s course through the state standards-aligned curriculum. All daily lesson plans are provided to students and families online, directing them step-by-step through use of the comprehensive set of textbooks, trade books, manipulatives, and consumables that INCA ships to them.
- The Learning Triad:** Instruction at INCA builds on the PLP to surround each student with the resources needed for success. Each student is part of a “learning triad” as illustrated at right.
- A complete learning team:** At INCA, student learning benefits from committed educators and involved parents who provide total support for the student’s PLP. Members of each student’s learning team include a face-to-face Learning Coach; one or more highly qualified, Indiana-certified teachers (see “Qualified and Dedicated Teachers,” below); and the highly trained Connections Academy curriculum specialists and “education resource center” staff who support these teachers in their daily work. In effect, each INCA student has a staff of experts working together to leverage the school’s myriad resources – technological, instructional, and interpersonal – for his or her success.



What the Research Says: The primary building blocks of the instructional model are parent involvement; individualized instruction; and high-quality teaching. Education research has

shown that these touchstones of Personalized Performance Learning directly correlate to top student achievement.

For example, decades of research show that parent participation is very closely related to student achievement. In *A New Generation of Evidence: The Family Is Critical to Student Achievement*³, Anne T. Henderson and Nancy Berla document concrete benefits of parent involvement for students, including higher grades and test scores, higher graduation rates, and greater enrollment in postsecondary education. A Stanford study found that using parents as tutors brought significant and immediate changes in children's I.Q. scores. At INCA, parents are closely involved in their child's education.

Students benefit from instruction that is differentiated in terms of pace, content, sequence and style. Among many studies on this topic, Margaret Haertel and her colleagues show in "What Helps Students Learn?"⁴ that "curriculum and assessment tailored to student ability and academic background" to assure "an appropriate level of task difficulty for students and an appropriate instructional pace" is a proven achievement tool. At INCA, instruction is individualized for every student, every day.

Teacher quality counts as much in virtual learning environments as in traditional classrooms. While past research on the impact of good teaching, such as the 2000 study by Harold Wenglinsky⁵ of the Educational Testing Service, occurred before virtual schools were available as study sites, more recent research focusing specifically on virtual learning echoes the critical importance of teacher quality. For example, 2005's *A Synthesis of New Research on K-12 Online Learning*⁶ shows that the unique ability of an online teacher to communicate one-on-one with students and offer personalized feedback – as teachers at INCA will – is key to student success in virtual learning environments.

Describe how the educational program is appropriate for the students expected to enroll in each of the grades the school will offer. If the school intends to enroll students in elementary grades describe how the school's educational and non-educational program is appropriate for those students.

Elementary/Middle School Program: The K-8 INCA program integrates textbooks, lesson plans and other content from a variety of leading publishers and school programs including Houghton Mifflin®, Zaner-Bloser®, the Calvert School® and others, as well as technology-based content from "best of breed" providers such as BrainPop®, World Book®, SkillsTutor®, Compass®, and United Streaming®. The elementary curriculum includes the nationally recognized Hooked on Phonics™ and Hooked on Math™ programs. The K-8 technology literacy program covers a comprehensive set of technology skills ranging from basic productivity tools to web page development, but also reinforces national and Indiana academic standards.

The Connections Academy curriculum integrates a variety of proprietary and highly effective technology tools such as Teachlets® – online animated tutorials developed by Connections

³ Henderson, A., & Berla, N. (Eds.). *A new generation of evidence: The family is critical to student achievement*. National Committee for Citizens in Education, Center for Law and Education, Washington, DC, 1994.

⁴ Wang, Margaret C., Haertel, Geneva D., and Walberg, Herbert J., "What Helps Students Learn?" *Educational Leadership*, 1993.

⁵ Wenglinsky, Harold, *How Teaching Matters: Bringing the Classroom Back Into Discussions of Teacher Quality*, Educational Testing Service, 2000.

⁶ Smith, Rosina, Clark, Tom, and Blomeyer, Robert, *A Synthesis of New Research in K-12 Online Learning*. Learning Point Associates/North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, Naperville, IL, 2005

Academy to introduce challenging topics and provide interactive practice – and LiveLesson[®], which provides for real-time web conferencing with small groups of students using voice over IP, chat, electronic whiteboard, and shared web surfing.

The K-8 Gifted and Talented program provides gifted students the opportunities and challenges they need to succeed while learning at their own pace. During the enrollment and placement process, students may be placed in different curriculum levels for different subjects. For example, a third grader with a high aptitude in math could be placed in a fourth-grade math course, while continuing to take third-grade-level courses in other subjects. Gifted students at INCA in grades 3 through 8 also have the opportunity to be enrolled in specially designated gifted courses in language arts and mathematics. These gifted courses allow students greater opportunities to:

- Interact with the instructor and other students.
- Explore grade-level content and participate in extension projects, investigations, and activities that integrate skills and promote higher-level thinking.
- Participate in individualized activities that enable students to develop and apply knowledge.
- Choose from a wide variety of electives and club activities to supplement learning in core subjects.

In addition, Connections Academy is the first to offer an exclusive online version of Junior Great Books[®]. Through JGB, gifted students enjoy age-appropriate works and participate in online literary discussions with other high-ability students.

For a detailed overview of the K-8 program, see Attachment L.

High School Program: The INCA 9-12 program involves more online experience than the K-8 program, as appropriate for secondary school learners. The Indiana Academic Standards-aligned high school curriculum integrates digital versions of textbooks from major publishers enhanced by multimedia, interactive material, communication/conferencing tools, and team projects. Top-quality third-party courseware elements are also licensed as part of the 9-12 curriculum, based on alignment to state standards, demonstrated success in producing positive test results, accreditation by AdvancED and/or a regional accrediting organization, and fit with the INCA curriculum philosophy.

This high school program will provide a balanced, challenging high school experience focused on students pursuing paths that lead to success, whether via a college major or a career choice. These are not separate curricula but rather selections and sequences of courses that students may mix and match according to their individual learning needs. Each student's path through high school will be custom-designed by the student and his/her parents in consultation with the school's guidance staff and teachers.

Compared with K-8, INCA's high school program will include substantial teacher-directed instruction through synchronous and asynchronous e-learning tools. Most of the electives and several of the core courses for high school students will be delivered primarily online, with offline assignments, projects, novels and practice work. All high school courses will include extensive use of Teachlets[®] and LiveLesson[®]. In addition, the INCA high school courses incorporate graded asynchronous online discussions which are required for all students.

This quality virtual learning high school program also includes a host of services and procedures to address credits, transcripts, and guidance counseling. It is important for students to start early on planning for graduation and post-secondary education or the world of work. Without early planning, students run the risk of missing crucial courses, thereby thwarting their plans or aspirations. The following important aspects of the INCA high school program were developed with input from a national group of principals, guidance counselors, superintendents, teachers and parents.

- *Graduation Requirements and Grade Point Average (GPA):* INCA uses a standard whereby one credit equals approximately 180 “hours” of instruction (this is equivalent to a full-year course in a traditional high school and is sometimes referred to as Carnegie Units). In contrast, Indiana’s high school requirements essentially measure each semester course (a minimum of 250 minutes per week for one semester) as one credit. To graduate and receive a diploma from INCA, each student must successfully complete the “Core 40” credits required by the State of Indiana, shown here as translated into INCA credits.

Area and Subject Requirements:

Students must earn the following credits in the following areas and subjects in order to graduate.

Area	Subject	Required INCA Credits	Required Indiana (Semester) Credits
English	English 9	1	2
English	English 10	1	2
English	English 11	1	2
English	English 12	1	2
Mathematics	Algebra I	1	2
Mathematics	Geometry	1	2
Mathematics	Algebra II	1	2
Science	Biology	1	2
Science	Chemistry or Physics	1	2
Science	Any Approved Course	1	2
Social Studies	U.S. History	1	2
Social Studies	U.S. Government	.5	1
Social Studies	Economics	.5	1
Social Studies	World History	1	2
Required Electives*	World Languages; or	.5 -2.5	5
Required Electives*	Fine Arts; or	.5 -2.5	5
Required Electives*	Career-Technical	.5 -2.5	5
Physical Education	Physical Education	1	2
Health	Health	.5	1
Electives	Any Approved Courses	3	6
		T = 20	T=40

* Students must complete a total of 2.5 INCA or 5 Indiana required elective credits. Students may choose to complete these credits in one or more areas (e.g. a student may complete 2.5 credits in just one area, or may complete their 2.5 credits selecting from 2 or 3 of the approved elective subjects).

