

Supplemental Report 3

Notes on Methods Used to Gather and Analyze Information Included in the Accountability Report and Supplemental Reports

Parent, Staff and Student Surveys

In 2007-08 the Mayor's Office partnered with Indiana University for survey development and administration. Data was collected in all 16 schools between March and April 2008. A sample copy of the parent, staff, and student survey instruments are available online at <http://www.indy.gov/eGov/Mayor/Education/Charter/Accountability/2008/Pages/default.aspx>

Parent surveys. Parent surveys took approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Each family was asked to complete one survey even if more than one child from a family attended the charter school. Schools distributed copies of the surveys on-site during parent-teacher conferences, sent them home with students, and handed them to parents and guardians as they dropped off or picked up their students at school. Parents had the option to complete the surveys at home or at school and to return the surveys either to collection boxes at each school or by mail in envelopes provided by Indiana University. A Spanish version of the survey was also made available for parents. An average of 60% of parents completed the survey.

Teacher surveys. The teacher survey took approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Teachers at each of the 16 schools completed paper and pencil copies of the teacher survey during a regularly scheduled staff meeting at each school. All schools had 100 percent of their teachers participate in the teacher survey.

Student surveys. Student surveys took 15 to 20 minutes to complete for students in grades 6 through 12 (students in 5th grade or below were not surveyed). Indiana University staff provided technical assistance as needed, including data collection in classrooms. Due to a design flaw, student results could not be matched to individual schools and thus only data at the aggregate level (i.e., across all schools) is available. An average of 86% of middle and high school students completed the survey.

Survey calculations. Results were rounded to the nearest whole percentage point and, as a result, percentages may not always equal 100. Calculations for the three surveys do not include missing or "don't know" responses.

Survey analyses and verifications. Dr. Ruth Green, Research Associate at Indiana University, led the overall survey administration. Mr. Brandon Rinkenberger and Mr. Tyler Sparks, both administrators at Indiana University, coordinated data collection, analysis and reporting.

Expert Site Visits

Researchers at the Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning (CELL) at the University of Indianapolis developed a detailed protocol to guide expert site visits of Mayor-sponsored charter schools. These protocols were adopted and refined by researchers at Indiana University for use during the 2007-08 academic year. These protocols, which address the overarching questions outlined in the Charter School Performance Framework, set forth a detailed schedule for the visits, including lists of questions to be posed to different groups of school stakeholders.

Mayor-sponsored charter schools in their first, second, and third year of operation were visited by multi-member expert site teams during 2007-08. Each of the five schools in their first or second year of operation received a site visit for one full day in late fall and again in the spring. A site visit team also visited the three third year schools throughout the school year. Dr. Ruth Green of Indiana University served as the team leader for most site visits conducted in 2007-08.

To maintain independent, third-party objectivity, Mayor's Office's staff does not participate in the site visits. The site visit team conducted classroom observations, held focus groups with staff, students, and parents, and reviewed curriculum- and business-related items. Additionally, each third-year school received technical assistance and conducted a self-evaluation, and those schools' site visits included activities related to their self-evaluation.

At the end of each visit, the site visit team provided school leaders and the Mayor's Office with oral and written feedback based on their observations, citing key commendations and areas for improvement. The Mayor's Office uses the findings in the written reports, along with the other feedback, as the basis for some of the observations on school performance included in this Accountability Report.

The Mayor's Office retained SchoolWorks, an educational consulting group, to train local experts to conduct the fourth-year charter review (FYCR), and participate on the site visits for three of the four schools fourth-year schools (local experts completed the fourth review without SchoolWorks support). These teams of independent experts conducted two-and-a-half day evaluations of the school's programs and practices. Visits were held in March, 2008 (Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School, Indianapolis Metropolitan High School, and KIPP Indianapolis) and April, 2008 (Southeast Neighborhood School of Excellence). The FYCR teams conducted classroom observations, held focus groups with staff, students, and parents, and reviewed academic systems and governance structure. The Mayor's Office uses the findings in the fourth year reports, along with the other feedback, as the basis for some of the observations on school performance included in the Accountability Report.

For the one school in its fifth year of operation (Andrew J. Brown Academy), an expert site visit team conducted a follow-up review on the one area in which the school received a "Does Not Meet Standard" rating in its FYCR.

The three schools in their sixth year of operation prepared for and participated in the Charter School Renewal Petition process.

