



the project school

2018 Ball State Renewal



We Opened Our Doors & Actualized Our Dream

In 2006, a small group of passionate Indiana public school educators in Bloomington began a discussion about the current state of education. They articulated a vision for a school where students would truly thrive as whole individuals while achieving academic excellence. And a school where educators would be honored for their innovation, creativity and commitment. Our K-8 chartered public school was born out of our founding educators' collective dream to create an authentic, intentional, democratically led school grounded in core beliefs & values - located in the heart of the community, in order to benefit the whole of the community. Their goal was to become an exemplar in both academic excellence and also heart-mind-voice education toward equity, social justice, and sustainability. They hoped to provoke and support others to do what they knew from experience is possible: to grow students who recognize their individual potential, and who aspire to achieve more and hope more for both their individual futures and the future of their local and global communities.

The Project School opened its doors in 2009 in downtown Bloomington, Indiana as a grass-roots, locally-designed and teacher-designed school to serve the community's children. Now in our tenth year of impacting families and the community, TPS has graduated close to 250 students, and will at the conclusion of this academic year have its first cohort of college graduates. Because we have retained fidelity to our original model and vision, our founders have remained connected and engaged with the school.

We are Compelled & Propelled by Our Mission, Vision & Values

Our founders used great intentionality in their design of our programs, practices, vocabulary and culture. This intentionality was infused into our mission, vision, and values, and can be seen in our everyday practice today.

The Mission of The Project School: To uncover, recover and discover the unique gifts and talents that each child brings to school every day. Our school works collaboratively with

families, community members and social service agencies to solve real problems, as well as to create art for public spaces. Students graduate from The Project School as stewards of the environment with the will, skill, capacity, and knowledge to contribute to the greater good.

The Vision of The Project School: To eliminate the predictive value of race, class, gender and special abilities on student success in our school and in our communities, by working together with families and community to ensure each child's success.

The Values of The Project School: We are committed to educating the whole child, and dedicated to cultivating the habits of heart, mind and voice. The Project School believes in

- Empowering students and families to be contributing participants in their education, their community, and the diverse society in which we live. The keystones to change rely upon the creation of a learning community that provides students with experiences that are immediately relevant.
- Creating learning experiences that are immediately relevant, & learning environments that are fully inclusive.
- Teaching our students and families that knowing oneself well is the pathway to knowing and understanding others well, and is the pathway to the kind of collaboration that can solve problems and bring people together for the greater good.
- Valuing the contributions and voices of all members of the learning community, including students, families and teachers. A school works best for each student it serves when the culture of the school is both inclusive and inviting.
- Judging our success based on the success of our students, particularly those with the highest needs and the most challenges.
- Tailoring our practices to serve all children, including our own. We identify all obstacles and barriers to success and work collaboratively to systematically dismantle them. There is no reason to fail.
- Celebrating and honoring our families and their communities by valuing our students, their diverse histories, their myriad individual identities, and their ancestral backgrounds.

- Valuing the contributions of all members of the learning community.
- Judging our success based on the success of all students, especially those with the highest needs.
- Trusting students, families and staff to be both learners and teachers.
- Creating a culture where all are important and valued, by nurturing positive relationships with all members of the community.
- Infusing environmentally responsible practices into our school's culture and curriculum.
- Welcoming all members of the community into our school, and creating classrooms that are fully inclusive.
- Recognizing the assets that every student, teacher, staff and family member brings to the learning experience, and utilizing those assets to create individualized supports and successes.



We Impact Place & Space in Community

From the birth of the idea of our school, our founders were focused on the idea that school location must be intentionally determined to create the highest level of student, family and community impact. Our founders recognized that our space and place would dramatically influence how we could best serve children and families.



Location: The Project School is located in a 22,000 square foot building in the heart of downtown Bloomington, fully accessible via public transportation, for families from throughout the Bloomington community. The Project School entered into a contract with the City of Bloomington to utilize a City-owned property on Walnut Street in the downtown core as its home. In the summers of 2009 & 2010, The Project School completed a significant renovation and building addition to beautify the streetscape, dramatically improve the facility, and create a twenty-first century school. There has been a revitalization of this corridor of Bloomington - much of what had previously become a business and residential deadzone - due to the TPS becoming an anchor for redevelopment.

Our location provides access and allows us regularly utilize important and exciting community resources, such as Indiana University, Monroe County Public Library, public parks, downtown

theatre spaces, and nonprofit organizations with shared values. Our location also allows us to minimize our school's carbon footprint, by creating field trip and learning experiences which can be accessed by foot.



All students at TPS make daily use of a nearby city park for recess, passions classes and other outdoor experiences.



Students visit the Mathers Museum of World Cultures on a walking Field Trip

Community Connections: We believe in deep, transformative, collaborative partnerships and alliances that are mutually beneficial and that create greater impact for both organizations and for the community. Some of our community partnerships include —

❁ The Ashoka Foundation. The Project School was selected to be a member of the Ashoka's Changemaker Schools Network, joining forty plus innovative and influential schools chosen from across the country. Ashoka – a Washington DC-based foundation – launched the Changemaker Schools Network in 2012 to identify, recognize, and collaborate with innovative, influential schools that are rethinking education. The Network is a national growing community of schools that serve as models for cultivating students

as changemakers, leading the way to ensure every child develops agency, empathy, and voice.

❖ **Bloomington Center for Connection.** The Project School works collaboratively with the staff of the Bloomington Center for Connection to implement major components of the Lily Counseling Initiative, a grant received in 2017. This collaboration has resulted in the integration of Relational Cultural Theory, a 5-8 Advisory program, and the implementation of the work of Ross Greene, PhD. author of *Lost & Found* and *Lost At School*.

❖ **Books & Beyond.** The Project School partners with an innovative ongoing service-learning program at Indiana University that seeks to develop globally-minded students who are prepared for life in the 21st century by increasing critical literacy skills, addressing the Rwandan book famine, and developing models for cross-cultural teaching and learning. For a number of years, the 5/6 TPS classroom has been paired with a Rwandan classroom. The students annually co-author a book of short stories and illustrations, which is then published and shared in both countries.

❖ **The Boys & Girls Club.** The Project School partners with The Club for after school programming, sharing our resources in exchange for use of the Club gymnasium facilities.

❖ **City of Bloomington Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission.** TPS regularly participates in city-led projects such as the Martin Luther King, Jr. “Day On Not A Day Off” service days, as well as the Students Auditing for Sustainability Project. TPS is proud to receive grant funds from the City for community service projects.

❖ **City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation.** The Project School utilizes a public park (Third Street Park) as its playground. In 2011, TPS partnered with the City, with the IU Hospital Foundation, and with the national play focused company, Kaboom!, to install a brand new, partially student designed, playground for use not only by our school but by the whole community.

❖ **Giving Back to Africa.** TPS partners with Giving Back to Africa by regularly hosting African educators for site visits, observations and mentoring. TPS and Giving Back to Africa are now implementing collaborative learning and research opportunities between students, teachers and university faculty, which include face-to-face dialogue and learning.

❖ **Global Gifts / Fair Trade Bloomington.** Global Gifts is a fair trade nonprofit business operated by Fair Trade Bloomington. With the shared values of equity, social justice and environmental sustainability, Global Gifts has built a substantive partnership with TPS. We organize fundraising nights at Global Gifts in support of the school, and Global Gifts uses TPS as a lab site for their Fair Trade curriculum designs.

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❖IU Center for the Study of Global Change. Indiana University Center for the Study of Global Change provides programming and curriculum outreach for our students and families. An example is our annual “International Night,” during which IU faculty and students set up cultural displays and activities at TPS. This event is attended annually by hundreds of individuals. TPS provides their graduate students with hands-on training opportunities.

❖IU Kelley Initiative for Social Innovation - Kelley Business School. TPS & KISI partner together on fundraising projects to benefit the school. KISI also provides student volunteers to staff TPS events, and also hosts roundtable seminars during which business students work with TPS leadership to address business challenges faced by the school. TPS serves as an ongoing hands-on internship site for business school students.

❖IU Learning Sciences Program & IU Creativity Lab. TPS and the IULSP received a \$199,000 grant to support a joint MakerSpace for the school and the larger community. IULSP provides staffing and teaching support as part of the TPS learning day. The IU Creativity Lab has been the leading force in the ongoing development of our school-wide technology infrastructure and increased capacity through systematic professional development around tools that leverage systems thinking concepts. In exchange, TPS provides a hands-on learning site for their graduate students.

❖IU School of Education. TPS serves as a practicum site for student teachers, field experiences, and doctoral work, providing an opportunity for education students to experience a unique public education model during their formative years of professional training.

❖IU Sciences. Indiana University Sciences Programs (chemistry, physics, etc.) provide regular supplementary science programming for our students and families. During our annual “Science Night,” many IU Science professors and students set up experiments and learning stations at TPS. This provides IU Sciences with hands-on learning opportunities for their students.

IU Service Learning Program. TPS serves as a placement site for an Indiana University ACE (Advocate for Community Engagement). The ACE is an undergraduate student who facilitates the service learning relationship between the school and IU faculty – including establishing partnerships and supervising undergraduate service learners in the school setting. The ACE is fully funded by Indiana University.

❖Shalom Community Center. Shalom Community Center is the local day-center for those experiencing homelessness in our community. TPS has built a service-learning program to facilitate our students engaging with the social justice issue of homelessness while also

helping the clients of Shalom Community Center. Our first major project with the Shalom Center took place during the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday in 2014. TPS prepared 1000 care packages for the clients of the center. In 2015, TPS provided 500 family care packages, as well as some art installations, for the Shalom Center. In 2016, TPS again provided 1000+ personal item care packages for Shalom's clients. In 2017 we held a public screening of a social justice film, and created large-scale art works for Shalom that shared Dr. King's vision of inclusion and economic social justice.



We Represent What is Possible to Achieve



School & Individual Accomplishments: TPS was designated an Indiana Bicentennial School of Promising Practice by the Indiana Department of Education (2016); TPS was named a Four Star School by the Indiana Department of Education (2015-2016); TPS was named an Ashoka Foundation National Changemaker School (2015); TPS was featured in a Huffington Post article on effective use of school assessment (see “headlines” on the TPS website for a link to the article, 2012); TPS received a Downtown Revitalization Award from Downtown Bloomington, Inc. (2011); Catherine Diersing, School Leader, received the Cardinal Stage Company Educator of the Year Award for her leadership in advocating for transformational youth community theatre opportunities (2016); Chris Bultman & Sara Irvine, Arts Infusion Faculty, received the Ivy Tech Community College Arts Educators of the Year Award (2015) for creating visionary and life changing performing and visual arts experiences for children; TPS faculty members Cindy Newland, John Searcy & Scott Wallace received Lilly Endowment Teacher Creativity Fellowships (2017); TPS faculty members Tarrey Banks & Scott Wallace were invited to be guest panelists at 2 international conferences on Design in Education – at

Stanford University (2016), and in Aarhus, Denmark (2017); TPS faculty members Tarrey Banks & Scott Wallace published articles in the peer reviewed journal *International Journal of Design & Learning* in partnership with Indiana University faculty (2016 & 2017); TPS faculty member Cindy Newland published a chapter in the book *Creating Critical Classrooms*, edited by IU Education Faculty Mitzi Lewison, and published by NY Routledge Press (2015).

Successful Fundraising & Stakeholder Development: TPS has created a Philanthropy & Outreach position in order to focus on long-term financial stability, the building of community partnerships, the creation of communication tools, and the cultivation of stakeholders. We have established an annual campaign, including a multi-faceted online giving portal, to enhance budgetary income and to introduce donors to giving opportunities. We have implemented a donor database for recording, tracking and utilizing fundraising data. TPS has designed and hosted an annual gala, "Project Celebration" (first held in 2014), which has seen a net income growth from \$8,000 in year one to \$60,000+ in years four and five. And we are now poised to work on a multi-year plan for major gift solicitation, a capital campaign, and the establishment of an endowment fund. We have cultivated our ability to tell our story passionately and compellingly, through written materials and through face-to-face dialogue and public presentations.

Grants of Note: We have a successful track record of receiving small and large grants, both from local community funders and from national grant organizations. TPS has received \$193,000 in operational grants over 5 years (2013-2018) from the Bay & Paul Foundations; TPS received a \$35,000 counseling planning grant (2016) & a \$100,000 4-year counseling implementation grant (2017) from Lilly Endowment, Inc.; TPS received a \$15,000 grant from the Community Foundation of Bloomington & Monroe County for the expansion of our MakerSpace & Design Studio programs (2015); TPS received a \$46,000 Quality Counts innovation grant from the Indiana Department of Education (2018).

Inspiring the Community With Our Story: We believe in the importance of powerfully sharing our story, in order to cultivate stakeholders and donors, to strengthen relationships, and to encourage support for our programs and impacts. Through the use of our website,

public presentations and tours, marketing materials, educational and fundraising public events, and our engagement with IU service learners and community volunteers, we are expanding our network of friends and advocates, and sharing the message of our successful impacts on our students, our families and on the broader community. We are very excited about TPS docu-series, in which we have begun creating topic-based videos about our school. Each year we will add a new video to the series, to help shape understanding about our school.

The Voices of our Constituents: We are honored to share the words of a number of our current parents, TPS graduates, and teachers —

Bloomington Center for Connection

315 West Dodds
Bloomington, IN 47403
(812) 669-2227
info@bloomington.cc

May 17, 2017

Dear Committee Members:

This letter is to express my enthusiastic support for The Project School's application to Lilly Endowment's Comprehensive Counseling Initiative. I have worked with The Project School (TPS) for several years as a volunteer and community member. The Project School offers a supportive educational environment capable of nurturing students who may struggle in a larger setting. That is just one of the reasons I have encouraged families I see in my practice to explore what TPS has to offer.

As founder and director of the Bloomington Center for Connection, an organization committed to building relational networks throughout the community through improved mental health, community building activities and social justice advocacy, I am excited to partner with TPS to bridge current research on neurobiology of relationships and education with practical applications in an educational setting.

My work with TPS leadership and teachers has made clear to me that they are committed to the well-being of the entire student, understanding the inextricable link between social, emotional and academic success. With this grant they can expand their already stellar efforts to support our community's youth. It is easy to see how this work could create a ripple effect that benefits not just the current TPS students, but our community as a whole as the students take these skills out into high school and beyond.

Sincerely,

Amy Makice, MSW, LCSW

A Letter to TPS

It's incredibly common for one to forget the most important years of every humans life, and what those years can mold them into. These years, of course, are spent in school. Some may moan at the utterance of education, sigh at the idea of daily learning. Yet, it's justifiably rare to meet a student like that at The Project School. Through the combined 10 years spent at TPS between both of us, two graduate siblings of the school, we only ever saw growth, change, and progress. Almost every person that entered the school with us graduated right beside us, stronger and more knowledgeable about our world, ourselves, and each other. Our time was spent discovering great memories, experiences, and worldly lessons through our teachers, and friends.

One of the largest impacts TPS had on us was easily the arts. Leo, (a 2018 graduate of six year at TPS) stands today as an inspiring musician, and he has no doubt that Mr. Chris, TPS's music teacher, is an incredibly large portion for why. Ever year there are plays held for each grade, and serve the purpose of pushing each student to engage in all sorts of art forms: such as singing, playing music, creating set, acting, and many more celebrated engagers. His final year bestowed his chance to express his growing musical skills, being the lead and only pianist in the pit band for the show. The time that Mr. Chris had spent helping, teaching, and allowed Leo to grow inspired him as well as others and will continue to do so for the rest of many individuals' lives. Our time spent with him is irreplaceable, and never will we forget the work he does for all his students.

The visual arts classes that Ms. Sara leads with her comedic grace and innovative ideas is incredibly important to us. Her drive to push students to create great work while still learning about culture and history of said work sets her apart from all other art teachers.

Lily, (a 2016 graduate of four years at TPS) deeply enjoyed working on the set design for the earlier mentioned plays that the classes put on. The process of set design started simple, the class meets, shares ideas, they break themselves into groups, Ms. Sara hands them team folders for the sketches, and then everyone is off. The whole project is generally student run. The creative freedom and directorial say every student has is truly marvelous. We learned to how to make group decisions and turn to each other for input, rather than asking an adult anytime we had questions. For Lily, it was one of the most important lessons she learned. She used to be very to herself, and shy. Rather than turning to a peer anytime she had a question, she would always ask only her teachers. Yet, through the set design process that Ms. Sara provided to them, she learned how to step out of her comfort zone and work with others and even share her own thoughts.