* Specifies the number of electives required by the state. High school schedules provide time for many more electives during the high school years. All students are strongly encouraged to complete a Career Academic Sequences (selecting electives in a deliberate manner) to take full advantage of career exploration and preparation opportunities.

INCA students will participate in any required Core 40 end-of-course tests. The ISTEP+ End-of-Course Assessments (ECAs) are criterion-referenced assessments developed specifically for students completing their instruction in Algebra I, Biology I, or English 10. Pass/fail courses will not be averaged in to a student's GPA. INCA students will also have the opportunity to participate in CORE 40 plus Tech Diploma and CORE 40 with Honors, as appropriate.

While all INCA high school students will be encouraged and supported to earn a Core 40 diploma with a C average or better – thus qualifying, with a principal's letter of recommendation, for exemption from the Indiana Graduation Qualifying Exam (GQE) – INCA will also facilitate optimum participation in and successful passage of the GQE by all students likely to need the test for graduation.

- *Course Selection and Credit Transfer:* INCA parents will receive a detailed Course Selection Guide with specific school information during the enrollment process. Parents will then have an opportunity to select the courses for their student(s) based on his/her academic level, previously completed high school level courses, and the student's plans for higher education and/or career. Parent selections will be analyzed along with the student's prior academic record by the Connections Academy Placement Team who will then either accept these selections or recommend some modifications.

In terms of credit transfer, INCA will seek its own North Central Association accreditation to ensure that credits will transfer to other high schools as well as to any college or university. Additionally, the curriculum and course sequencing has been specifically aligned to Indiana's academic standards and designed to meet Indiana's graduation requirements. For students transferring into INCA, Guidance Counselors will carefully analyze student transcripts to provide the maximum allowable "transfer credit" into the INCA program. Upon graduation or withdrawal, students will receive an official transcript detailing both the credits earned at INCA as well as any transfer credits.

- *Instructional Delivery and Scheduling:* Compared to the K-8, the INCA high school program introduces increased structure and a pacing system that encourages all the students in a single class to move forward at a similar speed. The pacing and scheduling for the core courses changes from asynchronous/user scheduled (which means parents set the schedule and lessons can be done in any sequence and pace) to asynchronous/fixed schedule (which means that the schedule is fixed and students must all move at a similar pace). This does not take away the ability to personalize the curriculum for students, however it does add the additional accountability and structure that is necessary for a high school program, while preparing students for life and work in the 21st century.

Indicate the level of participation in instructional activities students will be required to meet to receive credit for successfully completing a course and receive a satisfactory grade for that course. The level of participation may include the amount of time students will be engaged in both on-line and other instructional activities in order to receive credit for a course.

See below.

Describe how the level of participation in an instructional activity will impact the grade and

amount of credit for a course.

Participation is a critical factor in student success at INCA. Student participation is monitored both by the EMS and by the teacher, based on completion of lessons, submission of portfolio items in timely manner, response to WebMails and other communications, participation in class-related threaded discussions and LiveLesson® sessions, and other variables. Each student's quantitative Student Status for participation is updated continuously for the school staff by the EMS; the student's teacher uses professional judgment to assign a qualitative Student Status designation (Satisfactory, Alert, Alarm, etc.) tied to the school's Escalation Process. Learning Coaches see these Student Status metrics on their homepages when they log onto the system. Teachers have persistent access to the list of all of their students with their associated statuses, and can sort this list to focus special attention on students showing less than Satisfactory. For students showing less than Satisfactory, teachers will intervene through contact with the Learning Coach via telephone and/or WebMail; the escalation process ultimately involves contact and action by the principal. This persistent access to the list of students and their associated statuses allows teachers to identify students experiencing difficulty with completing assignments or otherwise not demonstrating satisfactory progress and evaluate and provide necessary assistance.

Describe how the school will ensure that student work is authentic, especially with regard to students involved in on-line instructional activities or assessments.

The school uses a combination of efforts to ensure that student work is authentic, including both electronic and traditional methods.

- Both students and Learning Coaches have unique log-on information (IDs and passwords) for the Education Management System. Therefore, it is technically very clear to determine which member of the household performed each daily function (submitting assessments, sending WebMails, sending in work, etc.)
- As the students get older, they are required to complete more independent daily online activities, and take daily electronic "quick checks," or short online assessments, to assess their understanding of each lesson. Because it is necessary to actually read through and complete the entire lengthy lessons to access and accurately complete the quick checks, it is unlikely that any person, other than the student, would do so.
- In grades K-8 students are required on a regularly scheduled basis to gather and send in specific assignments to their teacher(s). These assignments are called "portfolio assignments," and are identified within the curriculum as particularly important items for the teacher to review and evaluate. Such items are essays, projects and science lab reports. Through regular analysis of such items, teachers become familiar with the students' work, and are assured that the students are completing it.
- Teachers also frequently call the students directly and ask them specific questions about their lessons, completed assignments, and/or projects to ensure proper student participation and understanding.

Qualified and Dedicated Teachers

Indicate whether the school will employ or contract for the services of teachers and other instructional personnel who may or not be located at the school's facilities.

As employees of Connections Academy, most INCA teachers will work full-time in

Indianapolis, INCA's principal office. The Governing Board may, at any time, request that the principal investigate and take action to address any complaints or concerns regarding the performance of a teacher. The Principal will provide a report to the Governing Board on any and all actions taken in response to such a request. As the school grows, teachers may be placed in satellite offices and adjunct or contract teachers may be hired for more specialized subjects.

Describe how the teachers will coordinate instructional activities with parents and others directly involved in the education of the students. Describe where the teachers will be primarily located during instructional activities.

Each INCA student has an Indiana-certified teacher specially trained in the INCA curriculum and instructional method. Based full-time in INCA's Indianapolis principal office, teachers may on occasion work from another location as circumstances demand. Teachers will work closely with each student on a one-on-one basis using the technology. The teacher is responsible for evaluating assignments and work products, providing instructional assistance, assigning and scoring assessment activities, and providing feedback on the child's performance. Based on a student's demonstrated mastery of the material, teachers add, expand or replace assignments; they also grade students in each subject for the regular student report cards and make promotion or retention decisions. Depending on the need of the learner, teacher contact with the student and Learning Coach may be as frequent as several times a day, and at minimum once every two weeks. Teachers do not wait to be contacted; they are proactive participants in their students' learning plans. INCA families are always welcome to visit the Indianapolis principal office of INCA during business hours to meet with their teachers in person.

Verify that all teachers will meet state certification requirements as well as the Highly Qualified Teacher requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA).

All INCA teachers will be Indiana certified. In addition, 100% of INCA teachers will be Highly Qualified under No Child Left Behind.

List the ratio of students to certified teachers the school will have during each of the first year of operation.

The proposed average student-to-teacher ratio at Indiana Connections Academy is 50:1 for grades K-5, when the student's Learning Coach is most directly involved with implementation of instruction, and 35:1 for grades 6-12, when Learning Coaches serve more of a monitoring role while students are working directly with their teachers. Teachers are able to serve a larger number of students than a classroom-based teacher because their duties are substantially different. Since INCA teachers are provided with all of their lesson plans and assessments rather than having to create them, they are able to personalize lessons for a larger number of students. They are also much more efficient in the time spent on grading assessments because all multiple choice and other objective questions are auto graded while short answer, essay, show your work and project work are all graded by a teacher. Yet even these take less time because rubrics and other guidelines are readily available. Course grades are calculated by an automated grade book that allows teachers to set weights for various types of assessments and other activities. Teachers do not spend their time in non-instructional activities like morning announcements, moving students from class to class, monitoring lunchrooms or recess, and gain significant time from not having to deal with disciplinary actions. INCA teachers have a number of other productivity tools including daily reporting of the progress of all of their students including a display of all

students who are showing problems on a number of metrics. Teachers are able to spend more time in direct instructional activities and interaction with students even while serving more students. This would not be possible without the lesson structure and the technology tools that are unique to INCA.

