

INDIANAPOLIS MAYOR'S OFFICE FOURTH YEAR CHARTER REVIEW

CHARLES A. TINDLEY ACCELERATED SCHOOL

March 10-12, 2008

The Indianapolis Mayor's Office Fourth Year Charter Review (FYCR) is designed to assess the extent to which a school is meeting the standards for renewal at the mid-point of its charter term. The FYCR Protocol is based on the *Performance Framework*, which is used to determine a school's success relative to a common set of indicators, as well as to school-based goals.

Consistent with the Indianapolis Mayor's Office Performance Framework, the following four core questions and sub-questions are examined to determine a school's success:

1. *Is the educational program a success?*

- 1.1. *Is the school making adequate yearly academic progress, as measured by the Indiana Department of Education's system of accountability?*
- 1.2. *Are students making substantial and adequate gains over time, as measured using value-added analysis?*
- 1.3. *Is the school outperforming schools that the students would have been assigned to attend?*
- 1.4. *Is the school meeting its school-specific educational goals?*

2. *Is the organization effective and well-run?*

- 2.1. *Is the school in sound fiscal health?*
- 2.2. *Are the school's student enrollment, attendance, and retention rates strong?*
- 2.3. *Is the school's Board active and competent in its oversight?*
- 2.4. *Is there a high level of parent satisfaction with the school?*
- 2.5. *Is the school administration strong in its academic and organizational leadership?*
- 2.6. *Is the school meeting its school-specific organizational and management performance goals?*

3. *Is the school meeting its operations and access obligations?*

- 3.1. *Has the school satisfactorily completed all of its organizational structure and governance obligations?*
- 3.2. *Is the school's physical plant safe and conducive to learning?*
- 3.3. *Has the school established and implemented a fair and appropriate pupil enrollment process?*
- 3.4. *Is the school properly maintaining special education files for its special needs students?*
- 3.5. *Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related to access and services to students with limited English proficiency?*

4. *Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?*

- 4.1. *Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?*
- 4.2. *Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?*
- 4.3. *For secondary students, does the school provide sufficient guidance on and support and preparation for post-secondary options?*
- 4.4. *Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?*
- 4.5. *Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?*
- 4.6. *Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?*
- 4.7. *Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success?*
- 4.8. *Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?*

COMPLETION OF THE FOURTH YEAR CHARTER REVIEW

As part of its oversight of charter schools, the Mayor's Office engaged SchoolWorks to conduct site visits of schools in their fourth year of operation. The purpose is to present the school and the Mayor's Office a professional judgment on conditions and practices at the school, which are best provided through an external perspective. The FYCR site visit uses multiple sources of evidence to understand the school's performance. Evidence collection begins before the visit with the review of key documents and continues on-site through additional document review, classroom visits and interviews with any number of stakeholders. Findings provided by the site visit team can be used to celebrate what the school is doing well and prioritize its areas for improvement in preparation for renewal. It is the task of the site visit team to report on the following pre-identified aspects of the *Performance Framework* and to assist the Mayor's Office in its completion of the FYCR Protocol: ***Core Question 4 and all of its sub-questions (4.1-4.8), sub-question 2.3 and sub-question 2.5. Responses to Core Question 1 and all of its sub-questions (1.1-1.4), Core Question 3 and all of its sub-questions (3.1-3.5), and sub-questions 2.1, 2.2 and 2.4 will be completed by the Mayor's Office.***

The outcome of the FYCR will provide the school with a written report that includes a judgment and supporting evidence on various aspects of the school, based on a rubric of indicators¹ developed for each of the four core questions and sub-questions in the *Performance Framework*. The assessment system utilizes the following judgments:

- Does not meet standard*
- Approaching standard*
- Meets standard*
- Exceeds standard*

Note: In the case of the sub-questions under ***Core Question 3*** and ***Core Question 4*** of the *Performance Framework*, there is no rating for *Exceeds standard*. *Meets standard* is the highest possible rating.

¹ Rubric indicators are subject to revision by the Mayor's Office.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

CHARLES A. TINDLEY ACCERATED SCHOOL

| Core Question 1: Is the educational program a success? | FINDING |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1.1. Is the school making adequate yearly academic progress, as measured by the Indiana Department of Education's system of accountability? | Exceeds Standard |
| 1.2. Are students making substantial and adequate gains over time, as measured using value-added analysis? | Approaching Standard |
| 1.3. Is the school outperforming schools that the students would have been assigned to attend? | Not Evaluated² |
| 1.4. Is the school meeting its school-specific educational goals? | Not Applicable³ |
| Core Question 2: Is the organization effective and well-run? | FINDING |
| 2.1. Is the school in sound fiscal health? | Approaching Standard |
| 2.2. Are the school's student enrollment, attendance, and retention rates strong? | Does Not Meet Standard |
| 2.3. Is the school's Board active and competent in its oversight? | Meets Standard |
| 2.4. Is there a high level of parent satisfaction with the school? | Meets Standard |
| 2.5. Is the school administration strong in its academic and organizational leadership? | Meets Standard |
| 2.6. Is the school meeting its school-specific organizational and management performance goals? | Not Applicable⁴ |
| Core Question 3: Is the school meeting its operations and access obligations? | FINDING |
| 3.1. Has the school satisfactorily completed all of its organizational structure and governance obligations? | Does Not Meet Standard |
| 3.2. Is the school's physical plant safe and conducive to learning? | Meets Standard |
| 3.3. Has the school established and implemented a fair and appropriate pupil enrollment process? | Meets Standard |
| 3.4. Is the school properly maintaining special education files for its special needs students? | Approaching Standard |
| 3.5. Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related to access and services to students with limited English proficiency? | Not Evaluated⁵ |
| Core Question 4: Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success? | FINDING |
| 4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade? | Meets Standard |
| 4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission? | Approaching Standard |
| 4.3. For secondary students, does the school provide sufficient guidance on and support and preparation for post-secondary options? | Meets Standard |
| 4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction? | Meets Standard |
| 4.5. Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively? | Does Not Meet Standard |
| 4.6. Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders? | Meets Standard |
| 4.7. Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success? | Meets Standard |
| 4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful? | Meets Standard |

² The school was not evaluated in comparison to schools students would have attended.

³ The school did not have school-specific educational goals that were evaluated for the FYCR

⁴ The school did not have organizational and management performance goals that were evaluated for the FYCR

⁵ The school was not evaluated on access and services to students with limited English proficiency.

FINDINGS, INDICATORS AND EVIDENCE

CHARLES A. TINDLEY ACCELERATED SCHOOL

Core Question 1: Is the educational program a success?

| 1.1. Is the school making adequate yearly academic progress (AYP), as measured by the Indiana Department of Education's system of accountability? | |
|--|---|
| Does not meet standard | School has met AYP in less than half of student subgroups for the last two consecutive years. |
| Approaching standard | School has met AYP in more than half of student subgroups for one of the last two years. |
| Meets standard | School has met AYP across all student subgroups for the last two years. |
| Exceeds standard | School has exceeded the AYP target in all student subgroups in at least one of the last two years. |

Exceeds Standard. Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School (CTAS) achieved Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) toward statewide academic goals set by the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) in 2006 and 2007. Student performance exceeded statewide targets each year on both English/Language Arts and mathematics examinations. The school also achieved attendance and participation rate targets each school year.

Reports provided by the IDOE indicated that CTAS made AYP in 2006 and 2007. Across school years, CTAS met the required attendance and participation rate standard of 95%. CTAS students exceeded performance targets established by the IDOE in both English/Language arts and mathematics for both the aggregate (i.e. all students) population as well as disaggregated subgroups (African-American students, students who qualified for free and reduced priced lunch) across school years in order to make AYP. CTAS achieved AYP without relying on alternative methods such as the Safe Harbor Provision or alternate attendance rate standards.

In summary, the school exceeded the IDOE's standard for achieving AYP. It achieved AYP each of the past two years and exceeded AYP targets in all student subgroups.

| 1.2. Are students making substantial and adequate gains over time, as measured using value-added analysis? | |
|---|---|
| Does not meet standard | Value-added analysis indicates that less than 50% of tested students made sufficient gains. |
| Approaching standard | Value-added analysis indicates that 50%-74% of tested students made sufficient gains. |
| Meets standard | Value-added analysis indicates that more than 75%-89% of tested students made sufficient gains. |
| Exceeds standard | Value-added analysis indicates that at least 90% of tested students made sufficient gains. |

Approaching Standard. Analysis of data on fall-to-spring gains over four years revealed that an average of 72% of students achieved sufficient gains to reach proficiency over time. This percentage is approaching the Mayor's standard of at least 75% of students making sufficient gains.