Detailed descriptions of the site visit process and protocol, the fourth year charter review and fifth year follow-up protocol, and the renewal petition protocol is available online at <http://www.indy.gov/eGov/Mayor/Education/Charter/Accountability/2008/Pages/default.aspx>

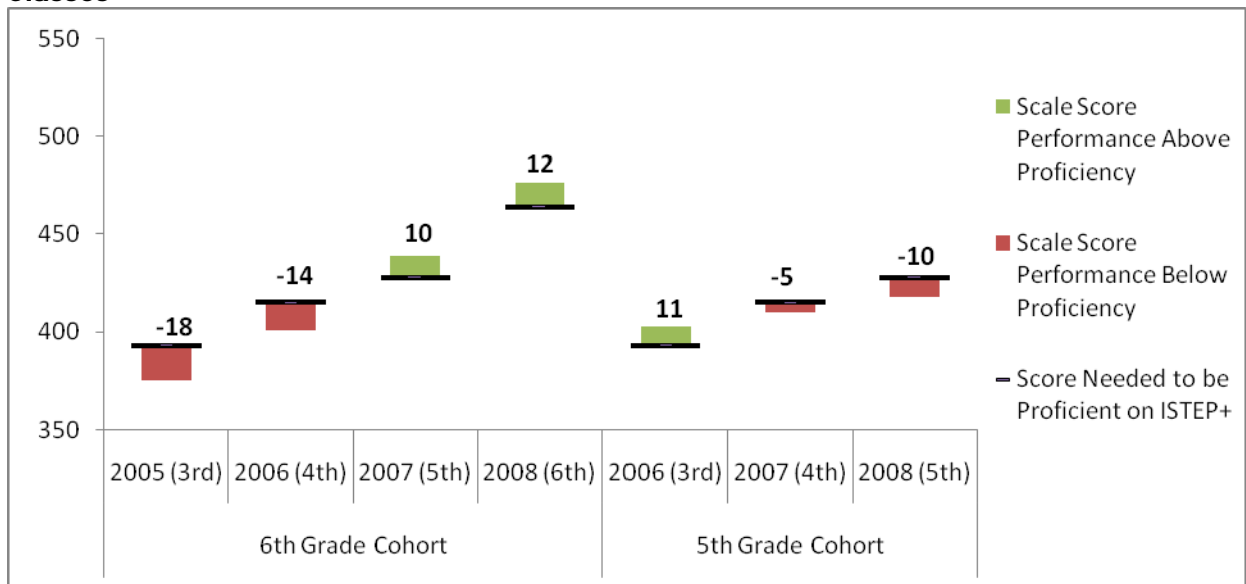
Test Score Analysis

Indiana Statewide Test of Educational Progress-Plus (ISTEP+) Cohort Analysis

The Indiana Statewide Test of Educational Progress-Plus (ISTEP+) is a state mandated assessment of student proficiency, administered each fall to all students in grades three through ten in English and math. To determine if students have mastered grade level content in each subject area, the state sets cut scores for each grade. Students who score at or above this mark are determined to be proficient in grade level content. The score needed to be proficient increases in each grade to reflect the new material students are expected to master each year.

The difference between a student's ISTEP+ score and the score needed to be proficient on the ISTEP+ is an indication of how well the student has mastered grade-level material. One way to understand how Mayor-sponsored charter schools are impacting student learning is to measure how students' average ISTEP+ scores have improved over time relative to the score needed to be proficient in each grade. For this analysis, each class at a school is analyzed individually. As an illustration, Figure A tracks the progress of two classes at an imaginary school.

Figure A: Average ISTEP+ Performance of 2008 Classes



The first set of bars shows how the school's current 6th grade class, also known as the 6th grade cohort, has performed over the last four years. Scores below proficiency are indicated with a red bar, and scores above proficiency are indicated with a green bar. The first bar shows how students who were in 6th grade this year, 2008, performed four years ago, when the class was in 3rd grade. In 2005, when this class was in 3rd grade, their average ISTEP+ score was 372, 18 points below the score needed to be proficient on the ISTEP+ in the 3rd grade (390). In 2007, when these students were in the 5th grade, their average score rose to 435, ten points above the score needed to be proficient on the ISTEP+ in the 7th grade (425). Over a 4-year period this class has improved, moving from 18 points below proficiency in the 3rd grade, to 12 points above proficiency in the 6th grade. Improving classes will have larger and larger green bars (rising higher above proficiency) or smaller and smaller red bars (approaching proficiency).

The next set of bars shows how the school's current class of 5th graders has performed over a three year period. Unlike the school's 6th grade class, the school's 5th grade class has been declining. When the school's 5th grade class was in 3rd grade in 2006, their average ISTEP+ score

was 401, 11 points above the score needed to be proficient (390). Two years later, however, when they were in the 5th grade their average score was 415, ten points below the proficiency score (425). Over a 3-year period this class has declined, moving from 11 points above proficiency in the 3rd grade to 10 points below proficiency in the 5th grade. A declining class will show shrinking green bars (sinking toward proficiency) or growing red bars (sinking lower below proficiency).