Serving Students with Special Needs

Describe how the school's administrative and instructional staff will be well versed in the requirements of IDEA and 504 plans and other special needs of students enrolling in the school.

INCA is committed to serving children with disabilities whether such children are currently or newly identified as disabled. INCA shall, through its policies and procedures, comply with all applicable requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Act, 20 U.S.C. 1400 et. Seq. (IDEA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794 (sec. 504) and Indiana State Board of Education, Special Education Rules, Title 511, Article 7. INCA staff will be provided with "Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Procedures," a document detailing implementation of federal and Indiana special education statutes and regulations, prepared by the Connections Academy of Indiana, LLC, Special Education Director. INCA will provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities, including, but not limited to, identifying, evaluating, planning educational programs, conducting case conference committee meetings, arranging for the provision of any necessary related services through charter school staff, local districts and private providers. Available services, as appropriate will include virtual speech and occupational therapies. In doing so, the INCA administrative and appropriately credentialed instructional staff (see below) will combine their own expertise with that of Connections Academy, through its affiliation with Connections Education, has established a track record of successfully serving students with special needs in a virtual school setting.

Of all students in Connections Academy schools nationwide, 10-16% have special needs requiring IEPs or 504 plans. This is significantly higher than the rate of most other virtual schools reflecting the strong commitment by charter schools associated with Connections Academy to meeting the needs of these students. In fact, Connections Academy schools that have local education agency status for the provision of special education services, provide special education and related services at rates that exceed the state averages by 2 or more percentage points. A breakdown of students with disabilities currently enrolled in Connections Academy schools by disability evidences the following:

- Learning disability 46%
- Other health impaired 14%
- Autism 11%
- Emotionally disturbed 11%
- Speech language impaired 11%
- Mental retardation 4%
- All disabilities 3%

In the 2009-10 Parent Satisfaction Survey, 80% of parents of students with disabilities said they were satisfied with their children's special education services (some of which were actually

provided by local school districts in states that don't allow charters to provide services directly), while more than 85% felt that their Connections Academy teachers provided sufficient support.

Verify that the school's teachers and administrators will be qualified to administer services for students with special needs

The INCA teaching staff will include a Special Education Manager and Indiana-credentialed special education teachers. The INCA Special Education Manager will be supported by Connections Academy's national Special Education Manager and Senior Director of Student Services, who have extensive experience and credentialing in providing support and services to children with disabilities using the virtual school instructional model. The INCA Special Education Manager will facilitate the implementation of the students' IEPs, often through a consultative approach with the INCA regular education teachers in which the Special Education Manager and teachers help general education teachers and Learning Coaches make adjustments to the learning environment, modify instructional methods, adapt curricula, and use other appropriate accommodations to meet the needs of individual students. Special education teachers will provide service both in the general education virtual classroom in the special education virtual classroom. The Special Education Manager will also facilitate IEP reviews (see below), arrange for delivery of special education and related services, and perform other special education functions at the school.

All families applying to INCA must disclose if their child has an IEP in place, and provide a copy of the IEP and the most recent comprehensive evaluation. During the enrollment process INCA will review the existing IEP and take the following actions, as appropriate:

- The IEP reflects a virtual environment and/or an inclusive education model, and the student continues through the enrollment process with the existing IEP.
- The INCA special education staff, in consultation with the parent, agrees that in the one-on-one environment the student's special education needs will be appropriately met in the least restrictive environment of the virtual setting, but the IEP does not contemplate such a placement. The student continues with the enrollment process, and within the first 45 days of school an IEP conference is held by the INCA team to review the IEP and revise as necessary.
- Identify special education and related service needs on the IEP and make arrangements needed to provide the service.

State how the school will ensure there will be a sufficient number of certified special education teachers to serve students with disabilities.

As a teacher with special education credentials and the support of the Connections Education national Manager of Special Education, the INCA Special Education Coordinator working with the regular teaching staff through the consultative approach – with contracting for related services as needed (see below) – is well-positioned to meet the needs of INCA's likely beginning first-year population of students with disabilities. Credentialed special education teachers will be added as the school grows. As of this update (10/2011), there are 4.5 special education teachers serving the students enrolled in INCA. INCA will carefully track the number and percentage of its students who have disabilities, and continue to hire additional special education staff as needed.

Describe how qualified staff will identify students with special needs in a virtual school environment.

To ensure service for students entering INCA without prior diagnosis for special education, the INCA principal and general and special education staff, together with the Connections Academy special education team, will regularly review teacher observations, assessment results and other data to identify any possible special education needs among INCA students. INCA will designate its Special Education Manager as its Child Find coordinator, who together with Connections Academy special education staff will conduct Child Find coordination and location activities. These activities shall include coordination with appropriate state and local organizations and agencies, as well as ensuring public awareness both inside and outside the INCA community through outreach each fall about INCA special education services and procedures.

- ***Pre-referral:*** The INCA staff will form a Child Study team consisting of teachers, special education teacher, principal, and Connections Academy specialists to handle all pre-referrals, which may be made by teachers, parents, or others. The Child Study team will determine if the student's needs may be met through curriculum modifications and interventions or if a formal referral for special education evaluation is warranted. If the former, the teacher then implements and documents suggested modifications, lesson adaptations, and alternative instructional strategies, as well as the student's level of success with each.
- ***Referral:*** If the Child Study team or the parent suspects that a student requires special educational services, the following procedures are implemented:
 1. The INCA teacher consults with the principal and INCA Special Education Manager to complete an official special education referral. The parent is notified of this referral.
 2. Parental consent for the student evaluation is obtained and the appropriate evaluations are arranged. Parents are sent a copy of *Procedural Safeguards*.
 3. Parent is invited to the Case Conference Committee (CCC) meeting to review the assessment results. The team determines if the student has a disability and the need for special education.
 4. IEP meeting is scheduled - at INCA's principal office, at another mutually agreeable site, or by teleconference- and the parents are invited to attend. IEP goals are formulated with parental consent.
 5. IEP is implemented.

Describe how the school will provide high quality services to all enrolled students with special needs regardless of where the student resides.

Since INCA is a program focused on individualization, flexibility and personalization, it is often a very good fit for students with special needs. INCA can be an appropriate setting for students with special needs by providing: 1:1 individualized instruction; a team of adults focused on student success; ongoing consultation with special educators and certified teachers to assist with adapting and modifying assignments to meet specific student needs; special education instruction provided in the virtual classrooms; Personalized Learning Plans; a safe and directed environment; reduced environmental distractions; frequent progress checks, evaluations and

reports; flexible schedule that allows for students to move at their own pace; ability to separate academics from socialization; recommendations for/provision of software and assistive technology (e.g., keyboarding or speech recognition software) to facilitate communication, organization and skill development and to address special needs. These factors, along with the presence of a caring and committed adult – the Learning Coach – enable the regular INCA program to accommodate the large majority of students with special learning needs in the least restrictive environment. This is accomplished through specific instructional approaches and learning strategies via the consultative service model described above.

Some students also have specific needs that will require additional direct “related services.” If it is determined that INCA is a good educational fit for these students, INCA will secure any IEP-mandated related services. Such services may include, but are not limited to, speech-language therapy (virtual and face to face), occupational therapy (virtual and face to face), physical therapy, and specialized virtual special education instruction. INCA will then facilitate arrangements between the families and service providers to ensure that proper scheduling, facilities use (as necessary), and consistent student attendance occurs. The Special Education teachers will use the telephone and Internet (web conferencing software) to provide direct special education teacher instruction. To enhance instruction and communication, Connections Academy offers interactive, online teaching tools. LiveLesson[®] is used extensively by Connections Academy teachers, to teach lessons to groups of students and to meet individual student needs. This technology is ideal for explaining difficult concepts, conducting review sessions, or promoting discussion.

Describe how the school will ensure that parents will be appropriately involved in CCC (IEP) meetings for students with disabilities.