The musical and visual arts were not just kept in their respected classroom, they were also incorporated in our classroom academics; like writing, history, science and even math. We were taught how to find connections between all subjects as well as our own personal identities and how to relate it all to a yearly central theme of which guided us through our learning.

TPS is easily one of the most important part of our lives, and shall continue to be for many, many children. The love and care that the teachers put into each one of their students to aid and harness their hearts, minds, and voices is unmatched. So many of us graduates still return regularly to help out and visit with our old teachers and friends. It is rare to hear of high school aged kids who go back to visit and volunteer at their old elementary/middle school; truly only a school like TPS shapes children like that. Through all of this, it's clear as to why we will never forget these years, our time at The Project School.

Lily and Leo Schunn

Elizabeth Winarski
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Canandaigua, NY 14424
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November 16, 2018

Teachers College
Ball State University
Room 1005
2000 W University Avenue
Muncie, IN 47306-0625

Dear Dr. Marra,

I began teaching at The Bloomington Project School in 2009 and worked with the founding members to create, prepare, and help start the school prior to its opening. I co-taught in the K/1 classroom from 2009-2012 with Doriet Berkowitz. I left TPS in 2012 when my husband finished his doctoral program at Indiana University and got a job in New York state. Although I left The Project School, The Project School never leaves me. It's influence and impact are a profound part of my heart, mind, and voice.

There are many aspects of TPS that I miss, but three aspects that stand out the most are care, collaboration, and thinking and learning. These three components are woven into all parts of the school, including the co-teaching model, inclusion, projects, the curricular summit, and the Museum of Authentic Work. Care is exemplified in many ways at TPS, from the way each child is greeted in the morning, to the deliberate commitment to the core beliefs that the school started with. This care allows students and teachers to do their best work. Another part of the care at TPS is the response it takes to the needs of students, teachers and the community. When things come up for the school, the TPS community is able to directly address and solve any needs or problems in a timely fashion.

Collaboration with families, students, teachers, and community members happens every day at TPS. The team teaching aspect at TPS means teachers are stronger together. Doriet and I were able to do more together than we would have on our own. I learned so much from her and our differences complimented each other in the classroom and this was a benefit to our students. Each day we were better because a safe place to construct knowledge and extend our understanding was present.

When I think of a classroom at TPS I think of students asking questions and then leading a path to solve and answer those questions, all while the teacher is facilitating this work. I also think of teachers learning from their students and being pushed to understand content and craft to best teach all of the students in the room. I was fortunate to be pushed everyday by all of the people around me. This also included collaboration with researchers and sharing the work of TPS with other teachers and schools. Thinking and learning is at the heart of the work at TPS.

As my daughter started Kindergarten this year, I have reflected on the special experience students at TPS receive. To be enveloped in care and taught so she could be her best self is so important and is what happens at TPS. Although TPS is not a choice for us and I work with her public school to help share the ideas and understanding that I came away with from TPS. While I wish that we could send our daughters to TPS, I also wish that every other child could have the opportunity to be a part of TPS. To be taught in a way where children are seen as someone of value, who can be empowered through the experiences of the school and then have them go out into the world to make change is something the students at TPS get and something all children should get from their schooling experience.

It is with gratitude that I think of my experience at TPS. I look forward to many more years for The Project School and the positive impact they will have on children, families, and teachers.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Winarski

Dear Dr. Marra,

The Project School will always be a special place for me. I spent 9 years there and I have nothing but love for the school and community that helped make me who I am today. TPS is fantastic in every way. One of the biggest differences between my high school and TPS is the teaching style. At TPS I felt like I understood each concept and I could apply the things I learned to other branches of my learning. At high school I learn exactly what I need to know for the test and it doesn't matter if I understand as much as if I can repeat facts.

At TPS the teachers want you to learn and they strive to make every student really understand whatever it is we are learning. This was true through every grade and I don't think anyone in my class ever had a bad learning experience. Every question I had was answered and I felt that I had a much better education because of it.

TPS will always be one of my homes and I was sad to leave. I came back for a day was glad to see the same wonderful things happening with the current students. I wish every student could have the same experience and I definitely hope more students in the future are able to get that opportunity.

Sincerely,
Edwin Shipp



November 21, 2018

Cathy Diersing
School Leader, The Project School
349 S. Walnut St.
Bloomington, IN 47401

Dear Cathy,

I am writing this letter in support of The Project School's charter renewal. The SCCAP Head Start Program is grateful to have an incredible partnership, and working relationship, with The Project School. We are happy to share our collaborative experiences and the importance of TPS within our community.

SCCAP Head Start is a federally funded, early childhood development program. We serve 267 preschool-aged children, along with 57 pregnant women, infants, and toddlers. Our program focuses on the social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development of children who live in low-income situations. Our program serves families at or below the federal poverty guidelines; including families experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, and grandparents as the primary caregiver. Head Start works alongside parents to provide comprehensive services to the family as a whole.

Head Start partners with TPS to provide opportunities for parents to learn about the school and ways to enroll their child. TPS also offers Head Start parents tours of the school, with the opportunity to answer questions and explain their philosophies versus that of a typical public school. Head Start and TPS leadership also visit each other's programs throughout the year, and have a working written agreement in place to help strengthen the commitment each have to supporting one another's programs and families.

The addition of The Project School to the community has been immensely positive. Our program often works with children who would not fit best into a typical public school setting, and having another option has been beneficial for families. While the community does have multiple private options aside from the public school districts, the addition of TPS as a charter eliminates the economic barrier families from Head Start would have when looking at alternative options for kindergarten and beyond. SCCAP Head Start supports the school's mission, and have seen direct correlation between TPS's values and those that Head Start implements as well.

We fully believe that The Project School should continue forth in the community, and hope the renewal process is smooth. Please let us know if we can provide any additional information, or support.

Sincerely,
Anna Donley
SCCAP Head Start
Community Engagement Specialist

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November 13, 2018

Dear Mr. Marra,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the charter renewal of The Project School. We opened our doors in 2013 and, from our beginning, through visits, phone calls, and direct trainings from Heather Baron Caudill, Daniel Baron and Amy Jackson, we have learned so much about how to be from The Project School. We consider TPS a sister school not only because we align so well philosophically, but also because we have learned so much from them practically.

Below are just some of the ways in which TPS has impacted our school academically and culturally:

- We have Passions class once a week. This practice has increased our relationship with community partners and is a favorite feature of the school for students and families. We have had to let our families know that Fridays at 3 are a really bad time to schedule dentist appointments because kids are very unhappy if they have to miss Passions.
- We use many of the National School Reform Faculty protocols that we learned from Daniel, including beginning each of our staff meetings with Connections. We also use the Consultancy protocol to work out staff dilemmas.
- We have learned ways to be creative with instructional aides to support flexible groupings for both guided reading groups, math classes and specific intervention groups.
- We use the LLI program for our intervention, thanks to training from Heather.
- I conduct monthly Coffee Talks with families based on a practice that Daniel described when the school first opened.

In the future, we would like to send teachers back to TPS to observe the end of the year process of reflection with families to design and plan next year's curriculum.

Overall, our partnership with TPS has allowed us to think more critically and creatively about how we organize our classrooms, collaborate as a staff, and engage with our families. Their renewal will allow us to continue to learn and grow from a wonderful school. Thank you for allowing me to share my enthusiasm. I would be happy to discuss our experience more, if this is needed.

Sincerely,
Julia Putnam
School Founder & Leader

November 16, 2018

Dr. Marra,

My name is James Morrison and I spent my career as an educator. I have been, among other things, an outdoor educator, elementary classroom teacher, school principal, state official, and researcher/teacher trainer with Indiana University. My last position, before retirement, was as a lead teacher with The Project School.

I would like to share my support for TPS in the current round of accreditation. I hope my experience and my story contribute to a favorable decision.

What makes TPS special? On this past election day, November 6, the local Bloomington schools were closed so they could act as polling sites. TPS was in session. More than a dozen former students, all now in high school, had arranged to spend the day at TPS. These alumni spent their day in service to the school, creating classroom materials, making copies and reconnecting with their teachers and friends. But my story is not about why high school students would want to spend a day off in service to their old school. Though that, in itself, speaks volumes about the TPS community.

I was at TPS serving as a substitute on November 6. (I can't help but come back myself.) During afternoon recess I sat on a bench and reconnected with two of these visiting alumni. I had been their teacher in their middle grades at TPS. We chatted. I asked how school was going. The usual conversation between former teachers and students.

Both were achieving great success as freshmen. Their grades were high. They were connected and excited. They were happy and were proud of their achievements. One said, "I thought high school was going to be much harder, but all you have to do is pay attention and do your work." They both commented that TPS alumni were easy to spot in their respective schools. These alums used words like "respectful" and "engaged" to describe fellow TPS students in high school. We had a lovely conversation.

I was deeply moved by our conversation because I know how far these two young people had come since I first met them as fourth graders. Both of these students had significant issues back then. Both were academically fragile, struggled with significant social and emotional challenges and both needed daily support from the collective TPS staff. It would have been an unlikely prediction that the unsuccessful, angry and distrustful students whom I met then would be the joyful and confident students I chatted with on the bench during recess.

I firmly believe that my conversation on that bench was only possible through the systemic, consistent and intentional work of our school over the course of those students' entire school careers. That simple conversation was the result of a cumulative effort of all the adults, school and family, in their lives over the course of many years. Both of these students were challenging. Both probably would have not found success in a "traditional" school setting. Working with these two students required a strength beyond any one teacher. The strength was in the resilient philosophy that guides the work at TPS.

Values drive TPS. We believe that each and every child deserves the expertise, resources, attention, kindness and professionalism that will help them grow, learn and become happy people. We believe each school day should be created to allow personal growth, encourage curiosity, strengthen skills, and find joy. We believe each family is our partner and should get the best support, advice, and respect that we can offer.

To achieve all these things a school cannot simply be an amalgam of talented individuals. TPS is successful because, by intention, it is a committed team with deeply held and shared values. The success of these two students validates everything TPS works to create as a school culture and school community.

In my final letter to the staff last June I wrote, "One of the things I love about our craft is the narrative arc of a school year. The clear beginning, middle and end of each cycle. The chance to begin afresh each fall....Our success as a school is measured in the cumulative arcs that make a student's career. The young people who stand on the stage at graduation have been part of our lives for a long time. We have been part of theirs. We can never know which word of ours, which lesson, which action meant the most in their path. Every act we commit as educators is an act of faith. School is built on hope.

All we do is a leap of faith. We trust that the word we speak today will resonate, percolate and be heard. We trust that the lesson we present will spark interest, build confidence and align with the next and the last. We trust that the problem we work on today will help someone grow just a little bit. We trust in the long game.

I dearly love the potential of school. We create and recreate a place that believes that acts of faith and hope are worth our life's work. We believe that our relationship with a young person is going to make a difference for them and for the world. We commit these acts of hope with little chance of knowing the true outcome. We do our work, we follow the arc of each year and we begin again. We work in hope."

The Project School is built on hope. But when you sit on a bench in November and are lucky enough to witness the outcome of your hope, the outcome of a collaborative vision, the outcome of collective professional skill and the outcome of a shared "long game" it validates all those thousands acts of faith.

I ask that you continue to support The Project School and the hope it represents for all students.

Respectfully,

James Morrison



November 20, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

The Project School of Bloomington, Indiana is an inspiration and resource unparalleled. Throughout our founding years, Inspire Academy has looked to The Project School countless times for guidance and has visited to gain ideas and insights as we pursue the journey of continuous growth for our staff and students. We have learned from their guided reading program. We have learned from their approach to behavior management. We have learned from their staffing structures and use of physical space. The list could go on and on.

Ms. Cathy Diersing has served as a mentor to me with commitment to mutual learning and collaboration like I have seen in no one else. Early in my school leadership journey, I actively sought mentorship, and where others verbally agreed, Cathy followed through. Inspire serves students who face significant adversity, and when various consultants suggest that we should serve different students to raise our scores, Cathy has encouraged me to stay true to serving *all* students. Cathy demonstrates a commitment to affirming the dignity of all people whilst holding staff and families to high standards.

The Project School is an asset to the charter school community in Indiana. The organization demonstrates a commitment to a unique educational approach, contributes to the larger conversation about public education in our state and nation, and serves as a resource to the community. I know that the staff and students of Inspire Academy are positively impacted by The Project School, and we hope to see this school be a sustaining model for us all.

Sincerely,

Ms. Leslie Draper

Executive Director

Inspire Academy

ldraper@inspiremuncie.org

2801 E. 16th St.
Muncie, IN 47302

765-216-7980

admin@inspiremuncie.org
www.inspiremuncie.org



shalom community center
helping people in need

PO Box 451/620 S Walnut Street
Bloomington, IN 47402-0451
www.shalomcommunitycenter.org
day center: (812) 334-5728
administration: (812) 334-5734
fax: (812) 334-5736

November 15, 2018

To whom it may concern:

In our efforts to end hunger, homelessness, and poverty, the Shalom Community Center relies heavily on collaborative partnerships with other people and organizations in our community.

The Project School is one of our favorite partners.

In the face of growing need in Bloomington, they have responded in ways that have helped make a big difference with the guests of our Center. I particularly love how our relationship feels so much like a partnership, not just a group doing nice things for the Center now and again.

We have shared conversations not just on particular needs, but active ways to link the learning of the students of The Project School with the many needs of the guests of the Center, nearly all of whom are experiencing extreme poverty. This is an intentional educational experience for the students as much as it is a benefit to our guests.

Some of the ways we've partnered together have included a major donation drive, which provided clothing and hygiene products for our clients, student and faculty participation in the design of a public community artwork, and joining together in service around Martin Luther King, Jr's birthday.

Our relationship with the School feels unique and special. We cherish it and very much look forward to it continuing and expanding.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at (812) 334-5728, ext. 122 or forrest@shalomcommunitycenter.org.

Sincerely,

Rev. Forrest Gilmore
Executive Director



INDIANA UNIVERSITY

CENTER FOR INNOVATIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education /
University Information Technology Services
Bloomington

November 13, 2018

Robert Marra, Executive Director
Ball State Office of Charter Schools
Teachers College Room 1005
Muncie, IN 47306

Dear Robert,

This letter is to express support for The Project School reaccreditation. I am familiar with the work of the school through an institutional partnership with the Indiana University Service-Learning Program and as a lifelong Bloomington resident.

Our institutional partnership consists of service-learning students from IU offering community service as part of their course work. Annually, TPS hosts dozens of university students who provide hundreds of hours of service. While these service hours surely meet strategic outcomes for the school, TPS reciprocally educates those students by engaging them directly in the daily activities of the school, the deliberate and thoughtful integration of project-based methodology, and a school culture unique to Bloomington. Our partnership suggests an expansive vision of education.

Since TPS began, the school has also hosted an Advocate for Community Engagement (ACE). Staff mentor these undergraduate students during a four-year placement, training them to represent the school as liaisons to service-learning faculty and students. TPS is especially attentive to the personal and professional development of their ACEs.

As a Bloomington resident I especially appreciate that TPS models in our community a type of public education that prioritizes student led and applied inquiry. The school is a model for what is possible in public education.

I look forward to learning when TPS receives reaccreditation, for the benefit of Bloomington students and to continue our service-learning partnership. I am committed to seeking additional ways to bring the resources of the university in collaboration with TPS.

Sincerely,

Michael Valliant
Director, Service-Learning Program
Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning
Indiana University Bloomington
(812)856-5686
mvallian@indiana.edu



We Are Dedicated to Serving a Community of Unique & Deserving Individuals

All students at TPS are fully integrated into an interdisciplinary, inclusive, whole-child approach to education that prepares them for high school and beyond, equipping them for a lifetime of active participation in the building of community. Our founders' vision compels us to reach out to the most marginalized families in our community to provide them with innovative, whole-child educational opportunities. We believe that all students can learn and can achieve great things for themselves and for the community.

Who We Serve, By the Numbers: TPS currently serves 278 students, kindergarten through grade 8, from throughout Monroe County's culturally and socioeconomically diverse population, as well as from 5 of 11 counties in South Central Indiana.