The value-added analysis uses the Northwest Evaluation Association's Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) to determine and predict student gains over time. Student assessment results were analyzed in

reading, language arts and mathematics to determine an overall percentage of students that are likely to achieve proficiency on ISTEP+ within two years time (e.g. the percentage of 6th grade students making sufficient progress to achieve proficiency by the end of 8th grade, and thus able to pass ISTEP+ the following fall). For each student, analysts projected the student’s test scores into the future based on the amount of progress that each student made on the MAP test between fall and spring. Analysts then compared that projected score to the score needed to pass Indiana’s ISTEP+ exam at that future time (i.e., proficiency score). Finally, analysts calculated the average percentage across all grades (sixth through eighth where applicable), subjects (reading, math, and language), and years (2005-06, 2006-2007, 2007-2008).⁶ The result was a single percentage, which determines the rating for the school according to the rubric above.

In the 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-8 school years, CTAS students showed average sufficient gains of 64.5%, 73.0% and 79.5% respectively.

In summary, the school’s multi-year average of 72.0% places the school in the Approaching Standard category in the Mayor’s performance framework.

| Year | Average Sufficient Gain |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 2005-2006 | 64.5% |
| 2006-2007 | 73.0% |
| 2007-2008 | 79.5% |
| Multi-Year Average | 72.0% |

| 1.3. Is the school outperforming schools that the students would have been assigned to attend? | |
|--|---|
| Does not meet standard | School’s overall performance in terms of proficiency and/or growth is generally lower than that of the schools the students would otherwise have been assigned to attend in each of the last three years. |
| Approaching standard | School’s overall performance in terms of both proficiency and/or growth is generally lower than that of the schools the students would otherwise have been assigned to attend in two of the last three years. |
| Meets standard | School’s overall performance in terms of both proficiency and/or growth is generally as good as that of the schools the students would otherwise have been assigned to attend. |
| Exceeds standard | School’s performance consistently outpaces that of the schools the students would otherwise have been assigned to attend. |

Not Evaluated.

⁶ CTAS enrolled 8th and 9th graders in 2004-2005. The Northwest Evaluation Association analysts were only able to provide proficiency projections for students in grades 2-7 in 2004-2005 and thus, no sufficient gains data is available for CTAS for this year.

| 1.4. Is the school meeting its school-specific educational goals? | |
|--|---|
| Does not meet standard | School has clearly not met its school-specific educational goal. |
| Approaching standard | School is making good progress toward meeting its school-specific educational goal. |
| Meets standard | School has clearly met its school-specific educational goal. |
| Exceeds standard | School has clearly exceeded its school-specific educational goal. |

Not Applicable. CTAS did not have school-specific educational goals that were evaluated for the FYCR.

Core Question 2: Is the organization effective and well-run?

| 2.1. Is the school in sound fiscal health? | |
|---|---|
| Does not meet standard | The school presents concerns in <u>three or more</u> of the following areas: a) its state financial audits (e.g., presence of “significant findings”); b) its financial staffing and systems; c) its success in achieving a balanced budget over the past three years; d) the adequacy of its projections of revenues and expenses for the next three years; e) its fulfillment of financial reporting requirements under Sections 10 and 17 of the charter agreement. |
| Approaching standard | The school presents significant concerns in <u>one or two</u> of the following areas: a) its state financial audits (e.g., presence of “significant findings”); b) its financial staffing and systems; c) its success in achieving a balanced budget over the past three years; d) the adequacy of its projections of revenues and expenses for the next three years; e) its fulfillment of financial reporting requirements under Sections 10 and 17 of the charter agreement. |
| Meets standard | The school presents significant concerns in no more than <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) its state financial audits (e.g., presence of “significant findings”); b) its financial staffing and systems; c) its success in achieving a balanced budget over the past three years; d) the adequacy of its projections of revenues and expenses for the next three years; e) its fulfillment of financial reporting requirements under Sections 10 and 17 of the charter agreement. In addition, if the school presents significant concerns in one area, it has a credible plan for addressing the concern that has been approved by the Mayor’s Office. |
| Exceeds standard | The school demonstrates satisfactory performance in all of the areas listed in previous levels. |

Approaching Standard. Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School has not corrected “significant findings” from its state financial audits, and has not achieved a balanced budget. In addition, for the past two years the school has been significantly underenrolled. Coupled with its high facility debt, these factors have left the school with significant short- and long-term financial concerns.

The school was audited twice by the Indiana State Board of Accounts (SBOA) for the time periods of July 1, 2003 to June 30, 2005 and July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2007. The first audit (2003-2005) outlined several findings, including Board meeting minutes nor public records related to financial transactions were available for the auditors to review, and that the school did not obtain an official bond for the school’s treasurer in a timely manner. Findings from the second ISBA audit (for 2005-2007) showed that the school had not rectified many of these issues. Records were not presented for examination, including board minutes, salary and benefit information for employees, and records related to financial transactions. An official bond had not yet been obtained for the necessary officials. In addition to these repeat findings, the second audit revealed that several of the school’s funds were overdrawn, and penalties were assigned to the school by the Internal Revenue Service in October of 2006.

The school has consistently generated revenue from external sources to support operational and programmatic expenses, but has not used these funds to develop its financial reserves. This means that

the school is highly dependent on external contributions and fundraising to support operational and programmatic expenses, making its long-term financial health uncertain. The school has very limited financial reserves and is heavily in debt, due primarily to high facility costs.

In order to address many of these concerns, the school has recently begun to rely more heavily on an experienced accounting firm to assist with financial management practices, and the school's board is exploring ways of addressing fiscal health concerns. Plans to address the school's fiscal health concerns and financial management practices have not been fully developed or implemented as of yet, however. Thus, the school and its board must further develop and implement a plan that brings both immediate and long-term financial stability to the school that allows the school to fulfill its educational mission long-term.

| 2.2. Are the school's student enrollment, attendance, and retention rates strong? | |
|--|---|
| Does not meet standard | The school's actual enrollment consistently falls short of target enrollment by <u>10% or more</u>. Student attendance and retention rates are consistently below the school's agreed-upon target rates. |
| Approaching standard | The school's actual enrollment consistently falls short of target enrollment by <u>1-9%</u> . Student attendance and retention rates are consistently below the school's agreed-upon target rates. |
| Meets standard | The school is consistently fully enrolled. Student attendance and retention rates are generally at or above the school's agreed-upon target rates. |
| Exceeds standard | The school is consistently fully enrolled. Student attendance and retention rates consistently exceed the school's agreed-upon target rates. |

Does Not Meet Standard. Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School (CTAS) has been consistently under-enrolled during the first four years of its charter term. The school achieved full enrollment during the 2005-2006 school year, yet fell short of enrollment targets agreed upon in the charter during all other years.

The following table displays the target enrollment compared with the school's official fall enrollment reported to the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE). Each year, with the exception of the 2005-2006 academic year, the school fell significantly short of its enrollment target.

| School Year | Target Enrollment | Fall Enrollment | Percent Below |
|--------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| 2004-2005 | 160 | 138 | 13.8% |
| 2005-2006 | 240 | 241 | 0% |
| 2006-2007 | 320 | 245 | 23.4% |
| 2007-2008 | 400 | 325 | 18.8% |

Source: Target Enrollment data are from the school's charter. Fall Enrollment data are from the Indiana Department of Education.

Attendance rates at CTAS were consistently above the IDOE's target of 95% over the last four years.

| School Year | Attendance Rate |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| 2004-2005 | 97.1% |
| 2005-2006 | 95.1% |

| | |
|-----------|-------|
| 2006-2007 | 96.0% |
| 2007-2008 | 97.0% |

Source: Indiana Department of Education.

No targets have been established for student retention rates for CTAS. Retention rates were at their highest from the Fall of 2006 to the Fall of 2007 (63.7%), but the rate of retention has not been consistently high.

| Years | Students Enrolled Initial Year | Students Re-enrolled Following Year | Retention Rate |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Fall 2004 to Fall 2005 | 163 | 91 | 55.8% |
| Fall 2005 to Fall 2006 | 240 | 115 | 47.9% |
| Fall 2006 to Fall 2007 | 237 | 151 | 63.7% |

Source: Mayor's office analysis of fall enrollment reports submitted by the school.