These simple comparisons of year-to-year performance are not perfect indicators of how much individual students have improved over time because the group of students taking the test changes somewhat each year. However, these comparisons do provide a general indication of overall student growth within classes. The analysis of fall-to-spring growth on an external assessment, described in the next section, provides more specific information about the academic gains made by individual students attending Mayor-sponsored schools.

Validity of Norm-Referenced Tests: Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress

Measuring school performance fairly is best done through multiple lenses. The Mayor's Office has determined that it should not only look at the performance of students at a given point in time – such as the performance of students in a given year on the Indiana Statewide Testing of Educational Progress-Plus (ISTEP+) – but should also consider the growth or improvement of those students over time.

The ISTEP+ measures of proficiency in math and English provide essential information. At the present time, however, it is not possible for the Mayor's Office to track the progress of individual students on the ISTEP+ from year to year. Also, because first-year schools had just opened when ISTEP+ was administered in fall 2007, their results do not indicate how much students had learned at those charter schools. Instead, those schools' results provide information about their students' starting levels of knowledge and skills.

To ensure that the Mayor's Office, the schools, and the general public have an ongoing sense of the progress of Mayor-sponsored charter schools, the Mayor's Office requires the schools to administer an additional norm-referenced test in both the fall and spring of each year for all students in grades 2nd through 10th. This test, the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), is produced by the well-respected Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA). It is a battery of tests in several subject areas and is administered under uniform conditions in each subject and grade level. The test produces scores that can be compared to the average scores attained by students across Indiana and the nation as a whole.

State and national averages for the test enable observers to compare student results to similar students in Indiana and nationally. NWEA developed its norm groups by extensive sampling of student performance across districts from the major geographic regions of the country, the spectrum of district enrollment, and a broad range of socio-economic status. For example, over 2.3 million students are included in the most recent norming group as 2006-07. They are drawn from 5,616 schools in 794 school districts and 32 states, and include 1,942,468 students tested in the fall of 2003 and 2004 and 1,818,403 students tested in the spring of 2003 and 2004. Within Indiana, NWEA used a norming sample for reading of 323,582 students in the fall and 425,143 students in the spring. In short, the MAP is a sound, nationally- and state-normed test that is representative and recent.

Test Score Analysis Methods

In addition to using NWEA's assessments, the Mayor's Office also enlisted NWEA to conduct a rigorous analysis of the growth of school performance from fall to spring in the Mayor's charter schools during the 2007-08 academic year.

When producing the analysis, a three-step process was implemented for each grade and subject

area.

First, NWEA identified students who had taken a particular subject test in both fall 2007 and spring 2008. Students whose growth rates were more than 40 points above or below mean growth were excluded from the analysis. According to NWEA, growth rates this far away from the mean are extraordinarily likely to reflect data entry or other errors rather than actual changes in student performance over the course of the year. Only 40 out of 6,658 total scores across the three different tests, or 0.6%, were excluded from the analysis due to this rule. Using the remaining students' scores only, NWEA calculated the difference between the average spring score and the average fall score, by grade and subject area for each school. This difference was deemed the average growth rate for that school in that particular grade and subject.

Second, to provide state and national comparisons, the average growth rates within each subject and grade for a school were compared to the average growth rate for Indiana and the nation, respectively, as reported by NWEA. A statistical test was performed to determine if the school's growth rate was significantly different from the state or national average growth rate. If the school's growth rate was significantly larger than the average, the school was deemed to have "gained ground" compared to peers in the state or nation. If the school's growth rate was significantly smaller than the average, the school was deemed to have "lost ground" compared to peers in the state or nation. Otherwise, the school was deemed to have "stayed even."

Third, NWEA determined the percentage of students in grades 2 through 8 who were "on track" to reach proficiency. For each of these students, NWEA identified a target score on the MAP that the student would need to achieve to be proficient in math, reading, and language. If the student already met the target, he or she was deemed to be "on track." If the student had not yet met the target, NWEA determined how much growth the student needed to achieve from fall 2007 to spring 2008 to be on track to reach the target within a certain period of time, usually two years (see Figure B). If the student achieved the necessary amount of growth, he or she was deemed to be on target. The percentage of students whose growth rate is sufficient to become proficient over time is then calculated for each grade and subject within each school.

For example, a school has a 3rd grade student who, in fall 2007, was 34 points below the target score needed to be proficient by the end of 5th grade (and therefore proficient in the 5th grade Indiana Standards, measured by the ISTEP+ test administered at the beginning of 6th grade). According to NWEA's large database of student information, students normally achieve about 45% of their growth toward proficiency in the first year of this set. This student therefore needs to grow by about 15 points (45% of 34) in 3rd grade in order to be on track.

The MAP assessment does not have specific proficiency cut points or performance standards, but it does correlate to the ISTEP+ test. For example, a MAP score of 216 for grade 8 in Language Arts correlates to a level of "Pass" on the ISTEP.¹ These cut points were used to determine whether students were on track to reach proficiency over time. NWEA projected no more than two years into the future for any given student. Figure B shows how this calculation worked for each grade.