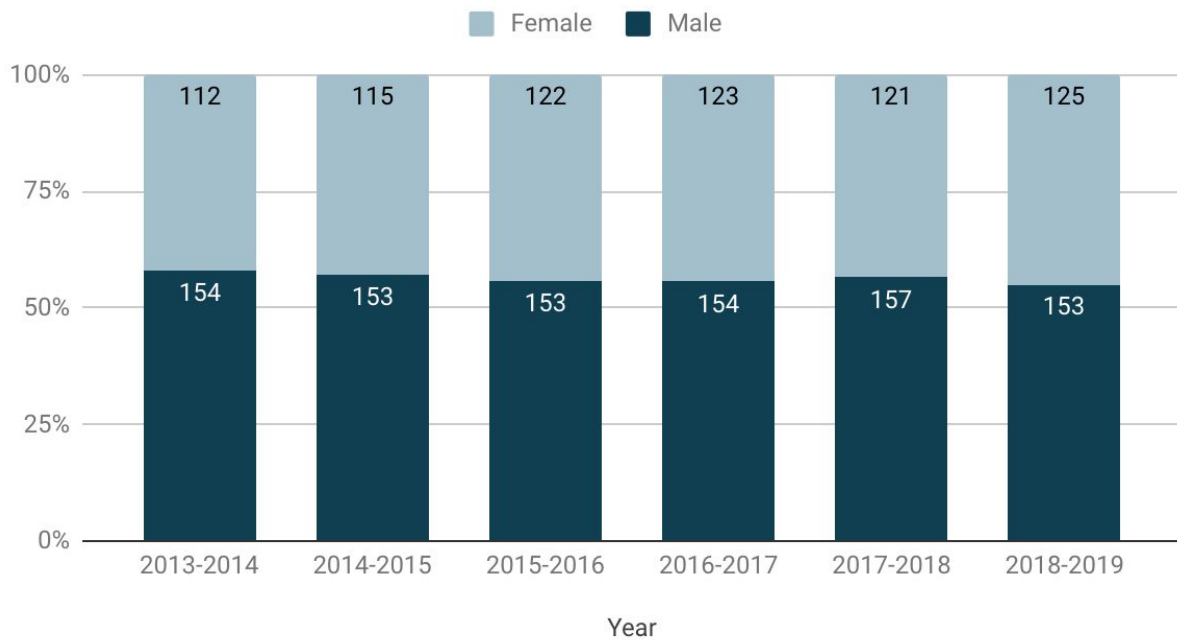
2018-19 ENROLLMENT & DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION		
	#	%
Total Enrollment	279	
# of Students on Waiting List	298	
Gender		
Male	153	55
Female	125	45
Ethnicity/Race		
White	216	77.7
Black	5	1.8
Hispanic	20	7.2
Asian	60	2.2
Native American	1	0.4
Multiracial	30	10.8
Special Populations		
Students with IEPs	72	26
English Language Learners	0	0
Homeless Students	8	2.8
Eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch	75	28

There are 298 students currently on our 2018-19 waiting list with 70 applicants having applied since the March 2018 lottery. This waiting list has grown annually since opening our doors. Currently, 28% of our students are eligible for free or reduced lunch, with our kindergarten class having a 50% free/reduced lunch rate, and 26% of our students receive special education services.

Enrollment by Grade Level

Grade	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
Kindergarten	23	26	26	27	26
Grade 1	25	23	25	25	25
Grade 2	35	27	26	26	26
Grade 3	35	39	26	27	27
Grade 4	37	36	39	27	27
Grade 5	27	38	39	39	29
Grade 6	28	29	31	37	37
Grade 7	33	29	31	37	37
Grade 8	28	30	29	33	36
Total Enrollment	271	277	278	279	279

Enrollment by Gender



Year	Total in Grade	Male	Female	American Indian		Black or African-American		Asian		Hispanic		White		Multi-Racial		Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander	
2013-2014	266	154	112	0	0.0%	11	4.1%	4	1.5%	20	7.5%	199	74.8%	32	12.0%	0	0%
2014-2015	268	153	115	1	0.4%	3	1.1%	6	2.2%	17	6.3%	210	78.4%	31	11.6%	0	0%
2015-2016	275	153	122	1	0.4%	5	1.8%	7	2.5%	20	7.3%	214	77.8%	28	10.2%	0	0%
2016-2017	277	154	123	2	0.7%	3	1.1%	7	2.5%	22	7.9%	214	77.3%	29	10.5%	0	0%
2017-2018	278	157	121	2	0.7%	2	0.7%	6	2.2%	21	7.6%	215	77.3%	32	11.5%	0	0%
2018-2019	278	153	125	1	0.4%	5	1.8%	6	2.2%	20	7.2%	216	77.7%	30	10.8%	0	0%
Monroe County Demographic Data					0.3%		3.6%		7.0%		3.5%		86.4%		2.5%		0.10%

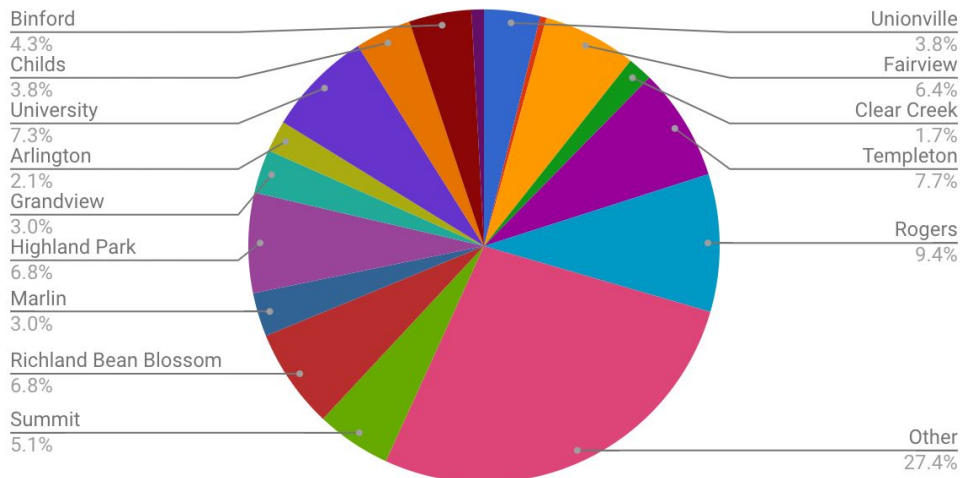
Percentage of students enrolled in special education	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
K	21.70	0.00	11.50	3.80	3.70
1	9.40	20.00	0.00	16.00	20.00
2	21.20	22.90	33.30	11.50	15.40
3	22.90	20.00	28.20	30.80	11.10
4	32.30	16.20	22.20	25.60	29.60
5	21.70	33.30	15.80	30.80	30.80
6	28.60	21.40	34.50	18.90	34.20
7	15.60	21.20	27.60	45.20	21.60
8	26.70	17.90	23.30	34.50	48.50
All Grades	22.1	19.6	22.4	24.8	25.1
Local District	14.6	14.7	14.9	15	15.2
State of Indiana	14.2	14.3	14.4	14.5	14.7

Below are two graphs which illustrate information about our applicants and our enrolled students. The first graph outlines the school attendance areas from which applicants have most recently applied. We believe it is significant that over 27% of applicants in grades 1-8 have come to us from outside of the two local traditional

public school districts. The second graph provides data to describe what “other” schools students attended prior to application.

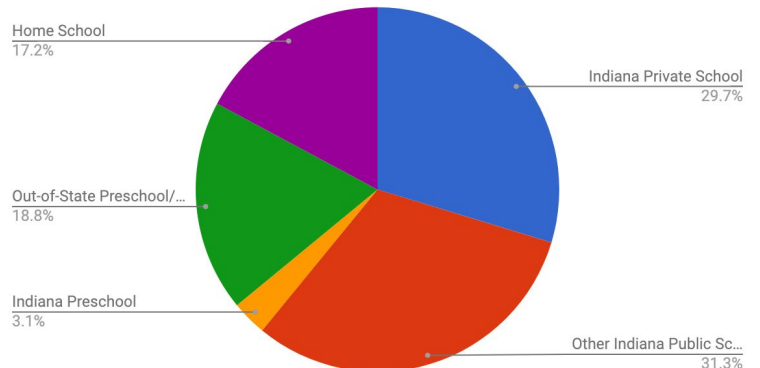
Previous School/District

2018-2019 Applicants Grades 1-8



Other Schools

2018-2019 Applicants Grades 1-8



Outreach: Because of our commitment to the elimination of the predictive value of race, class, gender and special abilities on student success, we focus our outreach efforts exclusively on marginalized community members. Annually, we reach out to Head Start and other agencies which serve low income and marginalized preschool-age families. We visit with families and make presentations in partnership with these organizations, in order to share information about The Project School and to support interested families in completing the lottery application. While our free/reduced lunch numbers have reduced over time - much to our dismay - our current kindergarten has a free/reduced lunch rate of 50%, indicating that our efforts to reach out to early childhood programs serving families in poverty are yielding success.

In-Reach: TPS is committed to supporting our students beyond the walls of our classrooms, by recognizing the social-emotional and socio-economic needs of our students and families. We have a full-time Life Skills Coach on staff to support individual students facing financial, familial and behavioral challenges, and to facilitate healthy interpersonal dynamics. Through a Lilly Counseling Grant we have implemented a substantive program of whole-class emotional support, and an intentional school-wide engagement - at developmentally appropriate levels - with challenging topics such as substance abuse, digital safety, gender, and sexual identity, and keeping bodies and hearts safe. We connect struggling families to community resources and participate as a school in programs such as Backpack Buddies, to ensure nourishment to families experiencing food insecurity. Through generous donations from families and the community, we provide resources such as grocery cards, gas cards, warm clothing and holiday gifts for families who struggle. Through all these methods, as well as through individualized support that each adult in the building provides to every child, we work to ensure that we wrap our arms around our students and families to give them a comprehensive opportunity to experience the most success possible.

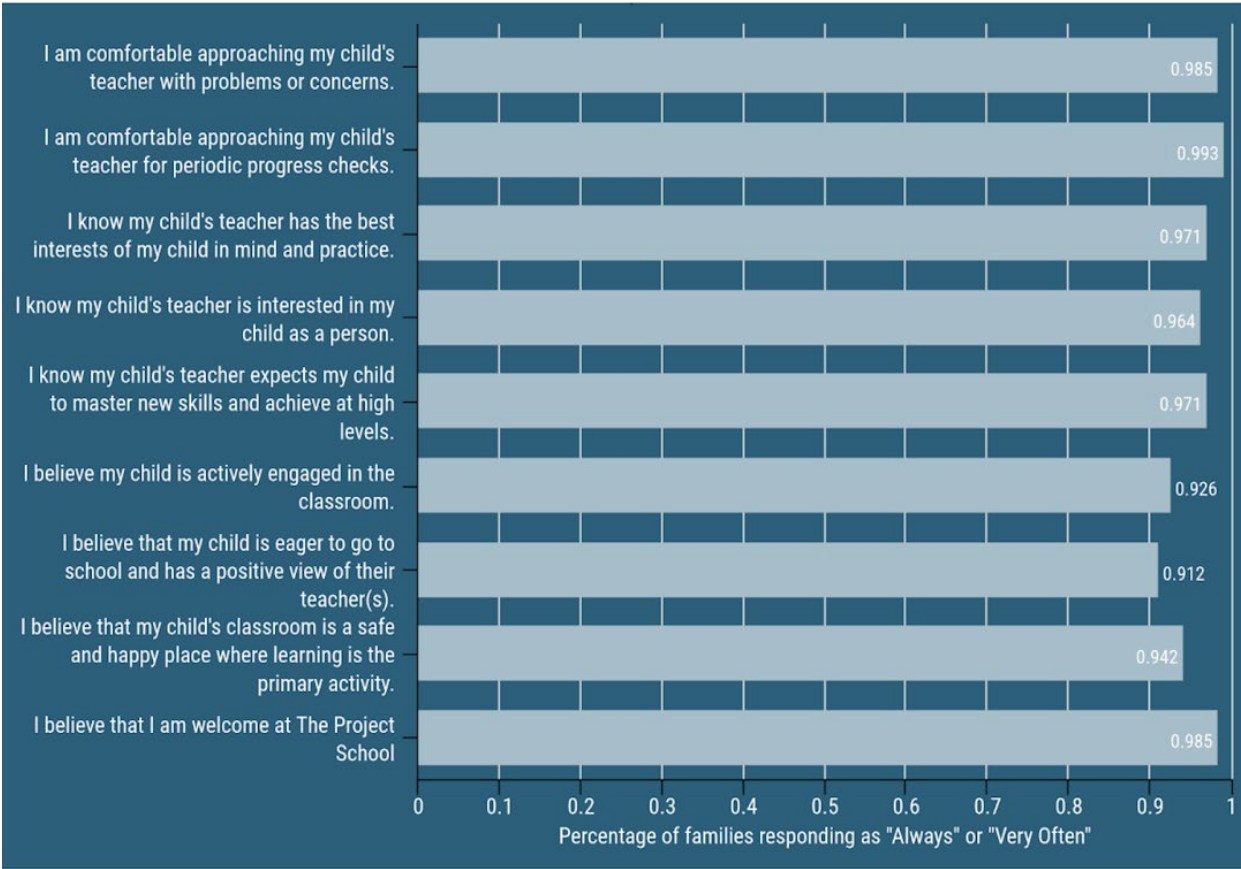


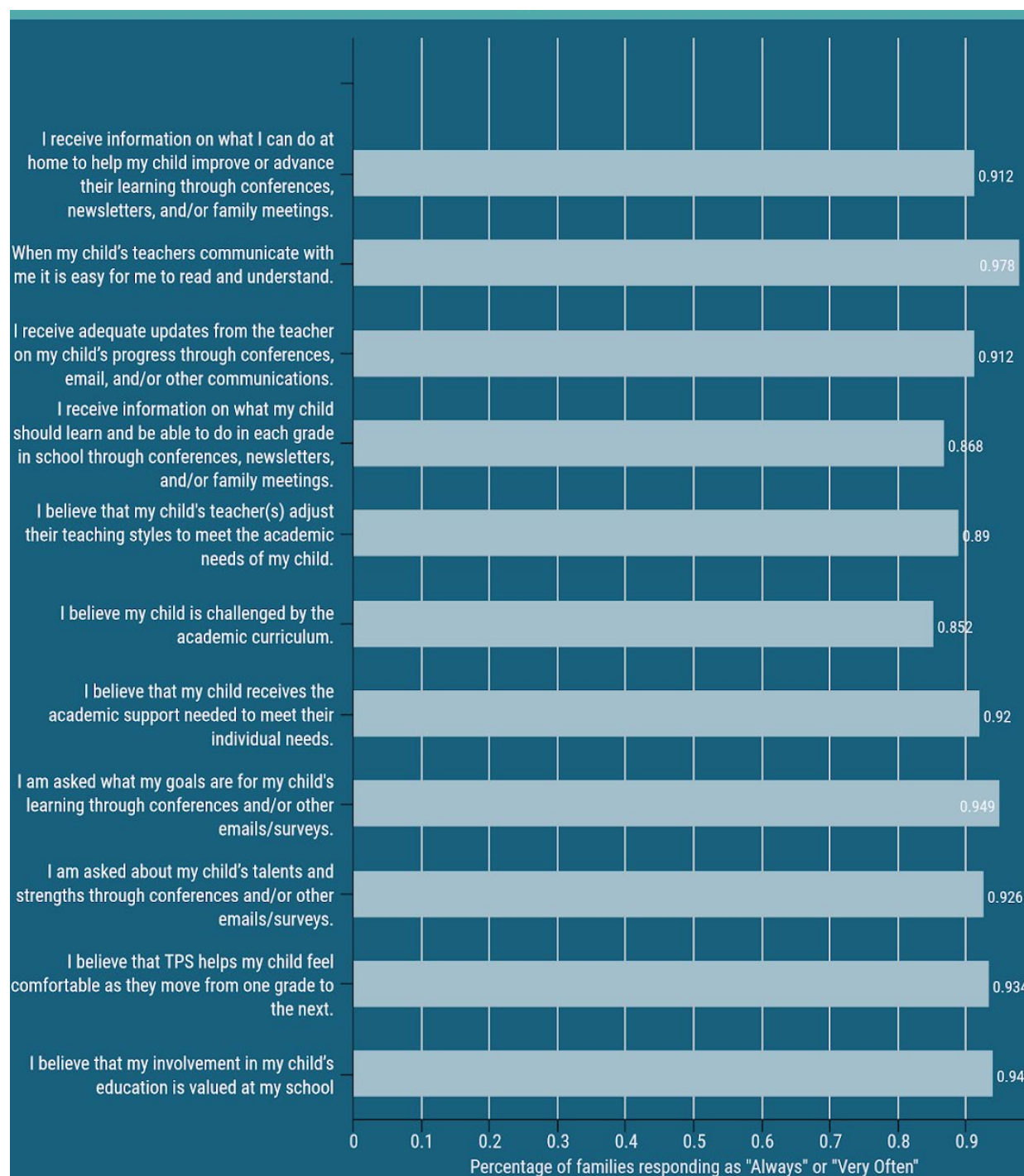
Our Families

Open Communication & Meaningful Engagement with Families: We place deep importance on effective, open, timely and substantive communication and engagement with families. We utilize many technology-based and in-person tools to communicate with our families, including weekly whole-school and classroom-specific newsletters, our website, digital student portfolios, social media, individual conferences, classroom author celebrations, classroom performances, family education opportunities, and survey tools. We recently surveyed our families on their current understanding of and connection to the various communication tools we use —

2018 School and Classroom Climate Survey

n=138 responses







We Utilize Innovative & Impactful Programs & Models

Students at The Project School are immersed in a rigorous and engaging curriculum that is specifically designed to develop skills that are necessary to be a productive citizen in the 21st century. In addition to educational excellence in reading, writing, mathematics, sciences, arts and humanities, we are committed to providing our students with a nuanced informal social-emotional educational experience, to provide them with the interpersonal tools they need to be able to successfully engage with others throughout their lives, including those who see and experience the world very differently from themselves. We also are committed to graduating students with the will, skill and capacity to see themselves as obligated and inspired to contribute to the greater good for the remainder of their lives.