Students enrolled in INCA will be working with a Learning Coach, most often the parent, on a daily basis. Parents of INCA students will be highly knowledgeable as to their child’s strengths, needs, present levels of performance and progress on IEP goals and objectives. It is Connections Education experience that parent participation in its affiliated schools is exemplary and parents are true partners in the process. Parent participation rates in IEP meetings (the equivalent of CCC meetings) at existing Connections Education affiliated schools throughout the United States averages⁷ 95% -- a particular strength of the virtual school environment.

To ensure that the parents of enrolled students with IEPs are appropriately involved, INCA will:

- Provide a qualified administrator to oversee CCC meetings.
- Provide parents with a written invitation to/ notice of the CCC meeting, clearly stating the purpose, date, time and location of the meeting and a list of the persons who will attend the meeting. Invitations/notices will be provided at least five business days in advance of the meeting to enable the parents to make arrangements to attend. Invitations (along with the Indiana Department of Education Notice of Procedural Safeguards and Parent Rights in Special Education) will be sent to parents by both US mail and WebMail.
- Hold CCC meetings at the INCA principal office, at another mutually agreeable site, or by telephone conference, using a dedicated conference line. Specific arrangements will

7

be made on a case-by-case basis and will be in accordance with all applicable law.

- Provide Annual Reviews of the IEP including a review with parents and relevant staff of student progress on the existing IEP goals and objectives and creation of a new IEP at least annually. INCA will obtain written parental consent for and approval of new IEP.
- Coordinate in Tri-annual Reviews, in which students are formally reassessed every three years, directly involving parents and following the same format as described for the Annual Review.

Describe the school's policy related to the technological support the school will provide to students with severe disabilities to ensure their participation in the school's program.

INCA will ensure that assistive technology devices are made available if they are identified as part of the student's IEP. These services and/or devices may be part of the student's special education, related services or supplementary aids and services. When students require assistive technology in order to access the general education curriculum, INCA will provide the necessary technology. Examples of such technology might include, but are not limited to:

- Word prediction or dictation software, such as Word Q® and Speak Q® or Dragon Naturally Speaking®⁸;
- Text readers, such as Natural Reader, inline readers, Adobe and Bookshare;
- Screen readers, such as Jaws for student with vision impairments;
- Touch screens or adapted keyboards, such as Intellikeys;
- Books on CD or tape; and
- Screen magnifiers for students with low vision.

Health and Safety

Describe how the school will provide for the health and safety of students and staff both in on-line and non-on-line activities

The INCA principal office in Indianapolis, which will house the principal, faculty and administrative staff, will comply with all health and safety policies as required by Indiana Code 20-34-3. All families receive the Acceptable Use Policy (see Attachment Q) which sets out use and safety procedures for all users accessing the EMS as required or recommended by the school. When students are participating in field trips or other activities, they must attend with a parent or guardian and submit a permission slip to the school prior to the event.

INCA will apply for a vision waiver prior to November 1st of the school year to conduct each student's vision test annually instead of upon enrollment. INCA will provide opportunities to students at their in person events with information on where families can receive an annual vision test, using the modified clinical technique, of each student in either kindergarten or grade 1; and an annual screening test of the visual acuity of each student enrolled in or transferred to grade 3 and grade 8 and of all other students suspected of having a visual defect. INCA will also provide information on locations for students to receive an audiometer test or a similar test to determine the hearing efficiency of all school children in the first, fourth, seventh and tenth grades, of all transferred school children and of all school children suspected of having hearing

⁸ There are several blind users in Connections Academy schools that are successfully utilizing Jaws screen reading software with the EMS

defects.

In addition to the vision and hearing screening tests, a test to determine postural defects shall be administered to each INCA student in grade 5, grade 7, and grade 9. With the approval of the Governing Board, INCA will work with INCA trained staff, local health care professionals, including families' own health care providers and local school districts, to carry out required screening.

Describe the professional staff employed or contracted by the school to handle:

- ***Immunizations and other required medical requirements for enrollment in public schools:*** Parents are required to submit immunization and other medical records as required of public schools during the enrollment process. The INCA staff will be trained in the proper handling of such records and will insure that every child has been properly immunized.
- ***Proper handling of medical records:*** INCA staff will be trained in the proper handling of such records and recording of information.
- ***First aid and emergency services:*** At least one INCA staff will be trained in first aid and emergency services.
- ***Medications and medical treatments:*** Since INCA students will attend from another location than where the teachers are and the Learning Coach will be with the student on field trips or while visiting the principal office of Indiana Connections Academy, the parent/Learning Coach of the student will be responsible for medications and medical treatments, if necessary.
- ***Health and vision screening:*** INCA will work with INCA trained staff, local health care professionals, including families' own health care providers and local school districts, to carry out required screening.
- ***Participation in Individual Education Plan (IEP) teams when appropriate:*** Certified staff will participate in IEP meetings, as appropriate. Where related service providers are appropriate participants in IEP teams, they will be included.
- ***Other health and safety requirements:*** The Governing Board will require the school to conduct periodic fire drills during the school year in compliance with rules adopted under IC 4-22-2 by the State Board. The Governing Board will require the principal to file a certified statement that fire drills have been conducted as required.

Describe how the school will address the nutritional needs of students when appropriate.

Since students will attend INCA from other locations, the school will not provide food services. Parents will be fully informed of this fact prior to their students' enrollment in the school so that they may make the best school choice for their family. For purposes of demographic documentation, however, INCA will request during the enrollment process that families who qualify for Free or Reduced Price Meals – based on past eligibility for these services or current family income – so identify themselves. The purpose of collecting this information is to ensure that the school will be prepared to arrange supplemental educational resources available to students and the school based on incidence of poverty. Parents will be fully informed that volunteering this information will not entitle their family to meal service. INCA staff will refer families who qualify for Free or Reduced Price Meals to local social service agencies for food assistance upon request. In the event that the federally funded lunch program is changed to

permit the distribution of direct assistance to families, INCA will be prepared to seek funds to provide this service

Increasing Student Achievement

Describe how the school will ensure that all enrolled students participate in the state required assessment program (ISTEP) and that all required security procedures of that program are adhered to.

INCA is dedicated to meeting and exceeding all of Indiana's goals and grade level requirements. The INCA faculty and staff will benefit from Connections Academy experience as CA has approximately a 95% or greater participation rate on state assessments nationally. At in-person, proctored locations set up within 50 miles of where students live, INCA students will participate in the ISTEP+ proficiency tests. The INCA faculty and staff will set up these locations and begin discussing the importance of the state assessments with parents and students at the start of the school year. All required security procedures will be followed and adhered to by all who are involved in the test. Results of these annual assessments will be reported through the sponsor and the Indiana Department of Education as well as communicated directly to INCA parents.

List the other assessment enrolled students will be required to take, including the NWEA.
See list on page 21.

Describe how the school will ensure that students follow assessment administration procedures and assessment security procedures.

INCA students will participate in ISTEP, Scantron Performance Series, and other required external testing at secure, proctored, in-person locations within 50 miles of their homes. INCA staff will be fully trained in the proper handling of assessment materials to ensure test security. All school rules regarding academic integrity (see "School Climate and Student Discipline," below) will be in effect.

Describe how the school will ensure that all enrolled students will increase in student achievement while enrolled at the school, regardless of the level of performance of the students upon entering the school.

As described in the academic goals above, INCA will be committed to student achievement and will have a variety of curriculum resources teachers may use to help to increase student achievement, regardless of the level of performance the student has upon entering the school. For students below grade level, INCA's PACE (Program for All Children to Excel) focuses on gaining proficiency in reading and math skills. For those above grade level, the K-8 Gifted and Talented program provides gifted students the opportunities and challenges they need to succeed while learning at their own pace. The K-8 Gifted and Talented program provides gifted students the opportunities and challenges they need to succeed while learning at their own pace. During the enrollment and placement process, students may be placed in different curriculum levels for different subjects. For example, a third grader with a high aptitude in math could be placed in a fourth-grade math course, while continuing to take third-grade-level courses in other subjects. Gifted students at Connections Academy in grades 3 through 8 also have the opportunity to be enrolled in specially designated gifted courses in language arts and mathematics. These gifted courses allow students greater opportunities to:

- Interact with the instructor and other students.
- Explore grade-level content and participate in extension projects, investigations, and activities that integrate skills and promote higher-level thinking.
- Participate in individualized activities that enable students to develop and apply knowledge.
- Choose from a wide variety of electives and club activities to supplement learning in core subjects.