In summary, CTAS has been consistently above the state's target for attendance each of the last three years, but has not been consistently fully enrolled and has not demonstrated a consistently high retention rate. In order to meet this standard, the school will need to maintain its attendance rate, improve its enrollment and its ability to re-enroll students year-to-year.

| 2.3. Is the school's Board active and competent in its oversight? | |
|--|--|
| Does not meet standard | The school appears to lack clear, consistent, and competent stewardship. The Board lacks the number of members specified in the by-laws; it is not well-balanced in member expertise; there has been consistently high turnover on the Board unrelated to the term limits stipulated in the Board's by-laws; roles and responsibilities of the Board are not clear; it often fails to achieve a quorum. |
| Approaching standard | Board membership is not complete; there has been some unanticipated turnover on the Board unrelated to the term limits stipulated in the Board's by-laws; it is reasonably well-balanced in member expertise; roles and responsibilities on the Board are reasonably clear; it is difficult to get a quorum; Board subcommittees are somewhat active; the Board is developing its ability to provide clear, consistent, and competent stewardship. |
| Meets standard | The Board's membership collectively contributes a broad skill set and fair representation of the community; Board members are knowledgeable about the school; roles and responsibilities of the Board are clearly delineated; Board meetings reflect thoughtful discussion and progress in the consideration of issues; overall, the Board provides consistent and competent stewardship of the school. |
| Exceeds standard | The Board meets the standard for this sub-question AND: displays exceptional expertise and stewardship, as evidenced by significant Board actions to enhance the school over time. |

Meets Standard. The Board at Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School (CTAS) is active, experienced, and provides competent oversight of the school. There is a broad range of expertise on the Board, and Board members are knowledgeable about the school, its policies, and issues of concern. The roles and responsibilities of the Board and its members are clearly defined.

The Board roster for 2007-2008 reveals fourteen members with a wide range of expertise drawing from experience in many fields, including finance, law, social services, medicine, insurance, public relations

and marketing, human resources management, and business. The board members in the focus group reported that they were looking for a professional educator to join the board to provide more expertise in this area.

From the school’s inception, the Board has provided the school with leadership and support. Accountability reports for the past three years all indicate a board that is “highly motivated, active, and offers innovative ideas for solving problems.” Interviews with both the Board members and the school leadership team revealed that Board members visit the school several times a month; one Board member visits nearly every day. Also, both groups discussed several professional services that Board members provide for the school pro bono, such as college financial aid advice and legal advice. The roles and responsibilities of the Board are clearly defined. A number of committees are focused on specific tasks and challenges facing the Board: governance, by-laws, finance, nominating, fund-raising, and the Board is currently exploring adding additional committees. Board minutes reflect evidence of committee work, such as a development committee report regarding database work and “possible donation from UPS,” and a personnel committee report regarding a maternity leave issue and the plan to hire a part-time Spanish instructor (meeting of 10/25/08). The Board meets monthly and the minutes of the past year’s meetings reflect thoughtful discussion and progress in consideration of issues. Previous accountability reports expressed a need for the Board to make some improvements in its public access and accountability. The interview with the Board members indicated that the Board complies with all Open Door Law policies by posting adequate notice of meetings and publishing accurate minutes. Minutes of the past year’s meetings revealed six of seven meetings achieved quorum. The minutes described board discussion and actions for each meeting. The Fourth Year Charter Review (FYCR) site visit team concluded that the Board has made progress regarding public access and accountability, and it must continue to assure its public access and publish accurate minutes that reveal details of their deliberations.

The Board members interviewed expressed the Board’s focus of attention on the facility debt facing the school. The school currently is paying only the annual interest on the loan and soon must re-negotiate that debt. Fund-raising and debt reduction are challenges that the Board recognizes must be faced successfully in order for the school to prosper.

In summary, evidence indicates the Board includes broad representation from the community, brings a range of skills, and provides consistent and competent direction for the school. Also, the Board is highly visible in the school and provides many essential services at no cost to the school. Therefore, the FYCR site visit team concluded that the Board has met the standard.

| 2.4. Is there a high level of parent satisfaction with the school? | |
|---|--|
| Does not meet standard | Less than 70% of parents surveyed indicate that they are satisfied overall with the school. |
| Approaching standard | More than 70% but less than 80% of parents surveyed indicate that they are satisfied overall with the school. |
| Meets standard | More than 80% but less than 90% of parents surveyed indicate that they are satisfied overall with the school. |
| Exceeds standard | At least 90% of parents surveyed indicate that they are satisfied overall with the school. |

Meets Standard. Averaged across the last four years, 89.05% of parents surveyed indicated that they are satisfied overall with Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School. In the spring of each year, an anonymous survey was administered to all parents and guardians of students enrolled at the school by the Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning at the University of Indianapolis (2004 to 2007) and the Center for

Evaluation and Education Policy at Indiana University (2008). Of the parents surveyed, between 86% and 96% of parents indicated overall satisfaction (see chart below).

| School Year | Percent Satisfied |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| 2004-2005 | 96% |
| 2005-2006 | 86% |
| 2006-2007 | 87% |
| 2007-2008 | 90% |
| Multi-Year Weighted Average | 89.05% |

Note: “Percent Satisfied” includes “very satisfied” and “somewhat satisfied” responses which were on a five-point scale that also included “satisfied”, “somewhat dissatisfied”, and “very dissatisfied”.

Source: Confidential survey results administered by the University of Indianapolis (2004 to 2007) and Indiana University (2008).

| 2.5. Is the school administration strong in its academic and organizational leadership? | |
|--|---|
| Does not meet standard | The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address them: a) the leadership has insufficient academic and/or business expertise; b) turnover in leadership has been high and/or damaging to the school; c) roles and responsibilities among leaders and between leaders and the Board are generally unclear; d) the school’s leadership does not appear to actively engage in a process of continuous improvement; it has made few mid-course corrections in response to problems. |
| Approaching standard | The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address it: a) the leadership has insufficient academic and/or business expertise; b) turnover in leadership has been high and/or damaging to the school; c) roles and responsibilities among leaders and between leaders and the Board are generally unclear; d) the school’s leadership does not appear to actively engage in a process of continuous improvement; it has made few mid-course corrections in response to problems. |
| Meets standard | The school’s leadership a) has sufficient academic and/or business expertise; b) has been sufficiently stable over time; c) has clearly defined roles and responsibilities among leaders and between leaders and the Board; d) actively engages in a process of continuous improvement which has led to some mid-course corrections. |
| Exceeds standard | The leadership displays exceptional academic and business expertise. Leadership turnover has been manageable and appropriate. Roles and responsibilities among leaders and between leaders and the Board are clear. The leadership has established exemplary processes to engage in continuous improvement which have led to significant enhancements to the school over time. |

Meets Standard. The administration of Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School is strong in its academic and organizational leadership. The Fourth Year Charter Review (FYCR) site visit team found many instances of active engagement in continuous improvement processes. Teacher surveys, constituent focus groups, and interviews with parents, board members, and teachers indicate that the principal is a strong leader and that the leadership team functions well to support the school community.

The school administration has sufficient academic and/or business experience, and its stability over time has helped the school to grow. The most recent accountability report commended the school’s “stable leadership for three years” and credited that leadership with the development of a “culture of high

expectation for student performance.” Seven out of nine members of the leadership team have been with the school for at least three of its four years, and they bring experience and specific expertise to their work. Each team member brings a strength and focus in areas such as instruction, curriculum, assessment, accelerated coursework and student services. The school is looking to hire a business manager in the near future.

The roles and responsibilities of school leaders are clearly defined. The organizational chart documents clearly defined roles and responsibilities for school leaders. The leadership team has a clear understanding of their individual roles (assessment, guidance, discipline, support services, etc.), and further described the “multiple hats” that each wears and how “everyone does multiple jobs here.” In focus groups, teachers reported having a general understanding of the roles of school leadership. Although formal job descriptions were not available, the individuals on the team were clearly capable of multiple responsibilities and worked very well together.

There is less clarity around instructional leadership at the school. In focus groups, teachers reported that there are several sources of support and supervision of instruction (e.g., they could ask the Principal, Assistant Principal or Assessment Director to observe), but they were not able to articulate a clear responsibility or system of management in this area. Overall, teachers indicated that they feel supported on many issues. One teacher commented, “After 16 years of teaching ... this is home. I can’t imagine going to a school with such administrative support.” On the one hand, all teachers in focus groups reported high levels of support, but on the other hand, they indicated a need for more definition regarding instructional supervision and evaluation.