Multi-Age Classrooms & The Building of Community: We believe in assets-based, individualized instruction. We work with students and families to articulate the strengths that each child brings to the educational experience, and set individualized goals to help that child reach and exceed expectations. Utilizing both workshop and multi-age models of instruction, we personalize the learning experience to best meet the needs of every student, no matter the assets and areas for growth that they bring.

The Project School utilizes a multi-age classroom structure for all classrooms above Kindergarten. Through these classrooms, teachers are able to effectively individualize instruction through the creation of just-right small group workshop learning structures. Multi-age classrooms allow students to build relationships across traditional age differentiation, and allow children to experience mentorship from both sides of the equation. They allow team lead educators to collaborate on the creation of unique curriculum, and allow co-leaders to hold one another accountable through ongoing partnership and feedback.

Additional benefits of multi-age classrooms include — children progress and grow without age restrictions; children acknowledge and accept differences in people; children benefit from remaining with the same group and teacher for more than one year; every child has a time for leadership; teachers have increased sensitivity to diversity; children can have continuous progress when they can pick up from where they left off the previous school year; curriculum is determined based on what is appropriate for individual children; interests,



The start of every day at The Project School is focused on community building, character development, and framing the day in brain-compatible ways through school-wide use (in every classroom space) of morning routines which include individually greeting all students as they enter the school and classroom, and gathering together as a classroom community for a “morning meeting.” Morning meetings include not only an opportunity to outline the day to come; they also provide extremely important inclusive and community-building activities such as greetings, icebreakers, and sharing, in order to bring everyone to the center of the experience as the learning of the days begins.

age, maturity, and and other diversities provide children opportunities for natural groupings; children can fully develop areas of strength, and at the same time, receive support for the areas of need; children are placed in a natural structure.

The Workshop Model: A substantive amount of time each day at TPS is dedicated to the teaching of skills, habits, and behaviors that readers and writers need. Reading and writing are taught through the Workshop Model, a structure which comes out of Teachers College at Columbia University. This approach allows time for direct individualized instruction, student application of the skill/strategy taught, and a reflection time.



Workshops are highly structured, predictable, purposeful and well planned; they allow for students to take initiative, create work, and learn in a way that is meaningful. The Project School has chosen to employ the Workshop approach because its constructivist philosophy most naturally aligns with our core beliefs about teaching and learning. The Workshop Model is consistent with the authentic experiences, complex learning, negotiated curriculum and metacognitive experiences students have throughout their day. The environment engages them in the real work and problem-solving of readers and writers on a daily basis. This approach is founded upon the belief that students must be actively involved in and reflect upon their learning.

Within every workshop, there are three consistent and predictable structures —

Mini-lesson —

Connection. The mini-lesson is connected to the needs of the students and their work.

Teaching. A skill or strategy is directly taught to the students.

Active Engagement. Students try out the new strategy they've learned, often referred to as "have-a-go." The purpose is to build confidence with the newly learned information.

Linking. The teacher links the new strategy to the work the students are about to begin.

Independent or Small Group Work Time —

Student Immersion. Students are engrossed in the work of their groups.

Teacher and Student Conferences. While the students are working, the teacher is facilitating conferences with individuals or small groups. This component allows teachers to truly individualize the curriculum. Conferences are responsive to the immediate needs of the student at hand. This is a time to assess the students' abilities. This information is used to then inform future instruction for the individual student, as well as to shape whole class mini-lessons (see Conferencing below).

Student Reflection —

A follow-up on the day's mini-lesson allows students to discuss their work as readers and writers. It is also a time to make connections among the varied experiences and abilities of the students within the class. Sample share questions include:

What did you try today? How did it go?

What did you struggle with?

What did you learn about yourself as a reader/writer today?

What will you do differently as a result of your work today?

Reader's and Writer's Workshop occur daily and are the heart of the reading and writing curriculum. Although students will read and write throughout every component of the curriculum, this is where students are explicitly taught the strategies and habits of effective reading and writing.

In Writer's Workshops, students learn to examine their lives as well as the world around them. They learn the art of collecting, drafting, revising, and publishing a wide variety of texts.

There is a great focus on learning from mentor authors who are professionally published, as well as learning from other authors in our school community. In Reader's Workshops, students learn effective reading strategies. They learn to talk, think, and write well about their reading. The ultimate purpose of Reader's Workshop is for students to cultivate richly literate lives.

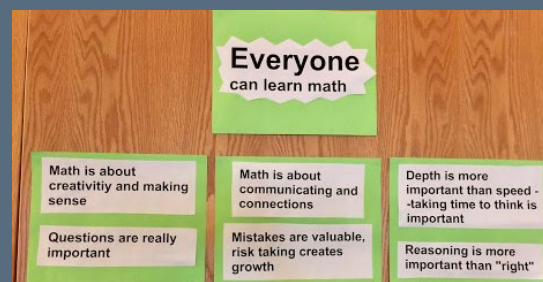
While the Workshop Model is highly predictable and structured, it is also accommodating to the individual needs and strengths of students across a wide range of levels. The Workshop Model also provides the best fit for our P3 curriculum (see below), which is at the heart of our educational approach. The ability to choose topics, genres, authors, and text formats that connect to our Compelling and Generative Topic (also see below) allows our work to provide a continuous sense of interrelatedness. It also allows us to present content through multiple representations and perspectives.

Guided Reading & Book Clubs: The very nature of the Reader's and Writer's Workshop is to teach the habits and skills that good readers and writers need. To further support this work, there are other structures utilized by The Project School teachers, which are designed to support literacy needs in a small group setting. Depending on the need of individual students, they will be engaged in literacy stations, guided reading, and/or book clubs.

- Our **Guided Reading** program is grounded in the work of Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell. During guided reading, individual students work toward developing fluency and comprehension skills of increasingly challenging texts. Students are placed in small groups (2-6 students) based upon reading development and/or specific need. These groups are temporary and dynamic. The teacher is part of each Guided Reading group and chooses a text and reading strategy for specific purposes. A Guided Reading lesson is an opportunity to learn about decoding and comprehension strategies. It also provides time to concentrate on word work, fluency, writing, and text structures. Informal and formal assessments are used to determine placement and mobility of students.
- **Book Clubs** are a time for students to choose books to read and discuss with their peers. The focus is on literary response and analysis. A group of students come together based on a common interest in topic, author, genre, etc. Each student completes a reading reflection in order to be prepared to co-construct new and deeper meaning around a

common text. Book Clubs are designed for readers who are more independent and who do not require the daily instruction of a teacher; students do, however, need support in deepening their comprehension and ability to respond to a text in multiple ways.

Math Instruction: At The Project School we are committed to ensuring that students see themselves as mathematicians. Too often, students think they are “good” or “bad” at math, without having a true understanding about what it means to be a mathematical thinker. Because of this, our faculty adopted a set of Math Core Values based on the work of Jo Boaler of Stanford University. These values represent our most important thinking about the math experience for all learners. These have been posted in all spaces where math is explored, to encourage a positive and exciting engagement with math learning both at school and at home —



We believe that all students need to understand the essential concepts of numbers and computation, geometry, data analysis, probability, problem-solving, measurement, and algebra. To do this well, the teaching of mathematics has its own workshop time, as well as an intentional focus in the P3 curriculum.

The Project School uses a math curriculum called Bridges, from The Math Learning Center, as the foundation for our K-5 math program. It was developed with initial support from the National Science Foundation. The Math Workshop includes a combination of whole-group, small-group, and independent activities. Lessons incorporate increasingly complex visual

models - seeing, touching, working with manipulatives, and sketching ideas - to create pictures in the mind's eye that help learners invent, understand, and remember mathematical ideas. By encouraging students to explore, test, and justify their reasoning, the curriculum facilitates the development of mathematical thinking for students of all learning styles

For grades 6-8, The Project School utilizes the College Preparatory Mathematics (CPM) program called *Core Connections*. On a daily basis, students using CPM *Core Connections* employ problem solving strategies, question, investigate, analyze critically, gather and construct evidence, and communicate rigorous arguments to justify their thinking. With the CPM instructional materials, students can tackle mathematical ideas set in everyday contexts to help them make sense of otherwise abstract principles. Students are taught how to gather and organize information about problems, break problems into smaller parts, and look for patterns that lead to solutions. Students often learn in collaboration with others, sharing information, expertise, and ideas.

Beyond the core math curriculum, students explore math through art and design and in relation to P3 topics.

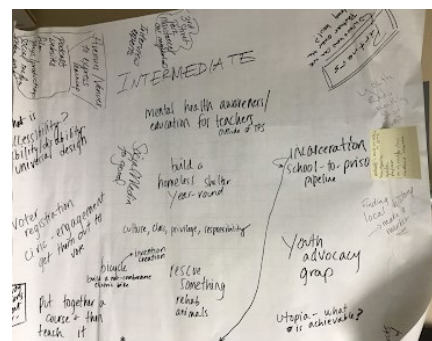


Compelling & Generative Topic or Question: During an annual Curricular Summit at the conclusion of each academic year, our community gathers together to discuss the topics and questions that are currently most compelling to them. Through the use of brainstorming protocols, participants in the Curricular Summit compile a substantive resource that is then used by the faculty to design the Compelling Generative Topic/Question and Through Lines for the coming academic year.

Students, teachers, families, and community members work together to arrive at school-wide topics and essential questions that guide individual, group, and community projects. Every student is engaged in experiences that are intentionally connected to the school-wide themes, and which result in a real-life impact on real-life issues. Students understand that they can make a difference in their communities, and the community sees the school as a force for social justice. This is the portion of the day (see P3 below) where the science and social studies standards are taught through authentic and meaningful work. While students are working on these projects, they are learning about the historical, geographic, economic, political, cultural, technological, environmental, and/or scientific components of the topic.

The Compelling and Generative Topic or Question (CGTQ) is a statement or question that serves as an overarching theme for the academic year. The Through Lines are corresponding statements and questions which encourage students to dig deeply into the CGTQ. The CGTQ and the Through Lines are utilized in every classroom of our school - from youngest to oldest students - to guide individual, group and community discussions and projects. All students look at their academic year through the lens of the CGTQ and Through Lines. Every student is engaged in service-learning experiences that are intentionally connected to the school-wide topics and result in a real-life impact.

The CGTQ for the 2018-2019 academic year is "Borders, Boundaries and Limits." The through lines for this topic include: How was it created? Can we change it? How can we? Should we? What is in-between?



Our CGT and Throughlines are developed following our annual Curricular Summit in which teachers, students, families and community members come together to brainstorm topics and ideas.

What was? What is? What could be?

Year II: 2010-2011

What is power, and how is it transferred?

- What does power look like from multiple perspectives?
- How has power been used to make change? Or keep things the same?
- What are the results of how we use our power and the decisions we make?
- What is the relationship between power and access to resources?
- How can exploring different points of view deepen our understanding?

Year III: 2011-2012

Impact

- How do we impact others? How do others impact us?
- What are the intended and unintended impacts on community?
- What is the impact of story on our lives and on the world?
- How does knowing my story and the story of others impact the choices we make?
- Whose stories haven't been told, and why?

Year IV: 2012-2013

Justice

- How can my actions impact justice in our world?
- How are my choices justified?
- How do we balance community and individual needs through multiple

Struggle & Progress

- Class-specific Through Lines found [here](#).

Year VIII: 2016-2017

Perspectives

- Students will express pride, confidence and healthy self-esteem without denying the value and dignity of other people.
- Students will respectfully express curiosity about the history and lived experiences of others, and will exchange ideas and beliefs in an open-minded way.
- Students will recognize that power and privilege influence relationships on interpersonal, intergroup, and institutional levels, and consider how they have been affected by those dynamics.
- Students will plan and carry out collective action against bias and injustice in the world and in their everyday lives, and will evaluate what strategies are most effective. They will do so despite negative peer or group pressure.

Year IX: 2017-2018

Connections

- What is the connection?
- How was the connection made?
- What is gained or lost by the connection?
- How could the connection be

perspectives?

- What is the relationship between justice and systems?

Year V: 2013-2014

Origins

- Where do we come from? Where do we stand? Where are we going?
- What is gained? What is lost?
- How does knowing the origin call me to action?
- We are the origins of what happens next

Year VI: 2014-2015

Interdependence

- How is this connected to that? Why does it matter?
- When and how should relationships be strengthened? Questioned? Sustained?
- How do we nurture empathy?
- What actions do I take to better myself? The community? The world?
- What do I think? What do I do? How does that communicate who I want to be?

strengthened, weakened or broken?

Year X: 2018-2019

Borders, Boundaries & Limits

- How was it created?
- How is it influenced?
- Can we change it? How can we? Should we?
- What is in-between?

P3 Curriculum: Our school focuses on educating our students to have the will, skill and capacity to see themselves as impactful contributors to the greater good throughout their lives. We emphasize creative problem solving through our unique P3 curriculum. P3 – a philosophy and pedagogy designed by the founding educators of our school – stands for Problem, Place and Project based work. Our teachers identify challenges that exist in the real world, and then design project-based, hands-on, interdisciplinary learning opportunities that are solution

focused, with an emphasis on history, civics, the hard sciences and social sciences. The P3 Curricular Framework is the vehicle for creating a school culture where the conditions exist to develop the “Habits of the Heart, Mind, and Voice.” P3 was born directly out of The Project School’s core beliefs, and is grounded in years of lived and practical classroom experience, as well as extensive research.

P3 work is focused on real-life application of academic learning. This curriculum design was built upon years of work from nationally known curriculum researchers. Our founders embedded the conceptual frameworks of project-based, problem-based, and place-based learning to create a curricular model that leads to a highly rigorous and relevant curriculum for children, one that is directly connected to issues in their local and global communities. Students learn about local, national, and international problems, while designing real projects to improve their community. This community may be close by or far away depending on the nature of the problem. Examples of P3 curriculum in action have included —

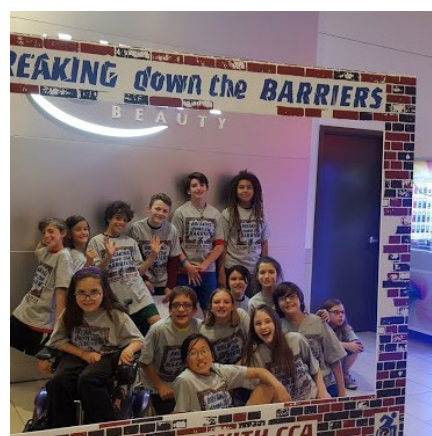
P3 Projects



During the 2016-2017 academic year. The 1/2 class conducted a comprehensive study of hunger and homelessness



During the 2017-2018 academic year. The 7/8 class addressed world food systems and food insecurity through a close reading of a



During the 2018-2019 academic year. The 6/7 class is currently looking comprehensively at issues of disability

issues in the greater Bloomington community, and addressed the crisis they discovered through the operation of educational and fundraising booths around the community. They raised over \$700 to donate to various partner agencies addressing hunger and homelessness issues.

youth edition of *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, and then working in teams to design, build, and install urban homesteading projects for community clients. Student teams worked with clients on projects including poultry, bee keeping, vermiculture, water collection, food preservation, raised bed gardening, and more.

inclusion and community access. They are undertaking a study of a local community playground utilized by The Project School, and they are developing initiatives – including grant writing and playground design – to address the inequities that make the resource less accessible. They hope to partner with the city to then facilitate these changes.