In addition, Connections Academy through its umbrella relationship with Connections Education, is the first to offer an exclusive online version of Junior Great Books®. Through JGB, gifted students enjoy age-appropriate works and participate in online literary discussions with other high-ability students.

High school students may choose from dozens of Honors courses and as many as 20 Advanced Placement courses, in addition to an Independent Study course that allows students with special interests to craft their own focused course of study.

The certified teacher makes curriculum modifications and works with the parent and student on their individualized program.

List the expected percentages of students attaining proficiency in both reading and in mathematics on the required state assessment program (ISTEP) for each grade the school will offer in each of the first years of operation.

As noted in Academic Goals, above, INCA students in grades 3-12 will participate fully and perform equal to or better than comparable Indiana public schools on the ISTEP+ Proficiency Tests; the school intends to meet Adequate Yearly Progress (“AYP”) as defined by the Indiana Department of Education beginning in Year 1 and meet statewide ISTEP test score averages by Year 2. By Year 5, the school will aim to exceed statewide averages for comparable school populations on required tests.

List the expected percentages of students attaining proficiency in both reading and in mathematics on the NWEA for each grade the school will offer in each of the first five years of operation.

As noted above, INCA would prefer its students take the Scantron Performance Series assessments once in the Fall (the pre-test) and again in the Spring (the post-test). The following chart outlines the percentage of students INCA expects to attain a year’s worth of growth from the pre- to the post-test in both reading and math for the first five years the school is open.

	% OF STUDENTS SHOWING A YEAR’S WORTH OF GROWTH				
Grades 2-8	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5
Reading	60%	65%	70%	75%	80%
Math	58%	62%	66%	70%	75%
	% OF STUDENTS SHOWING A YEAR’S WORTH OF GROWTH				
	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5

Grades 3-8	60%	65%	70%	75%	80%
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When administering the Scantron Performance Series test, students’ scale scores fall into one of four normative inter-quartile ranges that we have defined as Below Average, Low Average, High Average, and Above Average.

For Grades 3-8 in Reading and Math, an INCA student will have demonstrated “satisfactory academic growth” if:

- If the pre-test score is Below Average or Low Average, the student moves up one or more levels;
- If the pre-test score is High Average, the student maintains a level of High Average or moves up to Above Average;
- If the pre-test score is Above Average, the student maintains a level of Above Average.

With respect to other assessments the school will administer, list the expected levels of average performance in each subject area in each grade for each of the first five years of operation.

A student has demonstrated satisfactory progress on LEAP™ if the student: (1) gains 10 percentage points from the pre-test to the post-test or (2) earns at least a 75% on the post-test. By Year 5, a student has demonstrated satisfactory progress on LEAP if the student earns 80% on the post-test.

Describe the corrective actions the school will take when students are not meeting expected levels of participation or achievement.

See Attachment R, Escalation Policy.

Indicate how the school will meet the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA) each year and specific actions the school will take in any year in which the school does not meet the NCLBA requirements.

The school expects to meet Adequate Yearly Progress beginning in Year 1 (first year schools are not typically required to meet NCLBA). If it fails to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) or otherwise falls short of NCLBA requirements in a given year, INCA will develop a focused school improvement plan, in consultation with the sponsor, to correct the shortcomings. For example, if INCA's testing participation rate lags – a very rare occurrence among Connections Education affiliated schools, which typically have test participation of 96% and above and, as shown in the chart below, meet AYP in virtually all of its schools or has shown improvement -- the principal will lay out specific strategies and timelines for ensuring that INCA families will report to the school's testing sites for the next state assessment. If a sub-group falls short of the state proficiency benchmark, school staff will identify additional resources and processes for focused academic improvement. As a virtual school, INCA will have the flexibility to quickly implement a school improvement plan and adjust it as needed for optimum effectiveness.

State	Made AYP	Targets Met and Other Notes
Arizona	Yes	Met All Targets; Rated as a Highly Performing school under AZ LEARNS, the state's school rating system
California	CapoCA--Yes	Provisional - Graduation Rate may be assessed ⁹
	CenCA--Pending	Graduation Rate Method to be determined
Colorado	Elementary--Yes	Met All Targets; In 2009 a teacher was honored as the first-ever award for Online Elementary Teacher of the Year by the Colorado Department of Education; 2010 Online Secondary Teacher of the Year by Colorado Department of Education
	Middle--Yes	Met All Targets
	High--Yes	Met All Targets
Florida	Yes	Met All Targets; Has earned an "A" on the Florida Department Of Education report card for 4 consecutive years (2006-present) and in 2009-10 was the highest performing virtual school in the state among all full-time virtual school providers
Idaho	Yes	Met All Targets
Minnesota	Yes	Met All Targets
Nevada	Elementary & Middle--Yes	Met All Targets
	High--Yes	Met All Targets
Ohio	No	Math Performance for Students with Disabilities; School rated Excellent on State Report Card due to student growth; 2010 Ohio Public Charter School Association Leader of the Year Award to Ohio Connections Academy's Principal
Oregon	No	Graduation Rate; Was ranked Outstanding in 2009 by the Oregon Department of Education
Pennsylvania	No	Reading Performance for IEP students, & Math Performance for IEP Students and African American Students
South Carolina	No	Math Performance for Students with Disabilities & Graduation Rate; Highest performing virtual charter school in the state
Texas	NA	N/A
Wisconsin	Yes	Met All Targets; Met AYP 5 th consecutive year
Wyoming	NA	N/A

Student Enrollment

On the attached age and grade range chart (see Attachment A), list the grade configurations and maximum enrollment the school will have in its first five years of operation.

See Attachment A.

Describe the recruitment and enrollment procedures the school will follow to ensure that the school is open to all students. Describe how a random selection process will be used when any grade is overenrolled. Describe how the random selection process will be conducted in the virtual environment so that parents and guardians and members of the public may observe the process.

In addition to the students enrolled in the INCA-VPS in 2010-11, INCA will actively recruit families that represent the full cultural, demographic and socioeconomic range of the state. To do so, INCA will use a variety of means to inform families about its services and provide them an

⁹ *Graduation rates are often calculated based on the number of students starting high school in 9th grade and those same students finishing high school in 12th grade. Virtual school students change schools more often than their traditional counterparts and as a result, the graduation rate can appear to be lower when in fact the virtual student may have simply returned to the traditional school for part of the high school experience.

opportunity to enroll, including:

- **Direct mail:** INCA will conduct one or more direct mail campaigns announcing the school to families with children throughout Indiana. In a typical mailing, INCA will send out a postcard inviting parents to attend an Information Session (see below), visit the website, and/or contact the call center. INCA may also use electronic mail to supplement its physical mail campaign.
- **Information Sessions:** INCA will conduct Information Sessions for families in Spring and Summer 2011. In-person sessions will be held across Indiana, along with multiple virtual sessions to ensure that families from a variety of communities are able to attend. INCA will use these sessions to provide a complete array of information about its program, including curriculum, teaching methods, technology resources and testing requirements.
- **Website:** INCA will launch and maintain a website that contains information about the proposed charter school, its Personalized Performance Learning approach, and its curriculum. The site will also contain a regularly updated set of Frequently Asked Questions and their answers. The site will include application information and procedures, the School Handbook, and other useful tools for prospective students and their families.
- **Telephone/e-mail information service:** INCA will launch and will maintain a toll-free information line and an email information service to answer parents' questions about the charter school.
- **Community and youth services partnerships:** As part of its outreach process, INCA will provide information about the school to community, family, and youth-serving organizations such as Boys and Girls Clubs; reach out to residential facilities; and seek partnerships with parent groups, health-related organizations; and organizations for young performers and athletes.
- **School district referrals and outreach:** INCA will take every opportunity to brief school administrators and guidance personnel on INCA as an alternative for students who might benefit from individualized instruction in a non-classroom setting.
- **Media outreach:** INCA will make limited use of paid media, primarily advertisements in community newspapers and radio announcements, but will take full advantage of the local media's interest in community events relevant to Indiana residents in order to inform parents about INCA informational sessions and to raise awareness of the school.