The school clearly engages in a process of continual improvement that has led to many mid-course corrections. In focus groups, the leadership team, parents, and teachers presented multiple examples of mid-course corrections, such as homework club, mandatory Saturday support, switching from a trimester to semester structure, single-gender classes, and curriculum improvements. The vertical articulation of curriculum is an example of a very successful improvement effort. There is documented evidence of a rigorous self-study, with outside experts and all teachers participating. More importantly, evidence in course syllabi demonstrates that the process is being used in the classroom. The leadership team understands its own institutional development is in its start-up phase, and both leadership and teachers report that changes are made because, “you do whatever children need to be successful.” There have been many mid-course corrections based on the leadership team’s focus on what students need to be successful.

The Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School currently has sufficient academic expertise and leadership capacity. While much of it continues to reside in the person of the principal, who has led the school since its inception and whom all constituencies describe as an outstanding leader, the school is moving towards assuring the continuation of strong leadership by the ongoing development of its currently strong school leadership team. Enacting the plan to hire a business manager will strengthen the school’s ability to provide outstanding leadership. While there are areas noted above for improvement and further development, the FYCR site visit team concluded that the evidence indicates that the school administration has met the standard.

| 2.6. Is the school meeting its school-specific organizational and management performance goals? | |
|--|--|
| Does not meet standard | School has clearly not met its school-specific organizational goal. |
| Approaching standard | School is making good progress toward meeting its school-specific organizational goal. |

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Meets standard | School has clearly met its school-specific organizational goal. |
| Exceeds standard | School has clearly exceeded its school-specific organizational goal. |

Not Applicable. CTAS did not have school-specific organizational and management performance goals that were evaluated for the FYCR.

Core Question 3: Is the school meeting its operations and access obligations?

| 3.1. Has the school satisfactorily completed all of its organizational and governance obligations? | |
|---|---|
| Does not meet standard | School presents significant concerns in two or more of its organizational and governance obligations as specified in the Compliance and Governance Handbook, with no evidence of a credible plan to address them: a) maintenance of adequate “compliance and governance binder” containing all required documents; b) completion of criminal background checks on all board members; c) transparency of meetings and decision-making in accordance with open meetings obligations; d) maintenance of adequate board minutes. |
| Approaching standard | School presents significant concerns in one of its organizational and governance obligations as specified in the Compliance and Governance Handbook, with no evidence of a credible plan to address it: a) maintenance of adequate “compliance and governance binder” containing all required documents; b) completion of criminal background checks on all board members; c) transparency of meetings and decision-making in accordance with open meetings obligations; d) maintenance of adequate board minutes |
| Meets standard | School has substantially completed all of its organizational and governance obligations as specified in the Compliance and Governance Handbook, including: a) maintenance of adequate “compliance and governance binder” containing all required documents; b) completion of criminal background checks on all board members; c) transparency of meetings and decision-making in accordance with open meetings obligations; d) maintenance of adequate board minutes. Any concerns are minor and the school presents a credible plan to address them. |

Does Not Meet Standard. Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School (CTAS) has not completed its organizational and governance obligations as specified in the Compliance and Governance Handbook. The school has been routinely delinquent in submitting required reports or documents to both the Mayor’s Office, and to other regulatory agencies.

During each of the four years CTAS has been in operation, school leadership was responsible for maintaining the compliance binder and documents, which were routinely submitted significantly late. According to records maintained by Mayor’s Office, CTAS was late submitting required documentation and/or reports to the Mayor’s Office, the Indiana State Board of Accounts, and the Indiana Department of Education. In addition, the school experienced difficulty in ensuring that staff applied for and/or received the credentials required of teachers by the Indiana Professional Standards board in 2004-2005, 2005-2006, 2006-2007 and 2007-2008.

Furthermore, while the school has made progress in the last four years, it still does not always ensure strict adherence to the Open Door Law including timely posting of board meetings and keeping accurate minutes. Meeting minutes were often incomplete or submitted to the Mayor’s Office significantly late, despite repeated written requests. Board minutes were also not submitted or were submitted late for audits conducted by the Indiana State Board of Accounts in 2006 and 2008.

During the 2007-2008 school year, CTAS began working on a plan to bring the compliance binder up-to-date and perform required reporting in a more efficient manner. The plan included adding a business manager to the school staff, and restructuring reporting responsibilities among existing staff members. The plan has not yet been fully implemented.

In summary, Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School has not completed its organizational and governance obligations as specified in the Compliance and Governance Handbook. While the school has started to develop a plan to address these issues, CTAS must fully develop, implement, and monitor the effectiveness of this plan.

| 3.2. Is the school’s physical plant safe and conducive to learning? | |
|--|--|
| Does not meet standard | The facility requires <u>much</u> improvement in order to provide a safe environment that is conducive to learning. Significant health and safety code requirements have not been met AND/OR the school <u>lacks</u> many conditions such as the following: a design well-suited to meet the curricular and social needs of its students, faculty, and community members; a size appropriate for the enrollment and student-teacher ratios in each class; adequate maintenance and security; well-maintained equipment and furniture that match the educational needs of the students; and accessibility to all students. |
| Approaching standard | Significant health and safety code requirements are being met, but the facility needs <u>some</u> improvement in order to provide a safe environment that is conducive to learning. It <u>partially</u> – but not fully – provides conditions such as the following: a design well-suited to meet the curricular and social needs of its students, faculty, and community members; a size appropriate for the enrollment and student-teacher ratios in each class; good maintenance and security; well-maintained equipment and furniture that match the educational needs of the students; and accessibility to all students. |
| Meets standard | Significant health and safety code requirements are being met AND the facility generally provides a safe environment that is conducive to learning, based on conditions such as: a design well-suited to meet the curricular and social needs of its students, faculty, and community members; a size appropriate for the enrollment and student-teacher ratios in each class; good maintenance and security; well-maintained equipment and furniture that match the educational needs of the students; and accessibility to all students. |

Meets Standard. The Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School facility meets all the health and safety code requirements and provides a safe environment conducive to learning. The facility’s design, size, maintenance, security, equipment, and furniture are all adequate to meet the school’s needs. The school is accessible to all including people with physical disabilities.

| 3.3. Has the school established and implemented a fair and appropriate pupil enrollment process? | |
|---|--|
| Does not meet standard | The school’s enrollment process does not comply with applicable law AND/OR the school exhibits one or both of the following deficiencies a) a substantial number of documented parent complaints suggest that it is not being implemented fairly or appropriately; b) the school has not engaged in outreach to students throughout the community. |
| Approaching standard | The school’s enrollment process complies with applicable law but exhibits one or both the following deficiencies: a) a substantial number of documented parent complaints suggest that it is not being implemented fairly or appropriately; b) the school has not engaged in outreach to students throughout the community. |
| Meets standard | The school’s enrollment process complies with applicable law; there are minimal documented parent complaints suggesting that it is not being implemented fairly or appropriately; AND the school has engaged in outreach to students throughout the |

community.

Meets Standard. The admission and enrollment practices of the Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School (CTAS) generally meet the requirements of Indiana’s charter school law. During the school’s second year, it adopted an enrollment process that required parents and students to complete a lengthy application form prior to students being admitted to the school through its lottery process. The school quickly discontinued this process and now utilizes a one page information form prior to its lottery process, in line with access expectations set by the Mayor’s Office. The Mayor’s Office has received no complaints from parents regarding the school’s enrollment practices. The school conducts extensive outreach to parents, including advertisement, tours, job fairs, distribution of brochures, and word of mouth. The Mayor’s Office receives copies of CTAS’s enrollment policies and marketing plans. The school has implemented a lottery system and gives preference to siblings of current students, as required by law.

| 3.4. Is the school properly maintaining special education files for its special needs students? | |
|--|--|
| Does not meet standard | The school is not fulfilling its legal obligations regarding proper maintenance of special needs students’ files, and requires substantial improvement in order to achieve compliance such as the following: individualized education plans are up-to-date, student evaluations or re-evaluations have occurred within the appropriate timeframe, files contain the relevant required information, such as, file log sheet, parent consent form, documentation of case conference notification to parents and other conference participants and signatures of attendees at case conferences. A school does not meet the standard if any individual education plans have not been updated within the appropriate timeframe. |
| Approaching standard | The school is not yet completely fulfilling all of its legal obligations related to proper maintenance of special-needs students’ files, and requires <i>some</i> (but not considerable) improvement to fully achieve conditions such as the following: individualized education plans are up-to-date, student evaluations or re-evaluations have occurred within the appropriate timeframe, files contain the relevant required information, such as, file log sheet, parent consent form, documentation of case conference notification to parents and other conference participants and signatures of attendees at case conferences. |
| Meets standard | The school is fulfilling its legal obligations regarding special-needs students, as indicated by conditions such as the following: individualized education plans are up-to-date, student evaluations or re-evaluations have occurred within the appropriate timeframe, files contain the relevant required information, such as, file log sheet, parent consent form, documentation of case conference notification to parents and other conference participants and signatures of attendees at case conferences. |

Approaching Standard. The Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School is currently approaching the standard established for proper maintenance of students’ special education files. Files were found to generally be in good order having all necessary components, with a few exceptions.