Student Letter to the Teacher on P3

[Click here to listen.](#)



Soccer Passions

Passions Classes: Each day, students engage in a deep study of something which inspires passion within them as individuals. These teacher-, student-, and community-member designed courses of study are rigorous, inquiry-based, and experiential. Passions classes work to create the culture and conditions that will allow students and teachers to reach a state of flow while engaged in something they are intrinsically motivated to do.

TPS students have an opportunity to choose a Passions Class and engage in a multi-age experience with peers who share their interest. These courses of study are directly and intentionally linked to developing the Habits of Heart, Mind and Voice. Teachers use the same curricular and assessment process in designing, implementing, and evaluating the Passions curriculum. The philosophy of our Passions Classes is based largely on the work of Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's theory of Flow. Flow is a state that is reached when one is so engrossed in an activity that all sense of time, and possibly place, is temporarily lost. For example, an artist may be “in flow” while painting, and an avid gardener while gardening. Passions Classes take place four afternoons per week, during most weeks of the academic year. Students select a new Passions experience every three to six weeks, depending on their interests.

Arts Integration/Infusion: Arts at TPS consist of two distinct but connected components: Art Workshops and Arts Infusion. They work in concert with each other to provide experiences for students to express themselves and their learning through the arts. All TPS students participate in arts classes 4 times/week. Two of the sessions are workshop based (one each in visual arts and performing arts), where students learn the skills and strategies of the visual and performing artist. The other two sessions are art infusion sessions, where the arts are literally infused into the curriculum of the classroom. Our arts infusion teaching team partners with our classroom teachers to make these curricular connections.



The overall goal of the arts program is to seamlessly weave an appreciation for, and participation in, visual art, music, theatre and movement into the core education of every student. Through this infusion of visual and performing arts into their classes, students are able to process new knowledge on a deeper level, make connections between areas of study, and express their performing artistry in a way that is unique and moving to them.

Each of our classrooms puts on an integrated theatrical production each academic year. Under creative and motivational leadership of our performing and visual arts specialists, every student is given opportunity to shine in performance as actor and/or musician, as well as to assist in the design of sets and costumes. Some of our classes have even composed original scores and written original scripts.



Museum of Authentic Work: Each year, our students develop a comprehensive portfolio of work based on the Compelling and Generative Topic/Question, their Literacy and Numeracy Workshops, and their P3 Curriculum. They also document their group and class project-based work. During the final week of school, our classrooms are then turned into a Museum of Authentic Work (MAW), during which all students showcase the outstanding work that has taken place throughout the year.

The Museum of Authentic Work is one of the highlights of our year. Classrooms are creatively rearranged to provide visitors with a chance for exploration and celebration of all that has happened in our school year. Our students become their classroom MAW docents, giving tours to other students, to parents, to school friends and to community leaders. They are always proud of their accomplishments and of the substantive nature of their learning. The community is then invited to join us for tours by student docents.

[Visit our 2014-15 MAW Here](#)

Responsive Classroom: At The Project School we utilize Responsive Classroom, an evidence-based approach to education that focuses on the strong relationship between academic success and social-emotional

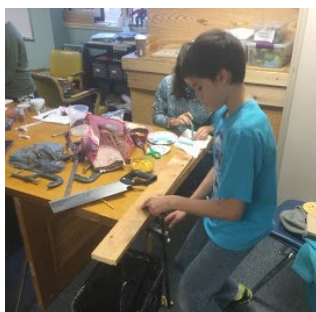
learning. The Responsive Classroom approach empowers educators to create safe, joyful, and engaging learning communities where all students have a sense of belonging and feel significant. The four key domains of Responsive Classroom include —

Engaging Academics. Adults create learning tasks that are active, interactive, appropriately challenging, purposeful, and connected to students' interests.

Positive Community. Adults nurture a sense of belonging, significance, and emotional safety, so that students feel comfortable taking risks and working with a variety of peers.

Effective Classroom Management. Adults create a calm, orderly environment that promotes autonomy and allows students to focus on learning.

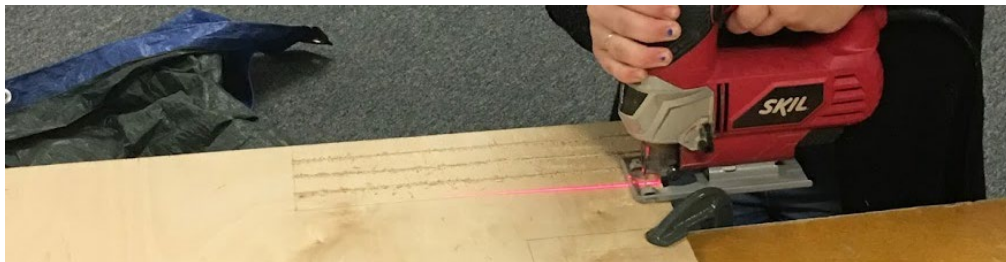
Developing Responsive Teaching. Adults use knowledge of child development, along with observations of students, to create a developmentally appropriate learning environment.



Makerspace & Design Studio: In a Makerspace, individuals gather to create, invent, explore and discover using a variety of tools and materials. It is a physical location where people come together to share resources and knowledge, work on projects, network, and build. Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards emphasize critical thinking, creativity, and 21st century skills. To achieve these requires taking a hard look at both what and how we teach. The Maker Movement offers lessons, tools, and technology to steer students toward more relevant, engaging learning experiences, preparing them to solve real world problems – both those that currently exist, and those that we cannot yet imagine.

Our middle school classroom has evolved to include important elements of a Makerspace, along with Design Studio concepts. This work has become integral to our P3 curriculum. The Makerspace and Design Studio have also become key resources for use in whole-school elective course offerings (Passions) and in much needed child care offered to students of all ages when school is not

in session.



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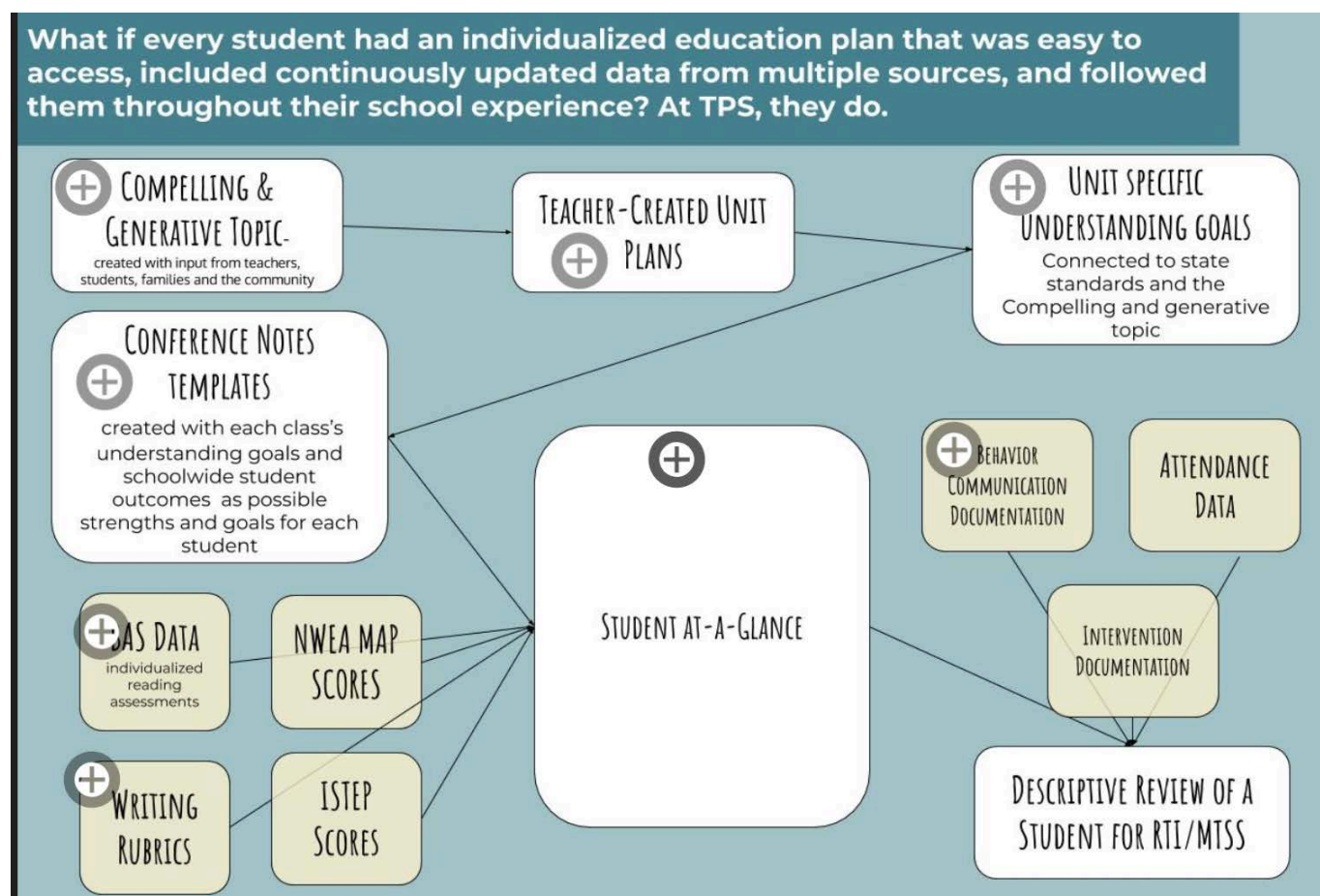


Student Performance Data

**WE STRIVE TO CREATE SYSTEMS TO
ACCURATELY REFLECT OUR VALUES AND
MEANINGFULLY IMPACT STUDENT
SUCCESS**

At TPS, we value data as a means to better understanding our students, informing our practice and documenting our growth. However, in a small school, with a single class for each grade level, percentages don't always tell an accurate or informative story, so we've created our own systems to provide easily accessible, real-time data for individual students. Teachers routinely utilize these customized solutions to contextualize a single piece of data within a bigger picture and to look for

patterns and trends. These tools provide for the documentation of individualized strengths and goals for every student at TPS as well as quantitative data such as test scores.



Interactive Graphic available at <https://www.thinglink.com/scene/1128472506668154883>

Ongoing Conferencing & Assessment: In the design of The Project School, our founders made an intentional choice to forgo the assigning of letter grades in the student assessment process. Instead, our teachers are comprehensively assessing - on an on-going basis - our students' work and growth as readers, authors, mathematicians, artists, scientists, and community members. As part of this assessment, our teachers meet regularly and individually with each student (multiple times each semester), as well as together with students and their parents/guardians (a minimum of 2 times/academic year). Student and parent/guardian voices are integral to both the goal setting and assessment process. Required family conferences take place in the fall and the spring, but teachers are always available to meet with parents/guardians throughout the year as needed. Teachers provide families with twice/annual written substantive narratives about who their child is a reader,

writer, mathematician, scientist, artist and community member.

Standardized assessment tools serve as one of many resources to provide data for helping us to best support students as individual learners, as well as to understand overall academic trends. We never wish for our students to feel judged based on the results of their standardized test scores. Test scores represent only one very small component of the myriad ways in which we can best assess and support them. We feel very strongly that standardized tests should never be a driving force in the design or implementation of curriculum. We never "teach to the test." Rather, in the days just leading up to a standardized test, we engage with test taking as a genre, just as we teach other genres of literature. We believe that helping our students to acquire positive, stress-free, general test-taking strategies provides them with a tool for life. The result of our students' test scores is validation that our compartmentalized strategy for talking about and teaching test-taking is effective and positive for our students, although we believe that the Indiana score for our school does not define who we are as a heart-mind-voice program.

Use of Technology to Support Both Students & Faculty: TPS has created a Data Analyst & Documentarian position in order to systematize the use of data, with a focus on student growth. We have launched a comprehensive, collaborative platform for the building of student multimedia portfolios, accessible to families. We have customized and standardized unit planning tools to reflect school-wide goals and philosophy. We have created a web-based staff resource database to archive teacher-developed curriculum. We have created a communications template for family conferences. We have implemented "student-at-a-glance" documents as a repository for multiple forms of student data. We have collected and analyzed student data related to school climate, academic engagement, and teacher expectations, in order to best meet the social and emotional needs of students.

All of the tools we have created (as well as the Data Analyst & Documentarian position) are a direct response to our renewal process from 5 years ago. We reflected on the outstanding feedback we received regarding our use of data and need for systems for sustainability, and took to heart the commitment to create systems and structures that would more effectively support our staff, while also enhancing the experience for students and families. We are extremely excited by all of the advancements we have made, with tools specific to the needs of our school community, personalized to match our mission, vision and values. The tools we have created are all housed within tools that were already in use by our faculty. We have utilized free online operations, such as Google, to build these tools, in order to do more with less in terms of our limited technology budget. We have built internal capacity, without the need to purchase software or hardware, or to pay unaffordable annual fees; we are truly learning how to do this ourselves in order to best serve our students, support our staff, and honor our limited budget. The data we are now collecting allows us to individualize and differentiate our students, and therefore to provide specific interventions designed to support

each student. All data we collect feeds into not only the teacher-used tools, but also into the progress reporting mechanisms that are shared with families, creating transparency for everyone involved in the life of the student. In essence, what we have created is a scaffold of tools that creates an IEP for every child we serve in our school, no matter the assets and challenges they bring to the classroom each day.

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SECTION 1. ACADEMIC QUALITY

Overview of Academic Quality Components

The Academic Quality Framework consists of six components. Within each component, there are defined **Quality Indicators** (QI) and **Informative Indicators** (IN), and associated targets. **Quality Indicators** will be the primary factors used for renewal and monitoring purposes. **Informative Indicators** provide a deeper examination of a school's programming, and enhanced context to the **Quality Indicators**. **Informative Indicators** may be used in corrective action monitoring plans.



Summary of Quality Indicators		2017-18 Rating
Student Progress Over Time (Growth)	QI 1.1.a. Are students making expected growth based on the school's median student growth percentile (SGP) in ELA? (Grades 4-8 only)	<i>Meets Standard</i>
	QI 1.1.b. Are students making expected growth based on the school's median student growth percentile (SGP) in Math? (Grades 4-8 only)	<i>Needs Improvement</i>
	QI 1.1.c. Are the lowest-performing students in the school making expected growth based on the median student growth percentile (SGP) of the lowest quartile of students in ELA? (Grades 4-8 only)	<i>Meets Standard</i>
	QI 1.1.d. Are the lowest-performing students in the school making expected growth based on the median student growth percentile (SGP) of the lowest quartile of students in Math? (Grades 4-8 only)	<i>Meets Standard</i>
Student Achievement (Proficiency)	QI 1.2.a. Are students in grades 3-8 achieving proficiency on state assessments in ELA?	<i>Needs Improvement</i>
	QI 1.2.b. Are students in grades 3-8 achieving proficiency on state assessments in Math?	<i>Needs Improvement</i>
	QI 1.2.g. Are students performing well on state assessments in ELA in comparison to other schools in the district, as measured by ISTEP?	<i>Meets Standard</i>
	QI 1.2.h. Are students performing well on state assessments in Math in comparison to other schools in the district, as measured by ISTEP?	<i>Meets Standard</i>

	QI 1.2.i. Are students in grades 3-8, who have been enrolled at the school for at least 3 years, achieving proficiency on state assessments in both math and ELA?	Not Available
	QI 1.2.j. Are students achieving proficiency on IREAD-3 assessment? (Grade 3 only, Spring Test)	<i>Meets Standard</i>
State Accountability	QI 1.3.a. Is the school meeting acceptable standards according to the A-F Accountability Label?	<i>Meets Standard</i>
College & Career Readiness	QI 1.4.f. Are students graduating from high school?	Not Applicable

1.1 STUDENT PROGRESS OVER TIME (GROWTH)

QI 1.1.a. Are students making expected growth based on the school's median student growth percentile (MGP) in ELA? (Grades 4-8 only)

Exceeds Standard:

☐ The median SGP of the school is at least 66.