The current INCA-VPS families and in future years, the current INCA parents will play a leading role in serving as a source of information about the school and referring other families.

To apply for enrollment for their children, parents must complete a simple application form online. Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to attend informational sessions prior to enrolling in INCA. INCA will use these sessions to provide a complete array of information about its program, including its curriculum, teaching methods, technology resources and testing requirements.

Many families may visit the website or call the toll-free information line to learn about INCA. The website will contain information about the charter school and its curriculum, its Personalized Performance Learning approach, application information and procedures, a regularly updated set

of Frequently Asked Questions and their answers, and other useful tools for prospective students and their families.

Through its recruitment/marketing and application guidance activities, INCA will disclose full details about its program and encourage families to carefully consider its academic and parental involvement demands before applying. INCA will also provide tools (such as an online self-quiz and contact with a Connections Academy education counselor if desired) to help parents decide whether INCA is truly the right fit for their children and themselves.

To finalize their enrollment, parents complete all enrollment and placement activities in a timely and complete fashion. This includes signing all necessary school-family agreements, including a Parent/Learning Coach Agreement. INCA families will have the opportunity to receive extensive training prior to the start of the school year. This is particularly important for families whose children have only been in a public school setting or for those who have had limited exposure to technology. The training includes a thorough orientation to the Education Management System and practice lessons for the students. Families also receive a book on virtual schooling that provides guidelines on everything from setting up a classroom outside a traditional classroom to how to handle more than one student.

INCA will not discriminate against pupils on the basis of race, color, or creed, in its education programs or activities, including its admissions policies and procedures.

The school's enrollment/admissions process will include rigorous screening for verification of city residency (address check, etc.). When students withdraw, they undergo an exit interview and are provided with complete transcripts.

The Governing Board will adopt a lottery policy for student admissions that meets Indiana state law and the requirements of the sponsor. The INCA-VPS has a lottery policy approved by the Indiana Department of Education which the Governing Board will review. Any lottery will be held at the principal office of INCA and open to the public, with in-person oversight by a disinterested party (for example, a sponsor representative) as appropriate.

A typical lottery policy for Connections Academy schools nationally is as follows (excerpted from the 2010-11 School Handbook):

1.5.3 Enrollment Priority

Some schools are subject to enrollment limits for the school as a whole or for particular grades. To address these limits, two months prior to the first day of school the number of enrollment slots still available and the number of students that completed the enrollment process are tabulated. If there are more students than there are spaces available, each timely applicant will be given an equal chance of admission with the following limitations:

- 1. Students who were enrolled in the school in the prior year will receive priority*
- 2. Siblings of students who are presently registered to return to the school and were enrolled in the school in the prior year will receive priority*

Describe how the school will identify the desegregation orders in effect in school corporations from which enrolling students seek admission. Describe how the school will ensure that it is in compliance with any desegregation orders that apply.

Due to the nature of a virtual school, students have opportunities to meet and work with a diverse group of students. At INCA, students have multiple opportunities throughout the year to attend field trips being held at various locations throughout Indiana. INCA will initially identify any desegregation orders in effect in any school corporations and will note if a student(s) enroll from such a school corporation. Should that happen, the teachers and Community Coordinators will make special efforts to provide a diverse learning experience for that student.

School Climate and Student Discipline

Describe the school's student discipline policies.

Appropriate conduct is expected of all students at INCA. Students at INCA are guaranteed due process of law as required by the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution and as interpreted by the United States Supreme Court. The student's code of conduct will be explained in the INCA School Handbook (draft sample available upon request) and includes steps to be followed in the event of misbehavior. INCA follows formal due process procedures to deal with the discipline of students. The policies that reflect these due process procedures are included in the School Handbook.

Violations that may lead to suspension include, but are not limited to, the following breaches of conduct:

- Cheating on tests or daily work: A student who knowingly participates in copying, using another student's work and representing it as his or her own (for example, students transmitting their work electronically for another student's use), or who provides other students with test answers or answer keys, or otherwise uses unauthorized materials in an assignment or assessment situation.
- Abusive conduct: A student who uses or engages in using abusive language or conduct in the presence of others in person or electronically.
- Vandalism: A student who intentionally damages or destroys school property or records (physical or electronic). In these instances the school reserves the right to contact the proper law enforcement agency.
- Theft and robbery: A student who takes money or other property (physical or electronic) with the intent to deprive another person or the school of that property. The threat or the use of force or violence is considered a serious breach of conduct. In these instances the school reserves the right to contact the proper law enforcement agency.
- Sexual harassment: A student who subjects another to any unwelcome sexual advances including verbal harassment, unwelcome or inappropriate touching, or suggestions, requests, or demands for sexual favors.

Violations that may lead to expulsion include, but are not limited to, any behavior that indicates that a student is a serious threat to the safety of others, possession of firearms, dangerous weapons, bombs, or explosives, criminal behavior, arson, possession of or sale of controlled substances or paraphernalia.

Suspensions or expulsions for children designated as exceptional follow all appropriate state and

federal policies, regulations, and laws, e.g., INCA will not discipline pupils protected under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794 (sec. 504), the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 1400 et. seq. (IDEA), the American with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et. seq. (ADA) unless INCA complies with the requirements of those acts.

Describe how student behavior will be monitored in all instructional and non-instructional activities.

The student's Learning Coach will monitor the student's behavior, as a parent would typically, however the certified teacher will provide support to the Learning Coach, if needed. Teachers will attend field trips, state assessment testing and other activities and will assist the Learning Coach when required to ensure the safety of all students. Student behavior in virtual instructional and school community activities such as LiveLesson[®] sessions, message boards, and clubs, will be monitored by school staff in charge of supervising these activities. All rules of behavior specified in the School Handbook will be in effect at all times.

Describe how the school will intervene when student behavior is inappropriate.

See above.

Describe the role of parents and others in the development and implementation of the school's discipline policies.

Parents always have opportunities to attend school board meetings and to convey their thoughts and ideas to both board members and administration. Prior to the launch of school, the Governing Body of INCA will adopt a written policy regarding the school's discipline policy which will be included in the written rules adopted by the Governing Body.

Describe how the school will handle instances when students submit school work that is not authentic.

See above.

Describe how the school will handle instances where students would typically be suspended or expelled for significant disciplinary infractions in traditional public schools.

The INCA Governing Board will set a policy on specific suspension and expulsion procedures prior to the enrollment process starting but the essential elements of the policy will be as follows. Appropriate conduct is expected of all students at the school. School students are guaranteed due process of law as required by the 14th Amendment to the Constitution. The student's code of conduct will be explained in the school's handbook and includes steps to be followed in the event of misbehavior. Violations that may lead to expulsion include, but are not limited to, any behavior that indicates that a student is a serious threat to the safety of others, possession of firearms, dangerous weapons, bombs, or explosives, criminal behavior, arson, possession of, or sale of controlled substances or paraphernalia. Suspensions or expulsions for children designated as exceptional follow all appropriate state and federal policies, regulations, and laws.

The school will not discipline students protected under Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act* of 1973, the *Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act* (IDEA), or the *American with Disabilities Act* (ADA) unless the school complies with the requirements of those acts. Section

118.31, Stats., which prohibits corporal punishment of students, shall apply to the school. Sections 118.32 and 948.50, Stats., which prohibit a strip search of a student, shall also apply to the school.

During a period of suspension as defined by the school principal, a student's permission to log on to and/or use parts of the EMS could be restricted. Student access to WebMail, the message boards, online clubs/activities, and/or the entire EMS may be revoked. In such cases where the student's access is completely revoked, the Learning Coach will be responsible for logging on to the EMS and obtaining the student's assignments, responding to WebMail, and recording assessment responses for the student.

In an attachment, include an outline of the school's Student Rights and Responsibilities Manual.

This is covered in the School Handbook-Attachment S

Student Attendance

Describe the school's policies regarding truancy, absence and withdrawal, including the manner in which the school will monitor attendance under I.C. 20-33-2, or its successor.