In order to evaluate this question, an expert analyst conducted a file review in the spring of 2008 of the school’s special education files. Except for a few issues, files were found to be in good order with all the necessary components present. In all instances parents were provided notification of the case conference convening, and in all but one instance this notification was provided 10 days or more in advance. All Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) were current and in compliance. However, the school received notice from the Indiana Department of Education of less than full compliance in completing evaluations within a 60 day timeframe, and two files did not have log sheets at the time they were reviewed.

| 3.5. Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related To access and services to English as a Second Language (ESL) students? | |
|---|--|
| Does not meet standard | The school is <u>not</u> fulfilling its legal obligations regarding ESL students, and requires substantial improvement in order to achieve conditions such as the following: appropriate staff have a clear understanding of current legislation, research and effective practices relating to the provision of ESL services; relationships with students, parents, and external providers that are well-managed and comply with law and regulation. |
| Approaching standard | The school is <u>not yet completely</u> fulfilling all of its legal obligations regarding ESL students, and requires <i>some</i> (but not considerable) improvement to fully achieve conditions such as the following: appropriate staff have a clear understanding of current legislation, research and effective practices relating to the provision of ESL services; relationships with students, parents, and external providers that are well-managed and comply with law and regulation. |
| Meets standard | The school is fulfilling its legal obligations regarding ESL students, as indicated by conditions such as the following: appropriate staff have a clear understanding of current legislation, research and effective practices relating to the provision of ESL services; relationships with students, parents, and external providers that are well-managed and comply with law and regulation. |

Not Applicable. The Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School was not evaluated on this indicator as a part of the Fourth Year Charter Review.

Core Question 4: Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?

| 4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade? | |
|---|--|
| Does not meet standard | The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum does not align with the state standards; b) the school does not conduct systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school does not regularly review scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) the sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas does not focus on core (prioritized) learning objectives; e) the staff lacks understanding and/or consensus as to how the curriculum documents and related program materials are used to effectively deliver instruction; f) there is a lack of programs and materials available to deliver the curriculum effectively. |
| Approaching standard | The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum does not align with the state standards; b) the school does not conduct systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school does not regularly review scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) the sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas does not focus on core (prioritized) learning objectives; e) the staff lacks understanding and/or consensus as to how the curriculum documents and related program materials are used to effectively deliver instruction; f) there is a lack of programs and materials available to deliver the curriculum effectively. |
| Meets standard | The school: a) curriculum aligns with the state standards; b) conducts systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school regularly reviews scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) has a sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas that is prioritized and focuses on the core learning objectives; e) the staff understands and uniformly uses curriculum documents and related program materials to effectively deliver instruction; f) programs and materials are available to deliver the curriculum effectively. |

Meets Standard. The Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School has a high quality curriculum and supporting materials at each grade level. The principal and the school leadership team reported in interviews that the curriculum is currently aligned with Indiana Academic Standards; school documents reviewed by the Fourth Year Charter Review (FYCR) site visit team support that assertion. The school has an effective process that regularly reviews scope and sequence, and prioritizes and focuses on core learning objectives. Curriculum documents and useful and effective program materials are uniformly used by staff to deliver meaningful instruction.

The FYCR site visit team noted that the school leadership and staff have achieved the curriculum goals they established for the school in the Third Year Review, a school self-study. That review noted that the teaching faculty was working in teams to create a vertical skills articulation from sixth through tenth grade, with the eleventh and twelfth grade course work being completed through curriculum at Anderson University. They have since completed this task of identifying key skills at each grade that cover academic standards. The school is currently developing and piloting interim assessments based on this vertical skills alignment project, and they are piloting the use of this data to inform instruction.

School documents, particularly the curriculum alignment template, reveal that the curriculum aligns with state standards. The staff demonstrated its understanding and effective use of curriculum documents and related program materials. This is evident in school documents, particularly the weekly course syllabi classroom teachers prepare; it is also consistently noted in the classroom observations conducted by the FYCR site visit team. The aim of each lesson was clearly indicated. The only concern noted by the site visit team is the lack of clarity regarding how core learning objectives (or in the language of the school "high impact" or "priority" standards) should focus instruction. Particularly notable was the planning, development and implementation of curriculum and interim assessment done by the 6th grade team. This team is assisting other teams to follow this process.

During an interview with the leadership team, the curriculum planning was referred to as an "iterative process." The school utilizes an effective visual organizer which outlines each step in this annual process. Curriculum review is on-going process, with time set aside this summer for a more intense review of the vertical skill articulation. In focus groups, teachers described the alignment process to develop the CAT and their individual syllabi. The school leadership team and the 6th grade team reported that the Survey of Enacted Curriculum has served as an effective tool for teachers to focus instruction on core learning objectives. They also mentioned using the data to inform instruction of students in Title I classes.

The staff has programs and materials available to deliver effective instruction. When teachers were asked during interviews what materials they lacked or wished for, almost without exception staff reported having everything they needed. The parent focus group revealed that the computer lab that had been in development has not yet been completed. This could be a helpful tool in helping deliver curriculum effectively via the use of technology, particularly since classroom observations revealed a lack of technology use. The most recent accountability report (2007) also noted this as a key area for attention: "The staff should decide what role technology will serve at the school and determine how to enable students to develop their technology skills."

In summary, document reviews, staff interviews, focus groups representing all constituencies and classroom observations indicate that the Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School curriculum is a high quality, consistently implemented curriculum, aligned with Indiana standards and that provides an

appropriate scope and sequence. The school conducts annual, systematic reviews of the curriculum to ensure student performance. Teachers report, and classroom observations concur, that they have the programs and materials they need to deliver the curriculum and to promote student achievement. Evidence is sufficient for the FYCR site visit team to conclude that the school meets this standard.

| 4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school’s mission? | |
|---|---|
| Does not meet standard | The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum is not implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is not focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery lacks the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities lack variety and/or limited use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) staff do not receive feedback on instructional practices. |
| Approaching standard | The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum is not implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is not focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery lacks the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities lack variety and/or limited use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) staff do not receive feedback on instructional practices. |
| Meets standard | The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) the curriculum is implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery possesses the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities possess variety and/or use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) supplies sufficient feedback to staff on instructional practices. |

Approaching Standard. The teaching processes at Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School are generally consistent with the school’s mission to “empower its students –regardless of their past academic performance—to become successful learners who graduate with the capacity for rigorous college opportunities.” The Fourth Year Charter Review (FYCR) site visit team found sufficient evidence to conclude that the curriculum is implemented as designed in most classrooms and is focused on core learning objectives, that the content is somewhat rigorous and challenging, and that the school supplies sufficient feedback to staff on instructional practices. However, the site visit team concluded from observations and weekly course syllabi that while instructional activities often possess some variety, there is a notable absence of the use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities, and learning needs. Significant concerns in this one area led the FYCR site visit team to conclude that the school is approaching this standard.

School documents, interviews, focus groups, and classroom observations all gave evidence that the curriculum is broadly implemented according to its design. Students used or produced class syllabi that confirmed this point. These syllabi, along with classroom observations, confirmed that instruction is focused on core learning objectives.

Classroom observations revealed that a variety of teaching strategies are being employed. Sixteen observations were completed by the site team; hands-on learning activities, guided practice, independent practice, and use of visual cues/graphic organizers were observed in 50% or more of the observations.

Classroom observations also confirmed that the pace of content delivery was appropriate in 75% classrooms observed. Teachers prepared the activities and directed lessons, and students engaged in a variety of activities; group work was observed in 44% of the classrooms. Review of student work during classroom observations and student interviews, in addition to examples of student work located in the site team meeting room, showed some evidence of creative and critical thinking expressed in written work and other forms. However, much of what was seen involved recall and memorization (38% of classroom observations revealed students employing higher order thinking skills); given the mission of the school, staff may want to evaluate the extent to which higher order thinking skills are being developed across all subjects and across all grade levels. The work samples viewed by site team members revealed a sharp contrast between the lower school (gr. 6-8) and upper school (gr. 9-10). A group of lower school students specifically expressed a desire for more variety and long-term projects when responding to literature.