Meets Standard:

☐ The median SGP of the school is at least 50 and less than 66.

Needs Improvement:

☐ The median SGP of the school is at least 35 and less than 50.

Falls Far Below Standard:

☐ The median SGP of the school is less than or equal to 34.

2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
53	66	60.5	54	56

QI 1.1.b. Are students making expected growth based on the school's median student growth percentile (MGP) in Math? (Grades 4-8 only)

Exceeds Standard:

☐ The median SGP of the school is at least 66.

Meets Standard:

☐ The median SGP of the school is at least 50 and less than 66.

Needs Improvement:

☐ The median SGP of the school is at least 35 and less than 50.

Falls Far Below Standard:

☐ The median SGP of the school is less than or equal to 34.

2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
65	74	60	53	49

QI 1.1.c. Are the lowest-performing students in the school making expected growth based on the median student growth percentile (MGP) of the lowest quartile of students in ELA? (Grades 4-8 only)

Exceeds Standard:

☐ The median SGP of the lowest 25 percent of students in the school is at least 66.

Meets Standard:

☐ The median SGP of the lowest 25 percent of students in the school is at least 50 and less than 66.

Needs Improvement:

☐ The median SGP of the lowest 25 percent of students in the school is at least 35 and less than 50.

Falls Far Below Standard:

☐ The median SGP of the lowest 25 percent of students in the school is less than or equal to 34.

2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
45	63	64	51	52.5

QI 1.1.d. Are the lowest-performing students in the school making expected growth based on the median student growth percentile (MGP) of the lowest quartile of students in Math? (Grades 4-8 only)

Exceeds Standard:

☐ The median SGP of the lowest 25 percent of students in the school is at least 66.

Meets Standard:

☐ The median SGP of the lowest 25 percent of students in the school is at least 50 and less than 66.

Needs Improvement:

☐ The median SGP of the lowest 25 percent of students in the school is at least 35 and less than 50.

Falls Far Below Standard:

☐ The median SGP of the lowest 25 percent of students in the school is less than or equal to 34.

2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
65	74	51	49	50

IN 1.1.e. Are the school's top performing 75% makes expected annual growth in ELA, as measured by Indiana's Growth Model and reported through Student Growth Percentiles (MGP)?

Exceeds Standard:

☐ The median SGP of the top performing students in the school is at least 66.

Meets Standard:

☐ The median SGP of the top performing students in the school is at least 50 and less than 66.

Needs Improvement:

☐ The median SGP of the top performing students in the school is at least 35 and less than 50.

Falls Far Below Standard:

☐ The median SGP of the top performing students in the school is less than or equal to 34.

2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
55	69	73	61	58

IN 1.1.f. Are the school's top performing 75% makes expected annual growth in Math, as measured by Indiana's Growth Model and reported through Student Growth Percentiles (MGP)?

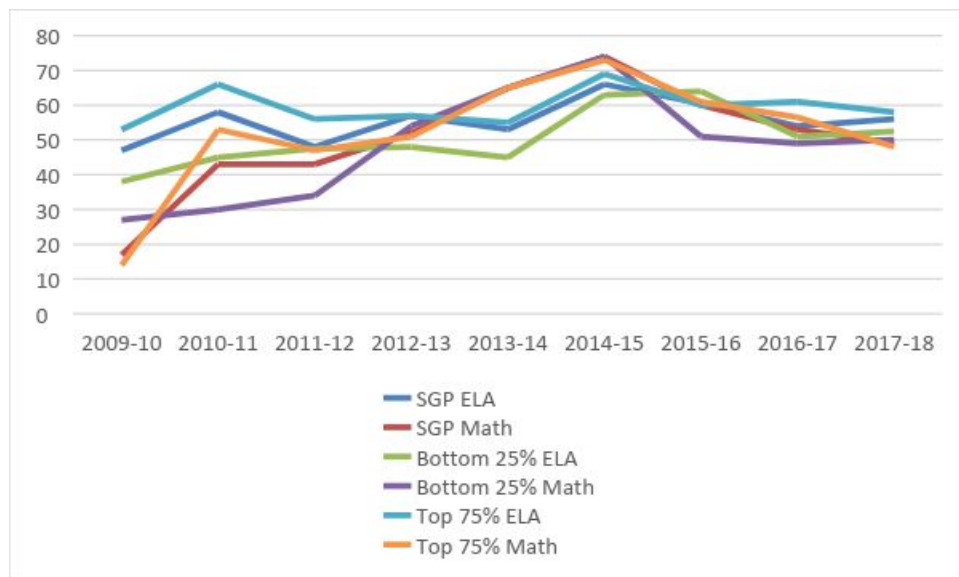
Exceeds Standard:

☐ The median SGP of the top performing students in the school is at least 66.

Meets Standard:

<input type="checkbox"/> The median SGP of the top performing students in the school is at least 50 and less than 66.				
Needs Improvement:				
<input type="checkbox"/> The median SGP of the top performing students in the school is at least 35 and less than 50.				
Falls Far Below Standard:				
<input type="checkbox"/> The median SGP of the top performing students in the school is less than or equal to 34.				
2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
65	73	61	56.5	48

ISTEP Growth Summary Chart



IN 1.1.g. Are students achieving or exceeding target growth in reading as measured by NWEA?					
Exceeds Standard:					
<input type="checkbox"/> More than 90% of students are achieving or exceeding target growth in Reading as measured by NWEA					
Meets Standard:					
<input type="checkbox"/> More than 60% and less than 90% of students are achieving or exceeding target growth in Reading as measured by NWEA					
Needs Improvement:					
<input type="checkbox"/> More than 40% and less than 60% of students are achieving or exceeding target growth in Reading as measured by NWEA					
Falls Far Below Standard:					
<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 40% of students are achieving or exceeding target growth in Reading as measured by NWEA					
2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	
59.6	58.4	66.1	54.2	52.6	

IN 1.1.h. Are students achieving or exceeding target growth in math as measured by NWEA?

Exceeds Standard:

☐ More than 90% of students are achieving or exceeding target growth in Math as measured by NWEA

Meets Standard:

☐ More than 60% and less than 90% of students are achieving or exceeding target growth in Math as measured by NWEA

Needs Improvement:

☐ More than 40% and less than 60% of students are achieving or exceeding target growth in Math as measured by NWEA

Falls Far Below Standard:

☐ Less than 40% of students are achieving or exceeding target growth in Math as measured by NWEA

	<i>2013-14</i>	<i>2014-15</i>	<i>2015-16</i>	<i>2016-17</i>	<i>2017-18</i>
	<i>50.5</i>	<i>53.7</i>	<i>54.4</i>	<i>53.1</i>	<i>43</i>

1.2 STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (PROFICIENCY)

QI 1.2.a. Are students in grades 3-8 achieving proficiency on state assessments in ELA?					
<i>Exceeds Standard:</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> At least 90 percent of students met proficiency on ISTEP ELA.					
<i>Meets Standard:</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> At least 80 percent and less than 90 percent of students met proficiency on ISTEP ELA					
<i>Needs Improvement:</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> At least 70 percent and less than 80 percent of students met proficiency on ISTEP ELA					
<i>Falls Far Below Standard:</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 70 percent of students met proficiency on ISTEP ELA.					
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
	85.1	79.3	81.3	80	77.4

Proficiency on State Assessment in ELA - Data in Context

Of General Education students who have been at TPS for 3 or more years, only 8 did not pass ELA in 2017-18.

A look at passing rates at individual grade levels for the 2017-18 school year indicated that only 2 of the 6 grades tested have met the standard. A closer examination of data at the individual student level for those grade levels falling below the standard reveals the following:

- Of the 11 fifth graders who did not pass the ELA test, 6 of the are in Special Education and 1 of them had been at TPS for fewer than 3 years. **Of General Education students who had been at TPS for at least 3 years, 89.7% passed.**
- Of the 8 sixth graders who did not pass the ELA test, 7 are in special education and 1 had been at TPS for fewer than 3 years. **Of General Education students who have been at TPS for 3+ years, 100% passed.**
- Of the 8 seventh graders who did not pass the ELA test, 7 are in special education and 0 had been at TPS for fewer than 3 years. **Of General Education students who have been at TPS for 3+ years, 96.6% passed.**
- Of the 8 eighth graders who did not pass the ELA test, 8 are in special education and of those 8, 3 had been at TPS for fewer than 3 years. **Of General Education students who have been at TPS for 3+ years, 100% passed.**

	Passing ELA		
	2016	2017	2018
3	82.1	84	80.8
4	75	87.2	85.7

5	81.1	77.2	71.8
6	82.1	84.2	78.3
7	80	74.2	77.1
8	85.7	73.1	71

Q1 1.2.b. Are students in grades 3-8 achieving proficiency on state assessments in Math?					
<i>Exceeds Standard:</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> At least 90 percent of students met proficiency on ISTEP Math.					
<i>Meets Standard:</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> At least 80 percent and less than 90 percent of students met proficiency on ISTEP Math.					
<i>Needs Improvement:</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> At least 70 percent and less than 80 percent of students met proficiency on ISTEP Math.					
<i>Falls Far Below Standard:</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 70 percent of students met proficiency in math and ELA.					
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
	93.8	75.5	73.8	73.8	73.5

Proficiency on State Assessment in Math - Data in Context

Of Grades 3-8 General Education students who have been at TPS for 3 or more years, only 12 did not pass Math in 2017-18.

A look at passing rates at individual grade levels for the 2017-18 school year indicated that 4 of the 6 grades tested have met or are within 1.5 percentiles* of meeting the standard. A closer examination of data at the individual student level for those grade levels falling far below the standard reveal that:

- Of the 14 sixth graders who did not pass math in 2018, 7 of them are in Special Education and 2 of them had been at TPS for less than a year. Of General Education students who had been with us for 3 or more years, 86% passed.
- Of the 11 eighth graders who did not pass math in 2018, 8 of them are in Special Education and 1 of them had been at TPS for fewer than 3 years. Of General Education students who had been at TPS for 3 or more years, 93% passed.

	Passing Math		
	2016	2017	2018
3	71.8	84.6	80.8
4	77.8	79.5*	89.3
5	75.7	80	79.5*
6	75	76.3	62.1
7	68	64.6	78.6*

8	75	53.8	66.5
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IN 1.2.c. Is the school achieving educational equity in regards to student proficiency on ISTEP ELA? <i>Applies only to schools with 60% or more of all students passing</i>				
Exceeds Standard:				
<input type="checkbox"/> School has no more than 5% difference in the percent of students passing standardized tests amongst any racial and/or socioeconomic groups				
Meets Standard:				
<input type="checkbox"/> School has no more than 10% difference in the percent of students passing standardized tests amongst any racial and/or socioeconomic groups				
Needs Improvement:				
<input type="checkbox"/> School has no more than 15% difference in the percent of students passing standardized tests amongst any racial and/or socioeconomic groups				
Falls Far Below Standard:				
<input type="checkbox"/> School has more than 15% difference in the percent of students passing standardized tests amongst racial and/or socioeconomic groups				
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
	19.4	21.6	14.8	15.2
				0.8
Narrative Analysis: FRL and Paid lunch students were used as comparison groups				

IN 1.2.d. Is the school achieving educational equity in regards to student proficiency on ISTEP Math? <i>Applies only to schools with 60% or more of all students passing</i>				
Exceeds Standard:				
<input type="checkbox"/> School has no more than 5% difference in the percent of students passing standardized tests amongst racial and/or socioeconomic groups.				
Meets Standard:				
<input type="checkbox"/> School has no more than 10% difference in the percent of students passing standardized tests amongst racial and/or socioeconomic groups.				
Needs Improvement:				
<input type="checkbox"/> School has no more than 15% difference in the percent of students passing standardized tests amongst racial and socioeconomic groups.				
Falls Far Below Standard:				
<input type="checkbox"/> School has more than 15% difference in the percent of students passing standardized tests amongst racial and/or socioeconomic groups.				
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
	3.9	13.6	7.3	11.6
				4.5
Narrative Analysis: FRL and Paid lunch students were used as comparison groups				

Special Education

IN 1.2.e. Are Special Education students in grades 3-8 achieving proficiency on state assessments in ELA?					
<i>Exceeds Standard:</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> At least 90 percent of students met proficiency on ISTEP ELA.					
<i>Meets Standard:</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> At least 80 percent and less than 90 percent of students met proficiency on ISTEP ELA.					
<i>Needs Improvement:</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> At least 70 percent and less than 80 percent of students met proficiency on ISTEP ELA.					
<i>Falls Far Below Standard:</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 70 percent of students met proficiency on ISTEP ELA.					
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
	57.7	37.8	47.5	44.2	Not Yet Available

IN 1.2.f. Are Special Education students in grades 3-8 achieving proficiency on state assessments in Math?					
<i>Exceeds Standard:</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> At least 90 percent of students met proficiency on ISTEP Math.					
<i>Meets Standard:</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> At least 80 percent and less than 90 percent of students met proficiency on ISTEP Math.					
<i>Needs Improvement:</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> At least 70 percent and less than 80 percent of students met proficiency on ISTEP Math.					
<i>Falls Far Below Standard:</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 70 percent of students met proficiency on ISTEP Math.					
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
	80	37.8	36.4	38.1	Not Yet Available

Special Education Students' Achievement on State Assessments - Data in Context

We have closely analyzed our growth and achievement data in relation to multiple subgroups in order to identify achievement gaps. This analysis revealed many causes for celebration as we could find virtually no significant gaps based on gender, race, SES, or even number of years at TPS. The one area we've consistently and unsurprisingly found a gap is between General Education and Special Education students. Our Quality Counts Innovation Grant (received in Spring of 2018) focused entirely on this area of concern. Beginning in the 2018-19 school year, our staff has begun professional development focused on Universal Design for Learning and has added components to our RTI/MTSS process in order to expand our range of responses and interventions to address this achievement gap. Our passing rate for special education students does not meet our own goals, but placed in context of the state of Indiana (as shown below), shows the concerted effort we've made in this area.

	General Education	Special Education
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	ELA Pass Percent	Math Pass Percent	Both Math and ELA Pass Percent	ELA Pass Percent	Math Pass Percent	Both Math and ELA Pass Percent
State of Indiana	70.70%	63.80%	56.60%	26.60%	27.70%	18.00%
The Project School	91.50%	82.40%	78.20%	39.60%	50.00%	35.80%

Students meeting NWEA Fall 2016 to Fall 2017 Growth Goals



QI 1.2.g. Are students performing well on state assessments in ELA in comparison to other schools in the district, as measured by ISTEP?

Exceeds Standard:

☐ School's average percent proficient on ELA exceeds the average performance of students in the home district by at least 15 percentage points.

Meets Standard:

☐ School's average percent proficient on ELA meets or exceeds the average performance of students in the home district by less than 15 percentage points.

Needs Improvement:

☐ School's average percent proficient on ELA is below the average performance of students in the home district by less than 15 percentage points.

Falls Far Below Standard:

☐ School's average percent proficient on ELA is below the average performance of students in the home district by 15 percentage points or more.

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
	+3.4	+6.4	+8.2	+6.7	+5.7

QI 1.2.h. Are students performing well on state assessments in Math in comparison to other schools in the district, as measured by ISTEP?

Exceeds Standard:

☐ School's average percent proficient on Math exceeds the average performance of students in the home district by at least 15 percentage points.

Meets Standard:

☐ School's average percent proficient on Math meets or exceeds the average performance of students in the home district by less than 15 percentage points.