Attendance is logged daily by Learning Coaches and verified by INCA teachers based on evidence of student work, communication with the teacher, and so on. Based on quantitative EMS data and their knowledge of each student, teachers assign a Student Status for attendance, updated continuously, ranging from Satisfactory to Alarm. The school's Escalation Process (see Overview and Definitions and Attachment R) allows timely, effective intervention for students in anything other than Satisfactory status.

Describe how the school will monitor student work on-line to ensure that students are engaged in instructional activities for sufficient time to complete high quality work.

INCA tracks student performance based on mastery of concepts across all core academic subjects, measured on internal assessments, including quizzes, tests and portfolios (see "Strong Educational Program"). In addition to the online, real-time gradebook, each student is assigned a continuously updated Student Status for Performance (e.g. Satisfactory, Alert, etc.) to facilitate intervention as needed through the Escalation Process.

INCA staff will use the attendance statuses of On-Track, Approaching Alarm and Alarm metrics to monitor overall student Progress on an ongoing basis, and to intervene with students who are falling behind on any of the three measures. On each teacher's homepage, students who may need special attention are flagged by the system, and the teachers reach out to these students' Learning Coaches via telephone and/or WebMail. The Learning Coach may simply need encouragement to keep EMS record-keeping up to date; the student may need special tutorial assistance; or the family may need counseling to get back on track with the program. In each circumstance where a student is identified as experiencing difficulty with completing assignments or otherwise not demonstrating satisfactory progress, INCA will evaluate what special assistance is required to get the student on track and ensure such assistance is provided to the student and/or Learning Coach.

Describe the intervention procedures the school will take when students are not participating as required.

The attached Escalation Policy (Attachment R) describes INCA's intervention procedures.

Social Needs

Describe how the social needs of enrolled students will be nurtured through school and other activities.

In addition to working with the curriculum materials described above, Indiana Connections Academy students in grades K-12 will have the opportunity to participate regularly in both face-to-face and virtual community activities. Face-to-face activities include field trips and community outings facilitated by INCA Community Coordinators – parent volunteers whom the school supports in organizing such activities for families who live nearby. INCA's technology-based community activities include virtual group projects, online bulletin boards/forums, book chats, teacher-led discussions, learning-focused WebMail, and student clubs ranging from chess to yearbook. All of the collaborative online activities and communications tools are restricted for use only by members of the INCA community; parents can feel comfortable that their children are experiencing this technology safely within the "walled garden" of INCA.

List specific activities that will be provided to nurture social needs of students.

See above.

Sound Financial Management

Specify which board will have direct oversight and be responsible for the financial management of the school. What actions will the board take to ensure the financial viability of the school? What actions will the board take when financial concerns arise?

The INCA Board of Directors is responsible for the overall financial management of the school. The Board has appointed one of its members to serve as the Treasurer of the school. This individual has a financial background to enable them to perform this function. The Board acknowledges that the Sponsor shall, at its discretion and its own cost, conduct an annual audit in a manner designated by the sponsor. The Board will also engage an independent accounting firm that will be responsible for preparing annual audited financial statements. To handle the day to day financial activities of the school, the Board will engage a business manager or will contract with its overall school management company (anticipated to be Connections Academy of Indiana, LLC) to perform that function. To ensure fiscal responsibility, the Board of Directors will meet regularly to review the operations and financial performance of the school *including reviewing and approving the school expenditures..* The business manager will be required to provide supporting documentation for all expenditures. The school will not authorize payment until it has reviewed such support. The independent accounting firm will also be engaged to review expenditures on a periodic basis prior to the audit. The Board will establish fiscal policies covering school expenditures. It will also designate specific check signing authority. It is anticipated that all checks over \$1,000 will require two authorized signatures. As a result of its contract with a management company, the school will be able to manage its cash flows through a short-term, non-interest bearing loan facility provided by the management company or will utilize the state offered loan. The business manager will also prepare a rolling forecast of the school's financial performance that will be reviewed at each meeting to ensure that the school has sufficient funds to meet all of its obligations and to stay on a sound financial footing. Any problems will be identified with sufficient time to make adjustments in the school's

operations to ensure that a sufficient fund balance is always available at the end of each school year.

Describe how the school will ensure that its financial management team is competent. What will the qualifications be of the staff directly responsible for the day-to-day finances of the school?

To handle the day-to-day financial activities of the school, the Board will contract with its overall school management company (Connections Academy of Indiana, LLC); it is also expected that the Board will contract with Connections Academy as its fiscal agent. Connections Academy, through its affiliate relationship with Connections Education, currently performs this function for eleven other charter schools in other states and has an exemplary audit record.

Describe the level of knowledge and experience the Governing Board has with the state funding formula and federal grants.

The INCA Governing Board members experience includes successful experience with federal grants having written and received a U.S. Department of Education Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs that expanded the Twenty-first Century Scholars Program's ability to address post-secondary education access issues from both financial and academic achievement standpoints. In addition, board members have financial experience and the EMO, Connections Academy, through its affiliate relationship with Connections Education, has extensive experience with state funding formulas and federal grants.

In the required budget forms, ensure the budget is balanced each year, all sources of revenues are identified and budget expenditures are consistent with the school's administrative and educational plan.

The required budget forms are attached. The development of the annual budget will be an iterative process that will incorporate input from key stakeholders every step of the way. A preliminary budget based on initial assumptions will be approved by the Board before the start of the school year. Once the beginning enrollment and per pupil funding figures are known, then a revised budget is prepared for the Board's consideration. This budget will then be compared to actual and forecasted results on a monthly basis as described above.

Appropriate Technological Support

List the technological equipment, connectivity, operating systems, software and any other instructional materials that will be provided by the school at all instructional locations. Indicate whether students will be required to pay for any required equipment, software, connectivity or support for instruction at any location.

Technology plays an important facilitating role in the INCA curriculum, so INCA will ensure that its students have access to technology. Each family participating in INCA will receive a loaned computer and an Internet service subsidy¹⁰. All necessary software and technology support is provided along with the computers. See Attachment T for a complete listing of the technology provided.

¹⁰ Assumes the school's funding levels remain at or above the anticipated levels.

Describe how the school will provide technical support to the on-line instructional activities at school facilities and at other locations. Include the hours when this support will be and will not be available.

Technical Support: INCA students and families will have access to extensive tech support (and a wide range of other support services) both through online Help (always available in the EMS) and live help.

- *Online Help* is accessible anywhere in the EMS through a click on the question mark icon, and provides a very robust array of answers and guidance. The online Help interface is shown here.



- *Connections Academy Support Services*, based within ConnectionsEducation’s headquarters in Baltimore, can be reached by calling 1-800-382-6010 then selecting the appropriate menu selection for Support Services, by e-mailing support@connectionsacademy.com, or by using the WebMail message feature in the Education Management System and sending a message to “Support Services” (included in the WebMail address book under Parent and Student Services). The Support Services Team is available during the school’s calendar year from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. eastern time. Voicemail messages can be left for Support Services at any time.
- *Continuity of Learning:* Although the INCA curriculum and EMS make cutting-edge use of technology to provide a high-quality, highly personalized educational program for each student, instruction can continue when a student is away from technology or when his or her technology is not working properly. Some courses in the Connections Academy curriculum include materials as well as online texts, so students may complete their assignments without being in front of a computer. Teachers have regular telephone consultations with students and may increase these in frequency or duration when a student will be away from the computer for a protracted length of time. Students also have the option of submitting portfolio materials via regular mail (in fact, at the early elementary grades, physical submission of materials is the default). Students having technological challenges can seek assistance from Support Services and may be encouraged to work from an alternative location, such as a public library, if technical issues are likely to interrupt home access for more than a day or two. Regardless of what combination of methods is selected, students can continue working even when their technology is not.

Describe the procedures the school will use to ensure the security and confidentiality of data

collected on-line and any transmission of the data.

Each user of the INCA EMS is assigned specific permissions that limit his/her access to only those parts of the system that are appropriate to his/her role. For example, teachers have different and more limited access rights than a principal. Further, certain entries can be specifically designated as confidential which further limits their viewing. For example, teachers make entries into a log concerning all contact with a student and members of the family. All teachers and other support staff with permission rights to view the log can see all entries. However, if an entry is made concerning special needs or any other protected category of communication, it can be marked confidential and then can only be seen by those users who are permitted by state and federal law or regulation to see the entry. The rights to view student data are strictly limited.