While additional instructional support is provided after school and in Title I pull-outs, the team did not observe during classroom observations differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities, and learning needs. Accommodations were referenced during a leadership team interview and by instructors throughout the school, yet specific teaching strategies that provided student choice or addressed individual learning styles were not observed, leading to the conclusion that the practice of differentiating instruction (a concern expressed in the 3rd Year Review self-study: “. . . we were deeply concerned that there was limited use of those strategies that engage a wide range of student interests, abilities, and learning needs.”) has not become common teaching practice.

Staff does process instructional practice during Friday staff development sessions. Concerns about groups of students or instructional practice can be voiced and worked through during this time. Teacher focus groups indicated that teachers participate in peer reviews, and beginning staff is visited frequently by members of the school leadership team. School leadership team members also recalled the level of support offered them when starting at the school. However, one teacher focus group comprised of teachers at the school two, three, or four years expressed a need and a desire for more feedback and support regarding instructional practices during their first year at the school.

Finally, the FYCR site visit team found sufficient evidence to determine that the teaching processes (pedagogies) are generally consistent with the school's mission. The curriculum is implemented as designed and focused on core learning objectives. While there can be further development of rigor, the evidence showed that the content is somewhat rigorous and challenging. While much evidence was found to indicate the school provides feedback to staff on instructional practices, there was also an expressed desire for more feedback to teachers new to the school. The review team concluded that while instructional activities often possess variety, there is a notable absence of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities, and learning needs. Significant concerns in this one area led the FYCR site visit review team to conclude that the school is approaching this standard.

| 4.3. For secondary students, does the school provide sufficient guidance on and support preparation for post-secondary options? | |
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| Does not meet standard | The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) the school's academic program lacks challenging coursework (e.g., Advanced Placement courses, internships, independent study) to prepare students for rigorous post-secondary opportunities; b) lack of high expectations to motivate and prepare students for post-secondary academic opportunities; c) insufficient material resources and personnel guidance |

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| | available to inform students of post-secondary options; d) limited opportunities for extracurricular engagement and activities (e.g., athletics, academic clubs, vocational) to increase post-secondary options; e) the school does not meet Indiana Core 40 graduation standard requirements. |
| Approaching standard | The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) the school’s academic program lacks challenging coursework (e.g., Advanced Placement courses, internships, independent study) to prepare students for rigorous post-secondary opportunities; b) lack of high expectations to motivate and prepare students for post-secondary academic opportunities; c) insufficient material resources and personnel guidance available to inform students of post-secondary options; d) limited opportunities for extracurricular engagement and activities (e.g., athletics, academic clubs, vocational) to increase post-secondary options; e) the school does not meet Indiana Core 40 graduation standard requirements. |
| Meets standard | The school: a) has challenging coursework (e.g., Advanced Placement courses, internships, independent study) to prepare students for rigorous post-secondary opportunities; b) has high expectations to motivate and prepare students for post-secondary academic opportunities; c) has sufficient material resources and personnel guidance available to inform students of post-secondary options; d) presents opportunities for extracurricular engagement and activities (e.g., athletics, academic clubs, vocational) to increase post-secondary options; e) meets or exceeds Indiana Core 40 graduation standard requirements. |

Meets Standard. For its secondary students, the Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School provides sufficient guidance on and support preparation for post-secondary options. The Fourth Year Charter Review (FYCR) site visit team found sufficient evidence that the school upholds its mission in this area, “to empower its students . . . to become successful learners who graduate with the capacity for rigorous college opportunities.” The school is true to this mission and provides sufficient guidance on and support preparation for post-secondary opportunities.

The school has both high expectations to motivate and challenging coursework to prepare students for post-secondary academic opportunities. In the accelerated model, articulated by the school’s vertical curriculum integration project, students are required to master standards beyond their grade level. The school has articulated a curriculum which leads all students to an Indiana Core 40 Academic Honors diploma at graduation. Freshmen and sophomores concentrate on completing all Core 40 courses that must be completed before junior year, when students begin taking college level courses supported by Anderson University. The college courses taken during the junior and senior years are dual credit course, giving the students the completed Core 40 Academic Honors diploma and up to two years of college credit that may be applied at Anderson University or transferred to another school.

The school leadership team reported that this past fall semester was the first semester the school has begun the college level classes, with both the junior and seniors participating. These students completed course work in calculus, speech communication, humanities, and composition. In this first semester of early college classes, all 36 juniors and seniors enrolled earned at least 3-4 college credits. More than half (21/36) earned 6-7 credits, and 5 students earned 9-12 credits.

Students reported in a focus group that the early college program is very rigorous, but they stated that they do receive support from the early college advisor. The school’s commitment to rigor is supported by the fact that students must get at least a grade of B to receive college credit; B- or lower receives no college credit. To receive the Core 40 diploma credit, students must earn at least a grade of C; a grade of C- or

lower requires a student to re-take the course. (The team was unable to observe early college classes because the visit had been scheduled during the students' vacation.)

The school has sufficient material and personnel guidance to inform students of secondary options. The certified guidance counselor meets with students in junior year to help them build their list of prospective colleges. Before the start of senior year, the counselor meets with them again to hone this list and create a work plan for completing the application process. The guidance counselor reports that most students met the benchmark of at least 6 applications to different schools and that all 14 seniors currently have received at least one acceptance. The school is proudly displaying copies of these acceptance letters for the entire school community to see.

In addition, the guidance counselor has communicated with each senior parent or guardian to offer support in filling out financial aid forms (which can be provided by her or a board member who is a senior vice president at Franklin College). The guidance counselor indicated in an interview that the greatest priority is given to juniors and seniors to ensure their post-secondary placement of choice.

The school provides an array of extracurricular opportunities for students to hone their talents and skills, to increase their awareness of recreational opportunities, to provide community service, and to develop social skills derived from interaction with their peers. Athletics opportunities include IHSSA athletics for both girls and boys in cross-country, basketball, and track and field. The school has at least two outside partners who provide the students service activities, such as the "Sister to Sister" program and the "Youth and Government" program. In addition, a few parents help to offer programs, such as cheerleading and dance squad; a few faculty members supervise additional extracurricular opportunities, such as lacrosse and student government. Although the site visit team did not see an overall list of students participating in such activities, students in focus groups reported that they felt that they had "many opportunities."

In summary, the Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School has in place programs that provide sufficient guidance and support preparation for post-secondary options. The rigorous curriculum in the first two years of secondary study prepares students for success in their last two years of high school, in which they earn the final credits for a Indiana Core 40 Academic Honors diploma and college credits simultaneously. The school provides material resources and guidance counseling for students and parents to maximize opportunities for post-secondary education, and a growing program of extracurricular activities is in place to enable students to develop talents and skills that may lead to additional opportunities after high school. The FYCR site visit team concludes that there is sufficient evidence to indicate that the school meets this standard.

| 4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction? | |
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| Does not meet standard | The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are not accurate or useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are not received by classroom teachers in a timely or useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments lack sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is limited frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are not used to <u>guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.</u> |
| Approaching standard | The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are not accurate or useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are not received by classroom teachers in a timely or useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments lack sufficient variety to |

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| | guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is limited frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are not used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum. |
| Meets standard | The school: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are accurate and useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are received by classroom teachers in a timely and useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments have sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is sufficient frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum. |

Meets Standard. The Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School effectively uses learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction. The Fourth Year Charter Review (FYCR) site visit team found evidence revealing that the school administers a variety of standardized tests and formative assessments that give the school information on student performance. The school effectively uses assessments in a routine manner to guide curriculum development and make adjustments to instruction.

The site visit team determined, through document review, classroom observations, and teacher and leadership team interviews, that standardized tests and classroom assessments are used to monitor student progress and to determine which material needs to be re-taught. These same assessments also influence grade-placement decisions (promotion, retention, and return to previous grade). Grade level teams have worked on interim assessments that align with the learning standards/objectives taught at each grade level. They have also worked on a calendar that determines when these assessments will be administered. Although this work is more advanced among some grade level teams, teachers and school leadership reported that there is an ongoing effort to share the best practices with all grade level teams with the goal of consistent implementation across each grade level.