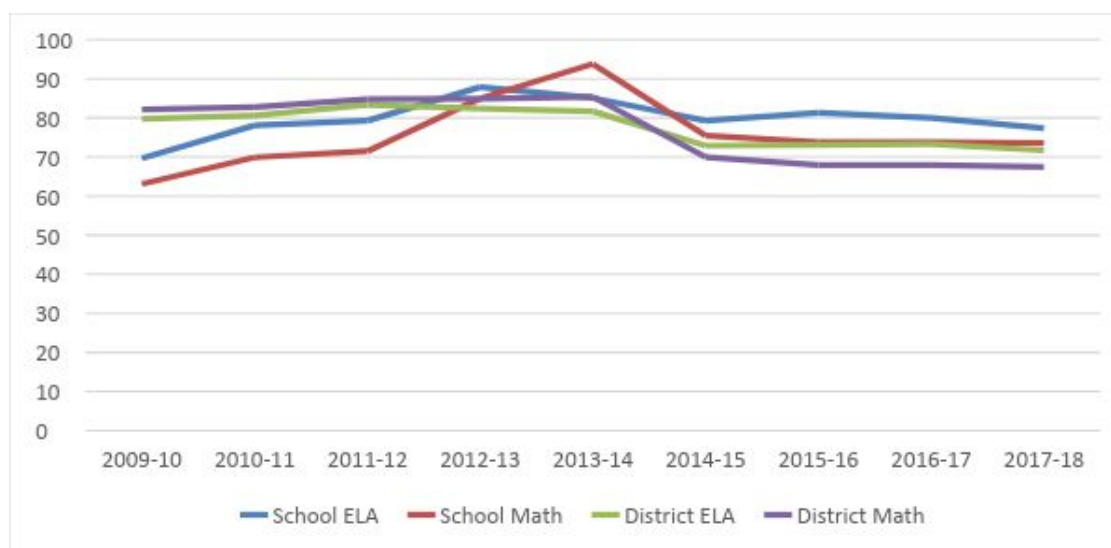
Needs Improvement:

☐ School's average percent proficient on Math is below the average performance of students in the home district by less than 15 percentage points.

Falls Far Below Standard:

☐ School's average percent proficient on Math is below the average performance of students in the home district by 15 percentage points or more.

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
	+8.4	+5.5	+5.9	+5.9	+6



QI 1.2.i. Are students in grades 3-8, who have been enrolled at the school for at least 3 years, achieving proficiency on state assessments in both ELA and math?

Note: Not applicable for schools without three years of data in tested grades

Exceeds Standard:

☐ At least 90 percent of students met proficiency on ISTEP ELA and math.

Meets Standard:

☐ At least 80 percent and less than 90 percent of students met proficiency on ISTEP ELA and math.

Needs Improvement:

☐ At least 70 percent and less than 80 percent of students met proficiency on ISTEP ELA and math.

Falls Far Below Standard:

☐ Less than 70 percent of students met proficiency on ISTEP ELA and math.

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
	Data Not Available				
	% of All Test Takers who were Enrolled 3 or more years				

QI 1.2.j. Are students achieving proficiency on IREAD-3 assessment? (Grade 3 only, Spring Test)

Exceeds Standard:

☐ More than 90% of non-exempt students passed IREAD assessment on first attempt.

Meets Standard:

☐ Between 75% and 90% of non-exempt students passed IREAD assessment on first attempt.

Needs Improvement:

☐ Between 60% and 74% of non-exempt students passed IREAD assessment on first attempt.

Falls Far Below Standard:

☐ 59% or less of non-exempt students passed IREAD assessment on first attempt.

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
	94.1	94.3	92.3	96.2	Pending

IN 1.2.k. Are students demonstrating grade-level proficiency in reading by the end of the year, as measured by NWEA, or another approved measure?

Exceeds Standard:

☐ More than 80% of students are at or above the norm grade RIT score.

Meets Standard:

☐ More than 50% and less than 80% of students are at or above the norm grade RIT score.

Needs Improvement:

☐ More than 40% and less than 50% of students are at or above the norm grade RIT score.

Falls Far Below Standard:

☐ Less than 40% of students are performing at or above the norm grade RIT score.

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
	Data Not Available				74.2

IN 1.2.l. Are students demonstrating grade-level proficiency in math by the end of the year, as measured by NWEA, or another approved measure?

Exceeds Standard:

☐ More than 80% of students are at or above the norm grade RIT score.

Meets Standard:

☐ More than 50% and less than 80% of students are at or above the norm grade RIT score.

Needs Improvement:

☐ More than 40% and less than 50% of students are at or above the norm grade RIT score.

Falls Far Below Standard:

☐ Less than 40% of students are performing at or above the norm grade RIT score.

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
	Data Not Available				73.3

1.3 STATE ACCOUNTABILITY

The **State Accountability Component** utilizes the A-F letter grades assigned to schools by the Indiana State Board of Education based on formulas assessing student performance, growth and college/career readiness during the academic school year.

QI 1.3.a. Is the school meeting acceptable standards according to the A-F Accountability Label?

Exceeds Standard:

☐ School received an "A" according to the state grading system.

Meets Standard:

☐ School received a "B" according to the state grading system.

Needs Improvement:

☐ School received a "C" according to the state grading system.

Falls Far Below Standard:

☐ School received a "D" or "F" according to the state grading system.

2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
A	A	A	B	B

1.5 STUDENT SUCCESS FACTORS

The **Student Success** component recognizes that the academic performance of a student and a school requires more than testing data. Student academic success depends on their consistent presence in school. Research demonstrates that students who are chronically absent, missing 10% or more of instruction for any reasons, perform at lower levels and face a much greater risk of dropping out. Being absent or suspended prevents a student from being fully engaged in their education. Equally so, schools with high chronic absenteeism will struggle to be successful.

IN 1.5.a. Does the school have a strong attendance rate?					
Exceeds Standard:					
<input type="checkbox"/> School's attendance rate is at or above 97%					
Meets Standard:					
<input type="checkbox"/> School's attendance rate is less than 97% and above 95%					
Needs Improvement:					
<input type="checkbox"/> School's attendance rate is less than 95% and above 90%					
Falls Far Below Standard:					
<input type="checkbox"/> School's attendance rate is below 90%					
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
	96	96	95.6	95.2	Not Yet Available*

* Our internal data indicated a 96% attendance rate for 2017-18.

IN 1.5.b. Does the school have low chronic absenteeism? <i>Defined as % of students missing 10% or more of school.</i>	
Exceeds Standard:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 5% of students are considered chronically absent	
Meets Standard:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Between 5% and 7% of students are considered chronically absent	
Needs Improvement:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Between 7% and 10% of students are considered chronically absent	

Falls Far Below Standard:

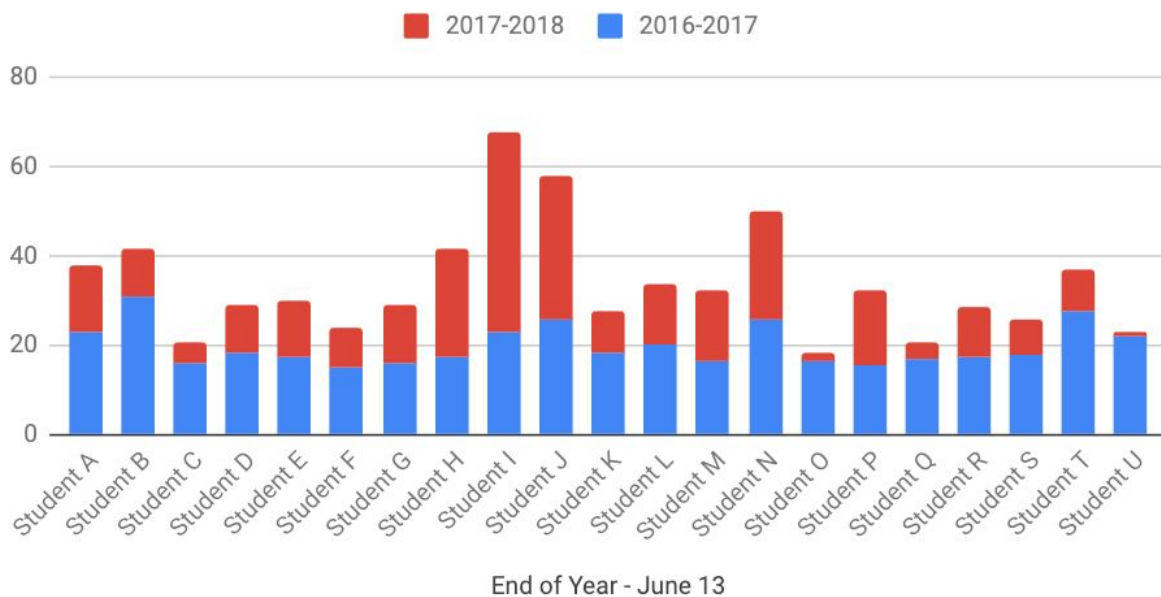
☐ More than 10% of students are considered chronically absent

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
	3.4	3.7	6.5	12.6	Not Yet Available

*Our internal data indicated that in the 2017-18 school year, 4.3% of students were chronically absent (missing 10% or more of school).

*As part of our Lilly Counseling Grant, we set a goal to decrease the number of absences of the specific students who missed 10% of school days in the 2016-2017 school year by 4% in year one and by an additional 2% each year until the end of the grant period. After implementing multiple changes to our reporting to families as well as our interventions, that group of returning students decreased their number of absences by 30.7%.

End of year number of absences for students with excessive absences in 2016-17.



IN 1.5.c. Does the school have low chronic disciplinary problems?

Defined as % of student population that has been suspended.

Exceeds Standard:

☐ Less than 5% of students have been suspended

Meets Standard:

☐ Between 5% and 7% of students have been suspended

Needs Improvement:

☐ Between 7% and 10% of students have been suspended

Falls Far Below Standard:

☐ More than 10% of students have been suspended

	<i>2013-14</i>	<i>2014-15</i>	<i>2015-16</i>	<i>2016-17</i>	<i>2017-18</i>
	<i>3.7</i>	<i>3.7</i>	<i>1.8</i>	<i>1.8</i>	<i>Not Yet Available</i>

Reflection on Goals Established in 2014

Below, we share the five goals and their associated key strategies/deliverables that were established for the 2014-2019 Charter Term, which came about through the 2014 renewal process. Based on significant reflection and the reality of current practices, each goal and key strategy has been determined to be fully implemented, partially implemented or not yet implemented.

Fully Implemented	Partially Implemented	Not Yet Implemented
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Goal 1 -- The Project School will develop systems and structures that will ensure sustainability beyond the founders of TPS.
(Organizational-Academic-Financial)



Systemize the Story of TPS:

It is time to systemize the way that we tell the story of TPS by developing a tool, a "documentary" of sorts, to use with guests, families, new staff, and the broader community. The tools that will be developed will also have the power to support developing schools and may, over time, be able to serve as an income source for TPS. We will utilize a newly designed website as one of our storytelling tools, as a method for engaging with the community.

Update: TPS has created two TPSumentaries that have been utilized in multiple settings, most importantly as a primary tool for fundraising at an annual event that we call Project Celebration. We are continuing to build upon our documentary series, with a new one to be added each year for the upcoming years. We have also redesigned The Project School website in order to better reflect who we are and what we do.



Go Deeper with Data:

By creating a part-time Data Analyst and Documentarian position, we will successfully systemize the use of data, with a focus on looking at student growth. This person will guide deeper interpretation to inform instruction. She will create structures and systems that coordinate school-wide data beyond the classroom and team levels. She will work in collaboration with the Curriculum Coach, and the School Leader to guide teachers in even more

effective data use. She will also focus teachers on the power of action research in their classrooms and the school that will result in improvements in our practice.

Update: This is absolutely the case and is reinforced throughout the renewal documentation.

Enhance Evaluation:

The leadership team, along with teachers and Board representatives, will work to expand the evaluation system of teachers and administrators, to ensure an evaluation system that meets all legal requirements and that, most importantly, results in the celebration of great work and the improvement of performance.

Update: There is a system in place that meets the requirements of the law; however, there are elements that are not used with consistency.

Expand Use of Technology within Assessment:

We are ready to develop a cohesive school-wide system for building digital portfolios for every student. Some teachers are currently piloting the program "Evernote" to compile student work and pass it on to future teachers so that work across the life of a student at our school can be archived. However, this is still an area in which we need to create realistic systems and protocols as a whole faculty in order to move forward.

Update: While Evernote was initially used and a second program was then tried, we have yet to find the perfect match to what is needed in order to best reflect what we believe in a digital portfolio. This year we are working with [Seesaw](#) and believe that this is the closest that we have gotten to what desire.

Goal 2 -- On average, based on the NWEA student growth summary (using the NWEA Percent of Projection), students will make no less than one year's academic growth in reading, writing, and math. (Academic)

Percent of Projected Growth Met: Ratio of total Observed Growth to total Projected Growth. A performance of 100% is average, meaning the student growth equaled the projections *

Subject	Growth Term	3rd Grade	4th Grade	5th Grade	6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade
Math	Fall 2017-Spring 2018	113.8	86.6	61.7	51.7	68.6	56.7
	Spring 2017-Spring 2018	126.3	90.9	99.3	-23.3	74.8	123.2

Reading	Fall 2017-Spring 2018	93.9	98.1	60.6	82.3	103.2	165.4
	Spring 2017-Spring 2018	109.6	79.2	112.1	113.1	122.7	177.5
Language Use	Fall 2017-Spring 2018	60.7	94.5	120.1	102.4	7.7	6.9
	Spring 2017-Spring 2018	83.6	110.6	162.3	87.4	61	75

* This measure can provide a good indicator of group performance. However, the assumption is that students will grow at close to the same rate. One or two outliers can skew the percentage for the group. For example, a percentage of 150% could mean that one student's growth surpassed all others. This phenomenon is reflected in the data above. By comparing fall to spring and spring to spring growth from the same year, we are comparing the same group of students, however it is clear that there are extreme differences in the percent of projected growth met in some instances. Given that in some cases there is a difference of 70% between the data sets (see 8th grade Language Arts and 6th grade Math as examples), we do not believe this is a reliable measure for assessing group growth and will not use it as such in the future.



Continue the Use of the Curricular Elements: Reader's Workshop, Writer's Workshop, Math, and P3

These were in the initial charter and have clearly created success, and we have also implemented additions and changes (LLI, Bridges, Origo, College Preparatory Math) that have been made since the inception of TPS which also have strong evidence of success.

Update: In addition to the curricular components that have continued, Bridges Math has been fully implemented in K-5 and additional math curricular decisions have been made and implemented for grades 6 and beyond (through geometry.)



Focus the Data Analyst's Work to Collect, Analyze, and Utilize Data:

We will work with the Curriculum Coach to make responsive changes in instruction as needed for individual students.

Update: The evidence for this addition is embedded throughout the renewal document.



Establish a Math Task Force:

To further evaluate the math trends and to determine additional changes that might be needed in math curriculum and instruction, we will establish a task force.

Update: The math task force worked to determine the best curricular options for all levels. In addition, all teachers K-5 attended professional development related to the implementation of Bridges and a portion of the team attended additional math professional development in the summer of 2017, bringing back the learnings to the larger team. Finally, the task force worked diligently to develop a set of math core beliefs that are now embedded in all math classes, K-geometry. This work is detailed in other areas of the renewal document as well.



Include Relevant Data In the Enhanced Evaluation System: Update

This is detailed throughout the renewal document.

Goal 3 -- For students who have been with TPS for three years or longer, there will be a decrease in the percentage of students who are performing below grade level. The current percentages of students performing below grade level are: Reading: 18%; Writing: 22%; and math: 15%. To calculate this, TPS will utilize NWEA and at least one other form of data (*Academic*).

2017-2018	Students enrolled at TPS for Three or more years considered below grade level based on NWEA data and conference notes	Increase/Decrease
Math	17.3%	+2.3% (approx. 4 students)
Reading	16.95%	-1.05%(approx. 2 students)
Language Use/ Writing	15.4%	-6.6%(approx. 12 students)



Continue the Implementation of Reader's and Writer's Workshops:

Each year, our ISTEP+ results have increased and our NWEA data is showing steady progress as well. Because of this, as well as other forms of data, we believe that our current curricular model for Reader's and Writer's Workshop are effective.

Update: Workshops are alive and well and fully implemented at The Project School.



Continue Our Commitment to Professional Development:

Our data shows that math is our most important and urgent area of growth, therefore TPS will bring in experts in the field to support the growth of our teachers.

Update: See information about related to math professional development.

Continue the Search for Math Resources:

We will continue researching math resources that can accelerate our math achievement. While we think the current resources we use are showing tremendous growth, we still believe there is room for improvement.

Update: There continue to be areas of strength and areas of struggle for TPS students in math. While there are some positive trends, this job is not complete.

Establish a Yearly Expectation for Professional Development:

While we have always offered staff members the opportunity to attend workshops to improve their practice, we are going to establish a yearly expectation for professional development that occurs by outside experts (and not housed at TPS/with our staff). We believe that this provides greater opportunities to learn from other teachers in other schools as well as from experts who are not in the position to travel to TPS.

Update: The annual focus for professional development through staff retreat and weekly staff meetings has maintained. In addition, a January winter retreat date has been added for all staff and the addition of support staff to two days of the fall retreat has become an important practice. The yearly expectation for increased professional development with outside experts has not been established, primarily due to fiscal limitations.