¹ For more information, please see the Northwest Evaluation Association Research Report, "A Study of the Alignment of the NWEA RIT Scale with the Indiana Assessment System," May 2007.

Monument Lighthouse Charter School	35	27	28	40	17	0	0	0	0
Southeast Neighborhood School Of Excellence	36	35	28	18	12	0	0	0	0
Reading									
Fall Creek Academy	11	14	7	13	14	24	18	10	2
Fountain Square Academy	0	0	0	8	12	20	34	6	12
Andrew J. Brown	57	60	59	52	49	28	23	0	0
Challenge Foundation Academy	47	46	39	41	0	0	0	0	0
Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School	0	0	0	0	50	64	43	29	21
Christel House Academy School	45	47	46	46	37	32	22	0	0
Decatur Discovery Academy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	27
Flanner House Elementary School	29	26	27	19	12	0	0	0	0
Herron High School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	67	68
Hope Academy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
Indianapolis Lighthouse Charter School	60	22	36	17	16	0	0	0	0
Indianapolis Metropolitan High School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	35	33
KIPP Indianapolis College Prep	0	0	0	19	49	45	27	0	0
Lawrence Early College High School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	37	7
Monument Lighthouse Charter School	35	27	29	39	15	0	0	0	0
Southeast Neighborhood School Of Excellence	37	32	28	16	9	0	0	0	0
Language									
Fall Creek Academy	11	22	10	15	15	22	18	11	2
Fountain Square Academy	0	0	0	8	12	30	34	14	11
Andrew J. Brown	61	58	58	51	50	27	29	0	0
Challenge Foundation Academy	48	48	40	42	0	0	0	0	0
Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School	0	0	0	0	49	63	38	29	20
Christel House Academy School	45	46	46	46	36	31	22	0	0
Decatur Discovery Academy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	23	26
Flanner House Elementary School	31	32	27	21	13	0	0	0	0
Herron High School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	67	70
Hope Academy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
Indianapolis Lighthouse Charter School	60	19	36	17	13	20	0	0	0
Indianapolis Metropolitan High School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	41	41
KIPP Indianapolis College Prep	0	0	0	1	39	27	0	0	0
Lawrence Early College High School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	18	6
Monument Lighthouse Charter School	33	28	28	38	17	0	0	0	0
Southeast Neighborhood School Of Excellence	38	30	30	16	13	0	0	0	0

Figure D. Number of students included in the sufficient gains analysis, by school, subject, and grade level

School Name	Grade Level							
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Math								
Fall Creek Academy	10	19	8	15	16	24	18	
Fountain Square Academy	0	0	0	8	10	24	29	
Andrew J. Brown	63	57	59	51	49	27	29	
Challenge Foundation Academy	47	46	40	42	0	0	0	
Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School	0	0	0	0	48	61	37	
Christel House Academy School	47	46	45	46	30	30	21	
Flanner House Elementary School	32	30	30	22	15	0	0	
Indianapolis Lighthouse Charter School	60	22	37	17	15	20	0	
KIPP Indianapolis College Prep	0	0	0	4	41	40	22	
Monument Lighthouse Charter School	35	27	28	40	17	0	0	

Southeast Neighborhood School Of Excellence	36	35	28	18	12	0	0
Reading							
Fall Creek Academy	11	14	7	13	14	24	18
Fountain Square Academy	0	0	0	8	12	20	34
Andrew J. Brown	57	60	59	52	49	28	23
Challenge Foundation Academy	47	46	39	41	0	0	0
Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School	0	0	0	0	50	64	43
Christel House Academy School	45	47	46	46	37	32	22
Flanner House Elementary School	29	26	27	19	12	0	0
Indianapolis Lighthouse Charter School	60	22	36	17	16	20	0
KIPP Indianapolis College Prep	0	0	0	19	49	45	27
Monument Lighthouse Charter School	35	27	29	39	15	0	0
Southeast Neighborhood School Of Excellence	37	32	28	16	9	0	0
Language							
Fall Creek Academy	11	22	10	15	15	22	18
Fountain Square Academy	0	0	0	8	12	30	34
Andrew J. Brown	61	58	58	51	50	27	29
Challenge Foundation Academy	48	48	40	42	0	0	0
Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School	0	0	0	0	49	63	38
Christel House Academy School	45	46	46	46	36	31	22
Flanner House Elementary School	31	32	27	21	13	0	0
Indianapolis Lighthouse Charter School	60	19	36	17	13	20	0
KIPP Indianapolis College Prep	0	0	0	1	39	27	0
Monument Lighthouse Charter School	33	28	28	38	17	0	0
Southeast Neighborhood School Of Excellence	38	30	30	16	13	0	0