Assessment results are received by teachers in a timely and useful manner according to the leadership team and teacher interviews. School leadership team and teacher focus groups indicated staff development time is spent understanding and interpreting ISTEP data, helping teachers make the connection between this testing and instruction. The school also devotes staff time to correcting assessments to help calibrate staff expectations. Currently, the school is investigating the use of a device that would help scan and score student work so the information could be processed in an even more timely fashion.

The variety of assessments viewed by the FYCR site visit team over the three day visit included student work samples shared during student interviews, informal assessment noted during classroom observations, and student work samples gathered by the school in advance of the visit. Sufficient variety in the work was noted; however, the team did discover that there were more examples of recall and lower level questioning. Inference questions were lacking in the reading comprehension questions viewed. The evidence also revealed a difference in the level of questioning between the lower and upper school, with more Socratic questioning and dialog being noted in the upper school. It was also noted that none of the assessments that were shared assessed students’ interests or learning styles, which would be another form of variety that could help guide instruction and differentiation.

The schedule for interim assessments, reported time spent in Friday staff meetings/professional development time, leadership team remarks about parents investigating when teachers hadn’t posted new grades, and teacher remarks indicated that assessments are used to inform instructional decision making and to make adjustments to the curriculum. A leadership team interview noted how in one instance “a

group of students had struggled with a particular math course.” Rather than require that the students repeat the course the following academic year, a summer course was offered to remediate any deficits. Switching from a trimester to a semester calendar was another decision based on assessment data and the desire to improve student mastery, according to the school leadership team. As noted earlier in this report, there is a schedule set for the continued review of the curriculum, part of which will be completed during the summer of 2008.

The Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School effectively uses a wide variety of assessments to measure student performance and make adjustments to instruction. These assessments are of sufficient variety and are used frequently in a timely manner to inform instructional decisions effectively. The school has clear and effective processes to implement changes in instruction based on data derived from assessments. Therefore, the FYCR site visit team concludes that the school effectively uses learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction and that the school meets this standard.

| 4.5. Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively? | |
|--|---|
| Does not meet standard | The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) hiring processes are not organized to support the success of new staff members; b) inefficient or insufficient deployment of faculty and staff limits instructional time and capacity; c) faculty and staff are not certified/trained in areas to which they are assigned; d) professional development (PD) does not relate to demonstrated needs for instructional improvement; e) PD is not determined through analyses of student attainment and improvement; f) the teacher evaluation plan is not explicit and regularly implemented with a clear process and criteria. |
| Approaching standard | The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) hiring processes are not organized to support the success of new staff members; b) inefficient or insufficient deployment of faculty and staff limits instructional time and capacity; c) faculty and staff are not certified/trained in areas to which they are assigned; d) professional development (PD) does not relate to demonstrated needs for instructional improvement; e) PD is not determined through analyses of student attainment and improvement; f) the teacher evaluation plan is not explicit and regularly implemented with a clear process and criteria. |
| Meets standard | The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) hiring processes are organized and used to support the success of new staff members; b) the school deploys sufficient number of faculty and staff to maximize instructional time and capacity; c) faculty and staff are certified/trained in areas to which they are assigned; d) professional development (PD) is related to demonstrated needs for instructional improvement; e) PD opportunities are determined through analyses of student attainment and improvement; f) the teacher evaluation plan is explicit and regularly implemented with a clear process and criteria. |

Does Not Meet Standard. The Fourth Year Charter Review (FYCR) site visit team determined that the Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School (CTAS) deploys a sufficient number of faculty and staff to maximize instructional time and capacity. Faculty and staff are certified/trained in the areas assigned. The professional development offered is related to demonstrated needs for instructional improvement and mostly focused on school-wide improvement goals. Two areas of concern resulted in the team determining that the school does not meet this standard. First, substantial evidence from multiple sources (e.g., administrator, teacher and board member interviews and parent focus groups) showed that the hiring processes are not sufficiently organized to support the success of new staff members. Second, while there is a formal teacher evaluation plan in place, evidence indicates that the plan is not regularly implemented with a clear process.

The site visit team found substantial evidence to conclude that the school's hiring processes are not organized to support the success of new staff members. School supplied documents revealed a teacher attrition rate, averaging approximately 42% over the past two years. Interviews with the school leadership team, the principal, and board members revealed that most of the teachers who leave do so at the request of the school principal, who acknowledged that they may become good teachers elsewhere but they did not fit the culture of CTAS or they did not meet the high demands placed on CTAS teachers. The consensus of these constituencies is that this is really best for the school. However, focus group interviews with teachers reveal a concern with the loss of many teachers each year, citing negative effects on staff morale, the negative effects on the students who become attached to these teachers, and the time spent in orientation of new teachers each year.

The school holds training for new and returning teachers each year; however, teachers who are hired close to the start of school do not receive extensive training. In teacher focus groups, nearly half of teachers interviewed noted that early expectations are clear in terms of classroom management, curriculum, interim assessment, and weekly syllabi. Several teachers, however, described the orientation process as "spontaneous" and expressed a desire for greater communication from the administration regarding expectations. One teacher focus group, consisting of one teacher each in the 2nd year, 3rd year, and 4th year at CTAS, indicated that they wished they had received more assistance their first year in knowing what the expectations were and how to achieve them. The school leadership team reported in an interview that the school currently assigns a mentor to each teacher new to the school. The school leadership team also reported that teachers receive feedback on their performance informally on a regular basis.

The FYCR site visit team found through observations and school documents that the school deploys sufficient faculty and staff to maximize instructional time and capacity. The school leader reported that all teachers and staff in the school are certified as required by their assignments; teachers who teach the college level courses meet the standard for adjunct professors at Anderson University. Classroom observations revealed small classes; the school's recent self-study reported a student: teacher ratio of 11:1.

The site visit team found sufficient evidence to conclude that the school uses analyses of student attainment and improvement data to determine professional development. The school leadership team stated that the school has one-half day each Friday devoted to professional development; further discussion and review of the calendar indicated that much of this time is devoted to working on school-wide improvement tasks. The school does provide a number of professional development activities that are determined through analyses of student attainment and improvement. The professional development calendar and interviews with the school leadership indicate that student achievement is the center of most professional development activity in the school.

Nearly all of these activities are school-wide sessions held on site for the entire faculty. Teachers indicated that many of these are helpful, but teacher focus groups indicated a desire for more teacher input into the decision-making process. The teacher focus groups also indicated that the agenda for half-day Friday sessions was often not known in advance, that the sessions sometimes started late, and that sometimes the time could be better used. The principal stated that funds were available for teachers to participate in professional development activities outside of the school, but in focus groups, some teachers

indicated that there was sometimes confusion over what opportunities were available and what processes needed to be followed to participate in these external opportunities.

A few returning teachers indicated frustration over the repetition of some professional development activities, necessitated by the high number of new teachers each year. Overall, the site visit team concluded that there was evidence to indicate many appropriate examples of professional development in the school and that the school does use analyses of student attainment and improvement data to determine professional development; however, there is a need for the school to refine its current policies and procedures regarding this matter, to involve teachers more in the planning/decision making process, and to publish clear guidelines and procedures related to individual professional development that can be understood by all.

Regarding the teacher evaluation plan, the FYCR site team concluded from interviews with the school leaders and teacher focus groups that the plan is not regularly implemented. This was noted in the school's recent self-study, the Third Year Review Report: "While teachers are provided with feedback by the administrative team, classroom observations have been conducted, and the evaluation criteria and classroom expectations have been explicitly stated and reinforced, CTAS has not regularly implemented the teacher evaluation process." The site team noted that the evaluation tool was very sophisticated and perhaps a more condensed tool would allow for more regular feedback to teachers.

There are documents that clearly state teacher expectations and the school leadership interview revealed that teachers receive much informal feedback regarding their performance. Teachers report in focus groups that they do not know when they will be formally evaluated and many report that they have not received a formal evaluation. The school leader noted that the teachers are to be formally evaluated twice a year; school documents and the school leader indicated that this current school year only four teachers out of twenty had received a formal evaluation at the time of the site visit. The school leader reported in interview that teachers who are not to be given a contract for the following year are not notified until the very end of the year. Teachers reported in focus groups that they often were unsure of their retention status until the last day of school.