Connections Academy has built the network infrastructure around a sound, robust policy of locking down all un-needed TCP and UDP ports on the production environment, applying several layers of protection between the front-end web servers and the database utilizing enterprise firewall appliances with implicit-deny features, address translation, ACL's, strong communications encryption and scheduled patch updates to all equipment on the network. The infrastructure is monitored at all times for bandwidth, network and hardware anomalies and alerts are automatically sent to the Connections Academy IT staff in the event that any problems are detected. Connections Academy also has a Security Committee that reviews all permission entries to determine that only authorized individuals have access to sensitive information.

Describe the Acceptable Use Policy the school will have in effect. Describe how the school will ensure compliance with that policy.

INCA will ask every student and family to agree to an Acceptable Use Policy that clearly defines appropriate technology and online behavior – and prescribes consequences for not doing so. Any violation of the Acceptable Use Policy while using INCA computer equipment may result in warnings, usage restrictions, the loss of a computer or Internet subsidy (where provided by Connections Academy), confiscation of the equipment, expulsion from the school, as well as other disciplinary actions or legal proceedings. In addition, school employees will also have specific Acceptable Use policies – with safeguards and consequences - regarding their own technology use. These will be communicated through the school's Employee Handbook and staff training.

Describe how the school will continue to deliver instruction when equipment, software or connectivity at any location becomes unavailable due to technical issues.

Although the INCA curriculum and EMS make cutting-edge use of technology to provide a high-quality, highly personalized educational program for each student, instruction can continue when a student is away from technology or when his or her technology is not working properly. Most courses in the Connections Academy curriculum include materials as well as online texts, so students may complete their assignments without being in front of a computer. Teachers have regular telephone consultations with students and may increase these in frequency or duration when a student will be away from the computer for a protracted length of time. Students also have the option of submitting portfolio materials via regular mail (in fact, at the early elementary grades, physical submission of materials is the default). Students having technological challenges can seek assistance from Support Services and may be encouraged to work from an alternative

location, such as a public library, if technical issues are likely to interrupt home access for more than a day or two. Regardless of what combination of methods is selected, students can continue working even when their technology is not.

Describe how data is protected and recovered if a catastrophic failure of the system occurs. Include any fault tolerance or redundant capabilities that provide protection for system availability.

The EMS is located at a hosting facility with back up generator and a biometric security entry. Further complete system backups and system schematics are stored off site as well. The EMS is backed up every day. Backup copies are maintained both on and off site. Further, the EMS is fully redundant – i.e. it is able to fail over to another system in the event of any point of failure. For further details about the Connections Academy Network Infrastructure and Security Policy, see Attachment U.

Describe functional and assessment views of the system from the various perspectives of student, instructor, parent, school administrator, system administrator.

Each user is assigned specific permissions that limit his/her access to only those parts of the EMS that are appropriate to his/her role. For example, teachers have different and more limited access rights than a principal. Further, certain entries can be specifically designated as confidential, which further limits their viewing. For example, teachers make entries into a log concerning all contact with a student and members of the family. All teachers and other support staff with permission rights to view the log can see all entries. However, if an entry is made concerning special needs or any other protected category of communication, it can be marked confidential and then can only be seen by those users who are permitted by state and federal law or regulation to see the entry. The rights to view student data are strictly limited. See Attachment V.

Describe the retention windows and policies used to administer and recover content.

The EMS is located at a hosting facility with a backup generator and a biometric security entry. It is fully redundant – i.e. it is able to fail over to another system in the event of any point of failure. Further, complete system backups and system schematics are stored off site as well. (See Attachment U- Network Infrastructure and Security Policy.) The EMS is backed up every day. Backup copies are maintained both on- and offsite.

Appropriate Facilities

Describe the location of the school. If a specific site has been identified, describe the site and any facility the school will use. Provide a diagram of the facility identifying classrooms, restrooms, offices, cafeteria, physical education and space for other uses. (see Attachment D)

See Attachment D.

If the schools is leasing or contracting with a church or religious organization, complete Attachment E

Not applicable

State whether the site and facility will be purchased, constructed or leased. If the land and facility will be purchased, indicate the purchase price and total costs for any renovations. If

the facility is to be newly constructed, indicate the cost of the property and construction costs. If the property is to be leased, provide the name and business address of the owner and the terms of the lease including monthly rent.

The school site is leased and the lease is included in Attachment D. .

If no specific site has been identified, describe the plan for locating and acquiring a suitable site.

The principal office of INCA is located in Indianapolis and will consist of office space for the teachers, an office for the principal and conference room for visiting families. As the school grows, satellite facilities may also be opened in different locations throughout the state.

Describe the steps that are necessary to prepare the facility for opening. Provide a list of those steps with projected completion dates.

Connections Academy will assist the INCA Board in preparing the facility for opening. See Attachment W.

A proposed timeline for opening the facility is:

April 2011	Begin canvassing for available space through national network of local brokers
May 2011	Sign lease
May 2011	Prepare space for needed technology infrastructure, furniture and equipment
June 2011	Space ready for faculty

Describe the procedure the school will follow to ensure that all its physical facilities meet all health and safety laws. Describe how the school will notify the Office that each physical facility has met all laws.

As part of securing space, meeting all health and safety laws will be confirmed. The school will notify the Office in writing when confirmed.

Transportation

Describe the plans the school has for the transportation of students and others to instructional and non-instructional activities. Indicate whether the school will provide appropriate vehicles for transporting students and others for specific activities. If the school will not be providing transportation, indicate how students and others will travel to and from instructional and non-instructional activities.

As a general rule, INCA will not provide transportation to students. Additionally, the only mandatory school events that will require transportation of students will be a) special orientation sessions, and b) state standardized tests, which students will take at proctored locations.

INCA families who do not have ready transportation to required face-to-face events and cannot be accommodated through public transportation or parent carpools may request transportation assistance from the school. INCA may provide such assistance either directly, by arranging for a vehicle, or indirectly, through reimbursement for public or private transport.

Special education students whose IEPs specify in-person contract services and whose parents are unable to provide transportation will be provided transportation through a properly bonded and

insured provider. The cost of transportation for IEP-mandated services will be included in the overall cost of providing special education services to these students. For any special needs students enrolled in the charter school with an IEP requiring special transportation to and from school, the charter school can/may contract for specific transportation arrangements for a fee for transporting any such student.

Satisfactory Reporting Relationships

Describe how the school will ensure that it meets the reporting requirements of the Indiana Department of Education, the Office, and other federal, state or local agencies.

The school administrator and EMO staff will work with the Office and DOE to meet all reporting requirements. Connections Academy, through its affiliate relationship with Connections Education, has many years of experience in working with over eighteen different states on state and federal reporting and has a stellar record to date.

Attachments

- A. Age and Grade Range of Pupils to Be Enrolled
- B. Budget
- C. Staffing Matrix Years 1-5
- D. Facilities Worksheet, Physical Plant Description and Address
- E. Lease or Contract Arrangements with Church or other Religious Organization (not applicable)
- F. Relationship of Parties Organizational Chart
- G. Resumes for Organizers and Board Members
- H. Administrative Structure Organizational Chart
- I. Performance Management System, Sample Individual Employee Performance Evaluation form, Employee Handbook, and Benefits Guide
- J. Professional Services Agreement/EMO Contract
- K. EMO Attachment
- L. Curriculum Overview
- M. Scope and Sequence
- N. Standards Alignment Chart
- O. Sample Lessons
- P. School Calendar/Sample School Day
- Q. Acceptable Use Policy
- R. Escalation Policy
- S. School Handbook
- T. Student Technology Specifications

- U. Network Infrastructure and Security Policy
- V. Functional and Assessment Views of the Education Management System
- W. Pre-operational Timeline
- X. Letters of Support
- Y. Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, and Tax-Exempt Forms
- Z. Board Member Background Check Policy, Non-Employee Background Check Policy
& Conflict of Interest Policy