Expand the Use of Professional Goal Setting: *to reinforce the focus on specific professional development.*

Update: This has been implemented inconsistently.

Goal 4 -- The Project School will create a system to improve the transition from TPS to high school. (*Organizational-Academic*)



Consider a High School Option:

We will bring together a focus group for consideration of the addition of a high school to TPS programming, and if the results of the focus group and accompanying research are to recommend the development of a high school option, we will create an action plan for how this will happen. The focus group will include staff, parents, and community members who will together explore the possibility of creating a new free, public, chartered high school that is aligned with the mission, vision, and core beliefs of TPS, or who will consider the addition of high school grades to the current Charter. This is a direct result of parents and graduates creating a compelling argument for this need in our community.

Update: A large group that represented both TPS and the broader community met to discuss the current strengths and needs for high school in our area. Based on this conversation, along with additional reflection and consideration of the direction that the Indiana Department of Education was moving toward secondary education, the decision was made to not pursue the option of a high school.

Create a Systematic Transition Plan for TPS Graduates:

We will develop avenues for TPS graduates to matriculate to secondary options with a positive lens and a successful plan of transition.

Update: This was difficult to determine if it was fully implemented or partially implemented because it appears to be a key strategy/deliverable that might never be "done." Significant progress has been made in terms of annual action steps for transitioning to the local high schools. All students now have access to presentations by the three local MCCSC high schools, as well as local private school options. Students are provided a day to shadow at the local high schools as a collective group from TPS. In addition, students are provided opportunities to meet with TPS graduates who attend the various high schools. Parents are also provided opportunities to attend events at the high schools to learn more about their programs and to determine what educational setting might be best for their child. Over the years there have been a number of opportunities for students to attend panel discussions and other connections to TPS graduates. This last component is not yet embedded as a regular practice, which is the primary reason that this strategy was considered partially implemented.

Goal 5 -- The Project School will continue to build strong financial solvency and community partnerships to ensure long-term viability for the organization. (*Organizational-Financial*)

Expand Expertise of the Board of Directors:

While there is absolute brilliance and broad representation on The Project School Board, there is a need for additional expertise in the business and financial sectors.

Update: While the board was expanded to represent these areas, there is again a need for new membership as of 2018.

Pursue Additional Funding Sources To Reduce Facilities Debt and Increase Flexible Income:

We will pursue creative funding sources beyond traditional state and federal funds, in order to provide greater support for curriculum and instruction, deeper and more extensive professional development, and the increase of direct services.

Update: This remains the greatest challenge that we face as a school community. Our creation and continued strengthening of an Annual Campaign (including annual and one-time fundraising events, direct appeals, online giving, consumer fundraising programs and events, stakeholder development, and additional activities) has contributed to a consistent and annually increasing source of non-designated income. The successes of several grants, including the Lilly Endowment Counseling Initiative, have also positively impacted opportunities and the financial health of TPS. That said, the securing of additional funds is a necessity for our long term fiscal health.



Establish a Development Director/Community Engagement Coordinator Position:

We will establish a part-time position with the purpose of increasing internal capacity for financial resources, as well as building additional and deeper community partnerships. The goal is to seek funding for this position through private foundations and/or grants, until sustainability is created within the position.

Update: This position was established as the Philanthropy and Outreach Director. The position is now self-sustaining within our budget. The evidence of our additional and deeper partnerships is a great source of pride for TPS. There has also been significant impact on additional funding through this role; however, as stated above, this remains one of the most significant challenges that TPS face.

New Goals Established 2018

- ❖ Establish Essential Outcomes for each academic area as well as social and emotional learning and behavioral goals.

- ❖ Raise attendance rates through improved communication, support systems, and policy.
- ❖ Decrease the achievement gap which exists between general education and special education students.
- ❖ Establish a schoolwide program centered around the work of Relational-Cultural Theory.



We Dream our Dreams Big & Envision a Bright Future

As we reflect on our first ten years as a school community, we remain committed to our founders' powerful vision for all that a school can be for its students, its families, its staff, and for the whole of the community. We are honored to have been given the opportunity to actualize our hopes and dreams, and to bring to life a school that inspires, motivates, and compels everyone involved to reach toward their best selves, and to learn from and grow with one another. We dreamed a big dream back when all of this began in 2006. And now we dream a new big dream about what TPS can become in its second decade of operation. We look forward to new partnerships and collaborations, new programs and outreach, new resources to expand our students' and families' horizons, and new spaces to increase the number of children and families who will

benefit from our mission, vision and values.



Sustainability Education: Part of our vision since our inception has been graduating students who see themselves as stewards of the environment. However, located in the “concrete jungle” of downtown Bloomington has limited our abilities to actualize this aspect of our vision. In the late spring of 2018 we received our first gift of property - a green space located in the residential neighborhood that is adjacent to our current school location. This generous gift will allow us to begin exploring an expanded sustainability program beyond the walls of our building. During the next decade, we envision the installation of a working vegetable garden - one which will produce food for our students, our families and the larger community. We also envision this space being used as a living lab for diverse P3 projects based on the environment and sustainability, with core science and social justice components. We are excited about the future of sustainability education in the lives of our students and families.

Exploration of New Partnerships with the Local School Corporation: Since our original founders first designed our model, they have envisioned having TPS serve as a leader in the strengthening of public education for children in our local community and beyond. During our first decade of existence, we have reached out to the traditional local school corporation to express our interest in sharing resources and expertise. As we enter our second decade, we look forward to seeing the fruits of our labor in building this collaborative relationship. During the fall of 2018, The Project School leadership was approached by the local superintendent to consider the possibility of combining forces. The exploration for this possibility is just beginning. During the next ten years, we envision partnering with educators and leaders from the traditional school corporation to implement programs that have the capacity to improve educational opportunities for all.

Makerspace Vision: Our vision for TPS – both in programming and facility – is to serve as a central hub for creative exploration for the community. Our building is located in what is becoming an important downtown corridor for the business, social service, and arts sectors. We want to invite the community into our spaces to experience social justice and equity programming that benefits everyone. We want to make our building available to other organizations and individuals in the community with these shared values, in order to increase our collaborative community partnerships. With the addition of space, we will be able to also provide Makerspace opportunities to a broader population during low-need times for TPS. Our space will parallel the efforts of the Indiana University School of Education, which developed its own Makerspace in 2015 for use by students and staff from throughout the campus. We believe that the addition of our new classroom space should go beyond service to The Project School in order to create broader community opportunity and impact.



We recognize that while adult literacy remains essential, the definition of what is necessary to be considered literate is changing dramatically for future employment and community engagement opportunities. Through implementation of cutting-edge instructional technology and Makerspace, we are able to build knowledge, skills and abilities in crucial areas for participation in the career arena of the future: production and processing, engineering and technology (including computers and electronics), building, construction and design, critical thinking, time and human resources management and coordination, complex problem solving, oral and written comprehension, manual dexterity, public and group speaking, and deductive reasoning

Lottery Numbers/Student Retention/Waiting List: Since first opening our doors in 2009, TPS has had a substantive waiting list. Since 2013 the waiting list has exceeded the actual enrollment. The response to our annual lottery is a testament to the impact TPS is making in the community, and to the deep desire among community families for whole-child education.

Student Lottery & Wait List Numbers (2016-2019)				
	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
Total Applicants	394	376	377*	84**
Spaces Open at Time of Lottery	30	29	34	unknown
Applications Post-Lottery	83	81	67*	n/a
Waiting List (Excludes acceptances and declinations.)	322	300	298*	n/a

* Current 12/10/18

**Application opened on 12/1/2019 and will close on the first Friday in March. The number of applicants is accurate as of 12/12/2018.

A Vision of Expansion: The current version of TPS began with a dream of educators. A dream to serve children and families in a public school setting through a heart-mind-voice education model. A dream that was developed through a set of core beliefs, a mission, and a vision that has become a reality at TPS.

Although we are still in the early phase of envisioning our next ten years, we can imagine an expanded TPS model as a part of a dream. This dream would be the stage of our development that allows our brilliant staff and school community to use what we have learned to serve even more children and families.

The second phase of TPS could include —

Two Locations for Small School Benefit. We believe strongly that small schools - with fewer than 300 students - allow for the building of the strongest community, allow adults to have the most meaningful relationships with the children in their care, and allow us to retain fidelity to our mission, vision, values and model. Our hope is to have a second downtown site to complement our current location, and to share important resources between the two in order to be the best stewards of the dollars we receive.

Students Served. Our new location would mirror our current location in size, with future determination made regarding the most effective division of grade levels between the two locations. Our goal is to double the number of students we currently serve in each grade, with

each site serving approximately 275-300.

Community Spaces. The current TPS school building is fully utilized, with limitations on multi-use of space. Our vision is to design a new space to be utilized more creatively, and to open up opportunities for community collaboration. Our new space will ideally include a multi-purpose performance space and a makerspace, both of which would become available for use by the larger community. We also intend to create school garden spaces which will produce nourishment for community organizations.

Why Expansion Matters: We believe that expanding our programs, the number of children and families we serve, and our outreach within the community will create even greater and more powerful impact. Expansion will allow us to create —

Waiting List Reduction. The hundreds of children annually on the waiting list demonstrate the desire and need among families in our community for innovative, inclusive, whole-child educational opportunities, especially for children with special learning needs, and for families with socio-economic challenges; expansion will allow us to serve a large percentage of children on our waiting list.

Opportunities for Visionary Educators. With little to no faculty turnover occurring at TPS and locally, expansion will allow us to create opportunities for outstanding educators to remain in the community, and to potentially attract new innovative educators to Indiana and from throughout Indiana.

Potential for Additional Multi-Use Educational Spaces. The current TPS facility, albeit beautiful and functional, is small and limited; expansion will allow us to think creatively about the potential addition of performance and gross motor activity spaces for use by our school and by the community.

Expanded Community Impact. With a larger student body, faculty, and group of families, TPS will be able to connect more substantively with partner agencies and businesses whose missions benefit the community, therefore living our values of educational equity, social justice, and sustainability.

Financial Stability. Expansion of our school will allow TPS to draw additional funding to strengthen administrative and support services, and will allow us to explore additional grant, donor and financing opportunities to overcome the discrepancy between chartered public school and traditional public school funding models.

Obstacles to Expansion: We recognize that there are a number of obstacles we must overcome in order to successfully actualize a potential long-term expansion vision, including

Faculty Salaries. The Project School annual budget is very tight each year, with a focus on doing more with less. The reality is that once the local district received a large referendum, TPS could no longer keep up with their salary schedule, resulting in educators making significantly less to work at TPS. Our faculty demonstrates great dedication to the mission, vision and core beliefs of our school. However, we recognize that our inability to keep pace with the local district will make it challenging to retain and recruit excellent teachers in the future. This is an issue that must be addressed for sustainability and expansion.

Location and Affordability. Our expansion vision places great importance on establishing a second site in close proximity to our current location. This is a central part of our expansion vision, as it will allow us to share resources, co-create curriculum and programmatic experiences between the two sites, and continue to take advantage of the many benefits that come from being located central to both the downtown and the university. However, choosing to be located in the downtown area creates an obstacle, as it is difficult to secure appropriately sized space - and space that is not cost-prohibitive - in what is very much a seller's/lessor's market. An in-earnest search for suitable property that meets our needs in terms of finances and location has been underway since fall of 2016. Securing such a site remains a major challenge.

Ongoing Funding. As represented in our stated obstacle above for faculty compensation, our annual funding structure provides little room to fund expanded programs. An increase in our student population *will* provide for an influx of per-pupil DOE dollars. However, those dollars - as with current per-pupil dollars - will not cover the full breadth of our school's mission, vision and work. We continue to rely on alternative funding sources such as grants, corporate support, and individual donor dollars to make up as much of the difference as possible each year. With a larger school comes greater need and therefore greater pressure to seek out these additional financial resources. Once a location is able to be secured, TPS will actively seek all funding sources through the Department of Education and other avenues, in order to begin the action portion of the process for expansion.

Planning For Our Leadership Future: At the 2018 annual meeting of The Project School Board of Directors, our current School Leader/Superintendent and Business Manager shared that a goal for the 2018-2019 school year is to intentionally develop a plan for a transition of

leadership for the future. While the benefit of consistent, competent leadership has certainly had a positive impact on all that The Project School is, it is of critical importance that the school community continue to not only exist but stay true to the mission, vision, and values of the original founding group far beyond the current leadership. While this plan has yet to be developed, it is clear that within the current staff, there are several individuals who have the skill and capacity to serve in leadership roles. We have much confidence around the model of developing leaders, as we have successfully done with teachers in our school community.

What an Extended (beyond 5 years) Renewal Would Mean: As we reflect back on the first ten years of the life of our school, we are extremely proud of the fidelity we have retained to the original mission, vision and values of our founders, while also learning and growing through experience and through feedback. The renewal process at our 5 year marker was extremely beneficial in allowing us to look back on what we said we would do and accomplish at the outset of our school, and allowing us to think bigger in terms of changes and tweaks we could make to always best serve our students and to expand the number of students we serve.

As we look forward to the next decade as a school, we believe we are poised to make huge strides in the work we do. We believe we have demonstrated excellence both in educational goals and responsibilities, while also growing in terms of fiscal stability. And we believe we are therefore ready to be granted the longest possible charter renewal allowable by Indiana law. We recognize that the current law only allows for a 7 year renewal term. We also recognize the benefits that a 10 year renewal would provide, including the reassurance of our long term existence for potential funders and a powerful message to the community that The Project School is here to positively impact our community for years to come.

The Project School would be honored to serve as a pilot site for future consideration of a longer than seven year renewal option. And we would

be pleased to participate in any discussions and processes aimed at consideration of this future option for exceptionally performing schools. Legislators are always welcome to tour our school and visit with our leadership and faculty, in order to learn what is possible to achieve in the lives of children and families.

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FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK
BALL STATE UNIVERSITY

Meets
Does Not Meet
Falls Far Below

1. NEAR TERM INDICATORS			
1.a.	Current Ratio (Working Capital Ratio)	Current Assets divided by Current Liabilities	1.38
1.b.	Cash to Current Liabilities	Cash divided by Current Liabilities	1.31
1.c.	Unrestricted Days Cash	Unrestricted Cash divided by ((Total Expenses-Depreciation Expenses)/365)	\$0.00
1.d.	Enrollment Variance	Actual Enrollment divided by Enrollment Projection in Charter School Board-Approved Budget	1.00
1.e.	Default		278
2. SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS			
2.a.	Total Margin	Net Income divided by Total Revenue and Aggregated Total Margin: Total 3 Year Net Income divided by Total 3 Year Revenues	\$0.04
2.b.	Debt to Asset Ratio	Total Liabilities divided by Total Assets	0.950423655
2.c.	Cash Flow	Multi-Year Cash Flow = (Year 3 Total Cash)-(Year 1 Total Cash); One-Year Cash Flow = (Year 2 Total Cash)-(Year 1 Total Cash)	
2.d.	Debt Service Coverage Ratio	(Net Income + Depreciation + Interest Expense)/(Annual Principal, Interest, and Lease Payments)	1.077457792

Current Assets	\$375,312.83	6/30/2018
Current Liabilities	\$272,326.41	6/30/2018
Cash	\$355,907.93	6/30/2018
Unrestricted Cash	\$338,573.93	6/30/2018
Total Expenses	\$2,414,736.59	6/30/2018
Depreciation Expenses	\$75,771.89	6/30/2018
Enrollment Projection in Charter School Board-Approved Budget	278	
Actual Enrollment	278	
Default	278	
Net Income	\$37,731.72	6/30/2018
Total Revenue	\$2,452,468.31	6/30/2018
Aggregated Total Margin	4.20%	
Total 3 Year Net Income	\$299,090.43	FY16+17+18
Total 3 Year Revenues	\$7,127,434.81	FY16+17+18
Total Liabilities	\$1,872,397.50	6/30/2018
Total Assets	\$1,970,066.18	6/30/2018
Year 1 Total Cash	\$80,484.03	6/30/2016
Year 2 Total Cash	\$236,124.95	6/30/2017
Year 3 Total Cash	\$355,907.93	6/30/2018
Depreciation	\$75,771.89	6/30/2018
Interest	\$101,276.60	6/30/2018
Interest Expense	\$101,276.60	6/30/2018
Annual Principal, Interest, and Lease Payments	\$199,339.79	FY18