In summary, the Fourth Year Charter Review (FYCR) site visit team determined that the Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School deploys faculty and staff who are certified/trained in the areas assigned to maximize instructional time and capacity. Professional development attends to demonstrated needs for instructional improvement, although evidence indicates a need for some changes in the professional development program. Two areas of concern, however, resulted in the team determining that the school does not meet this standard. First, substantial evidence from multiple sources (e.g., administrator, teacher and board member interviews and parent focus groups) indicates that the hiring processes are not sufficiently organized to support the success of new staff members. Second, while there is a formal teacher evaluation plan in place, evidence reveals that the plan is not regularly implemented with a clear process. Therefore, the FYCR site visit team concludes that the school presents significant concerns in these two areas and therefore does not meet standard.

| 4.6. Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders? | |
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| Does not meet standard | The school presents significant concerns in <u>both</u> of the following areas: a) significant disagreements exist among stakeholders about the school's mission; b) there is a lack of widespread knowledge and commitment to the intentions of the school's mission. |

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| Approaching standard | The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) significant disagreements exist among stakeholders about the school’s mission; b) there is a lack of widespread knowledge and commitment to the intentions of the school’s mission. |
| Meets standard | The school: a) has a mission that is shared by all stakeholders; b) has stakeholders possessing widespread knowledge and commitment to the intentions of the school’s mission. |

Meets Standard. The mission of the Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School is fully understood by all stakeholders, including the members of the board, the principal, the teachers, parents, and students. The mission of the school is both to “. . . empower its students –regardless of their past academic performance—to become successful learners who graduate with the capacity for rigorous college opportunities. . . .” and “provide a powerful learning experience that intellectually engages, inspires, and spurs academic achievement through a challenging and interactive college preparatory curriculum.” Various reports and the Fourth Year Charter Review (FYCR) site visit clearly indicated a thorough understanding of the mission.

Recent school surveys showed that over 80% of parents and students indicated that they understood the school’s mission; 73% of teachers responded that they also understood the mission. Teacher focus groups conducted during the FYCR site visit revealed that all teachers could articulate the mission. Further, teachers relayed in focus groups that they upheld the mission through classroom practices, including instruction, curriculum development, and holding students to high expectations. Focus groups of parents and students conducted during the site visit indicated that those constituencies understand and support the mission. The school uses staff and student handbooks, regular assemblies and their website to effectively communicate the mission.

An interview with the school leadership team revealed a clear understanding of the mission and that it regularly drives the school’s focus in its review and revision of all school programs. The school’s Board also expressed a clear understanding of the mission during an interview of three Board members during the site visit. One member noted a need to spread the understanding of the school’s mission to a broader audience in order to garner more support; the other members agreed, stating that the immediate school community understands and supports the mission fully.

In summation, the school has a mission that is widely understood by all stakeholders who possess a strong commitment to the intentions of that mission. Based on multiple sources of evidence, the FYCR site visit team concludes that the Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School meets the standard in this area.

| 4.7. Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success? | |
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| Does not meet standard | The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address them: a) The school does not have clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school’s discipline approach does not possess high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are disrespectful and/or unsupportive and there are non-existing or unclear processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are unprofessional and/or unproductive. |
| Approaching standard | The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address it: a) The school does not have clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school’s discipline approach does not possess high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are disrespectful and/or unsupportive and there are non-existing or unclear processes for resolution of conflicts; d) |

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| <p>Meets standard</p> | <p>interactions between faculty and administration are unprofessional and /or unproductive. The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) the school has clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school’s discipline approach possesses high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are respectful and supportive and faculty and students are clear about processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are professional and constructive.</p> |
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Meets Standard. The Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School provides a school climate that is conducive to student and staff success. The Fourth Year Charter Review (FYCR) site team found evidence that the school’s rules and discipline approach are clearly outlined, routinely enacted, and that they set high expectations for positive student behavior. The site team observed interactions between faculty and students that were respectful and saw no evidence that there is any lack of clarity regarding resolution of conflicts. All evidence further suggests that interactions between faculty and administration are professional and constructive. In all, the site visit team saw a positive school climate throughout the three-day visit.

The school has clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior. The FYCR site team observed these rules posted in 100% of the classrooms observed during the visit, and the nearly all students were behaving in accordance with stated behavioral objectives during these observations. A recent school survey of parents revealed that 79% of parents who responded to the survey believe that the school has clearly stated rules that reinforce positive behavior. Student focus groups related that the students understand the rules and the consequences for violating them; some students observed that the rules were strict and some were called “petty.” The site team noted positive reinforcement for good behavior in only 5 of 16 classroom observations.

The discipline approach reflects high expectations for student behavior. Interviews with school leaders and teacher focus groups repeatedly expressed the high expectations the school has for student behavior; all felt that the current discipline approach reflects those expectations. Parents in focus groups during the site visit concurred with this belief; a recent school parent survey indicated that 70% of parents who responded “believe that the school has high expectations for student behavior.”

In focus groups during the site visit, both students and faculty reported that they were clear about the processes in play for conflict resolution. A recent school survey of parents revealed that 63% of the parents who responded agreed that “interactions between faculty and students are respectful and students are clear about the resolution of conflicts.” Faculty in focus groups during the site visit indicated that the behavioral management process is “transparent” and they feel extremely supported by the administration. Throughout the site visit, the FYCR team observed interactions between faculty and administration that were professional and constructive. In focus groups, faculty stated that that they felt the relationship with the administration was “collegial” and very positive. School leaders relayed similar feeling in interviews and meetings held during the site visit. A recent survey of teachers revealed that 68% of those responding agreed that “the interactions between faculty and administration are professional and constructive.” The site visit team frequently heard throughout the visit: “Tindley is not a job; it’s a lifestyle.” All indications exist to judge that lifestyle to be very professional and constructive.

Finally, the FYCR site team concluded that the school climate at the Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School was conducive to student and staff success. The discipline approach reflects high expectations, it

is clearly stated and understood by all constituents, and it results in positive behavior. Interactions between students and faculty are respectful and there are clear processes for resolution of conflicts. The relationship between faculty and administration is positive and professional, reflected in the school as a whole. The school clearly meets this standard.

| 4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful? | |
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| Does not meet standard | The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) there is a lack of active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) school communication is neither timely nor relevant to the parental concerns; c) student academic progress and achievement reports are not clearly reported and/or misunderstood; d) the school’s communication methods are not well-designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., not communicating in parents’ native languages, communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at inconvenient times for parents). |
| Approaching standard | The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) there is a lack of active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) school communication is neither timely nor relevant to the parental concerns; c) student academic progress and achievement reports are not clearly reported and/or misunderstood; d) the school’s communication methods are not well-designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., not communicating in parents’ native languages, communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at inconvenient times for parents). |
| Meets standard | The school: a) has active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) utilizes communications that are both timely and relevant to the parental concerns; c) communicates student academic progress and achievement in reports that are understood by parents; d) the school’s communication methods are designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., communicating in parents’ native languages, not communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at convenient times for parents). |

Meets Standard. The ongoing communication with students and parents is clear and helpful at the Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School. There are multiple lines of communication in place for parents to receive timely and relevant information. Parents fully understand the reports produced by the school and sent home; they are also satisfied with the quality and frequency of other communications from the school.

The Fourth Year Charter Review (FYCR) site team found extensive evidence that the school has active and ongoing communication with the students and the parents. Weekly progress reports are sent home to parents, and parent-teacher conferences are held each semester. Teachers are required to make weekly parent contacts and logs of these are submitted to the principal each week. The school also communicates via a newsletter and a website.

In focus groups held during the site visit, parents gave high praise to the school for its timely and relevant communication. The school principal furnishes parents with his cell phone number so that they may call him at anytime with their questions or concerns. Parents have daily access to student grades that are posted in an online grade book; the school leaders reported that grade weighting has been structured so that it is easily justified to parents. A recent school survey revealed that 77% of the parent respondents felt that they “receive adequate information about student class work and grades.” The school leaders stated additional conferences needed are scheduled at a time that is convenient for parents, and that reports are made available in an “easy to read, straightforward method.” Parents in a focus group called the communications “exemplary.” With the school’s current population, there is no need for multilingual translation efforts.

The FYCR site visit team found sufficient evidence to conclude that the Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School provides ongoing communication with students and parents that is both clear and helpful. Therefore, the school meets this standard.

APPENDIX A FOURTH YEAR CHARTER REVIEW TEAM

The Fourth Year Charter Review site visit to the Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School was conducted on March 10-12, 2008, by a team of educators under the direction of SchoolWorks, LLC.

David L. Soots, Team Leader, Assistant Professor, English Department, Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana

Terrence Harewood, Team Member, Assistant Professor, School of Education, University of Indianapolis

Susan Zapach, Team Member, Center for Excellence in Leadership of Learning, University of Indianapolis

Spencer Blasdale, CEO of SchoolWorks, LLC