

INDIANAPOLIS MAYOR'S OFFICE FOURTH YEAR CHARTER REVIEW

INDIANAPOLIS METROPOLITAN HIGH SCHOOL

March 3-5, 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 fulfilling its legal obligations related to access and services to students with special needs?*
- 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 engages external professionals 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 2.4 and 2.6 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

INDIANAPOLIS METROPOLITAN HIGH SCHOOL

<i>Core Question 1: Is the educational program a success?</i>	<i>FINDING</i>
<i>1.1. Is the school making adequate yearly academic progress, as measured by the Indiana Department of Education's system of accountability?</i>	Does Not Meet Standard
<i>1.2. Are students making substantial and adequate gains over time, as measured using value-added analysis?</i>	Not Evaluated²
<i>1.3. Is the school outperforming schools that the students would have been assigned to attend?</i>	Not Evaluated³
<i>1.4. Are a high percentage of the school's graduates attending college?</i>	Exceeds Standard
<i>Core Question 2: Is the organization effective and well-run?</i>	<i>FINDING</i>
<i>2.1. Is the school in sound fiscal health?</i>	Meets Standard
<i>2.2. Are the school's student enrollment, attendance, and retention rates strong?</i>	Does Not Meet Standard
<i>2.3. Is the school's Board active and competent in its oversight?</i>	Exceeds Standard
<i>2.4. Is there a high level of parent satisfaction with the school?</i>	Meets Standard
<i>2.5. Is the school administration strong in its academic and organizational leadership?</i>	Approaching Standard
<i>2.6. Is the school meeting its school-specific organizational and management performance goals?</i>	Not Applicable⁴
<i>Core Question 3: Is the school meeting its operations and access obligations?</i>	<i>FINDING</i>
<i>3.1. Has the school satisfactorily completed all of its organizational structure and governance obligations?</i>	Meets Standard
<i>3.2. Is the school's physical plant safe and conducive to learning?</i>	Meets Standard
<i>3.3. Has the school established and implemented a fair and appropriate pupil enrollment process?</i>	Meets Standard
<i>3.4. Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related to access and services to students with special needs?</i>	Approaching Standard
<i>3.5. Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related to access and services to students with limited English proficiency?</i>	Not Evaluated⁵
<i>Core Question 4: Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?</i>	<i>FINDING</i>
<i>4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?</i>	Does Not Meet Standard
<i>4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?</i>	Does Not Meet Standard
<i>4.3. For secondary students, does the school provide sufficient guidance on and support and preparation for post-secondary options?</i>	Approaching Standard
<i>4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?</i>	Does Not Meet Standard

² The school was not evaluated on gains over time because the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) does not produce gain norms for high school populations.

³ The school was not evaluated in comparison to schools students would have attended.

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.

4.5. <i>Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?</i>	Approaching Standard
4.6. <i>Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?</i>	Meets Standard
4.7. <i>Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success?</i>	Approaching Standard
4.8. <i>Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?</i>	Meets Standard

NOTE: In 2007-2008, two schools – the Indianapolis Metropolitan Career Academy #1 (IndyMETCA1) and #2 (IndyMETCA2) – merged into one school, the Indianapolis Metropolitan High School (MET). Prior to the merge, both schools had the same academic program, governing board, curriculum, facility, student enrollment, policies and procedures, and shared many administrative and management functions. Further, performance data for the two schools has been very similar through the charter term. For these reasons, the Fourth Year Charter Review analyzes the MET as one school through the charter term by combining academic and organizational performance data.

FINDINGS, INDICATORS AND EVIDENCE

INDIANAPOLIS METROPOLITAN HIGH 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?	
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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 one of 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.

Does not meet standard. The Indianapolis Metropolitan High School⁶ (MET) did not achieve Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in 2005 or 2006 toward statewide academic targets set by the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE). The MET achieved AYP in less than half of the student subgroups tested each of the last two years. The school did achieve attendance and participation rate targets in each of these years.

Reports provided by the IDOE indicated that the MET did not make AYP in 2005 or 2006 in most subgroups and categories. In 2005 and 2006, the MET was evaluated in five categories (English/Language Arts performance for all students, Mathematics performance for all students, participation rates for English/Language Arts and Mathematics, and overall attendance rate). Indianapolis Metropolitan Career Academy #1 (IndyMETCA1) was judged to have met state targets in one category in 2005 (English/Language Arts). Similarly, IndyMETCA2 was evaluated in the same five categories, and was found to have met state targets for participation in both categories. In 2006, IndyMETCA1 was judged to have met state targets in zero out of the five categories it was evaluated in, and IndyMETCA2 was judged to have met targets in three categories: attendance and participation in both categories. Combined then, the MET achieved state targets in 3 out of 10 categories both in 2005 and 2006.

In summary, the school did not meet the IDOE's standard for achieving AYP in half of the student subgroups for the last two consecutive years.

⁶ In 2007-2008, two schools (i.e., the Indianapolis Metropolitan Career Academies #1 and #2) merged into one school, the Indianapolis Metropolitan High School (MET). Prior to the merge, both schools had the same academic program, governing board, curriculum, facility, student enrollment, policies and procedures, and shared many administrative and management functions. Further, performance data for the two schools has been very similar through the charter term. For these reasons, the Fourth Year Charter Review analyzes the MET as one school through the charter term by combining academic and organizational performance data.

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.

Not Evaluated. The Indianapolis Metropolitan High School serves grades 9-12. Analysis of substantial and adequate gains over time is only available currently for schools serving grades K-8.

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.

1.4. Are a high percentage of the school's graduates attending college?	
Does not meet standard	69% or less of the school's 2008 graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution.
Approaching standard	70-79% of the school's 2008 graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution.
Meets standard	80-89% or less of the school's 2008 graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution.
Exceeds standard	90% or more of the school's 2008 graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution.

Exceeds Standard. Ninety-two percent (92%) of the school's spring 2008 graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution the following academic year (fall of 2008). This rate exceeds the standard jointly agreed to by the school and the Mayor's Office.

According to data submitted by the school, the Indianapolis Metropolitan High school issued diplomas to 49 graduates in May of 2008. Forty-five (45) of these graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution of higher learning in the fall of 2008. Of the 45 graduates:

- 29 enrolled in a 4-year college or university;
- 12 enrolled in a community or junior college; and
- 4 enrolled in a technical school

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.

Meets Standard. The MET has demonstrated strong fiscal health over the first four years of its charter term. The school was audited by the Indiana State Board of Accounts (SBOA) twice in the first four years of operation – for the period from July 1, 2003 to June 30, 2005 and from July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2007. Each report included an unqualified opinion from the SBOA for the school’s financials. Each audit report outlined findings related to the school’s financial management and accounting systems, none of which were deemed significant. Yet, some of the same findings appeared on both audit reports, indicating that the school had not yet satisfactorily resolved these issues.

The MET has established adequate staffing and systems for managing the school’s finances. The school contracts with an outside bookkeeping firm for its financial management needs, and is supported in part by the administrative staff of Goodwill Industries of Central Indiana. The school’s board communicates regularly with staff regarding financial needs of the school and helps to develop and manage the school’s long-term financial goals. As a result of this relationship, the school has achieved a balanced budget. Budget projections for the next three years appear to be adequate, and the school has fulfilled all financial reporting requirements of the charter agreement in a timely manner.

Findings from the SBOA audits were deemed minor, yet the presence of the same findings on two consecutive audits suggest that school has not yet adequately resolved these issues. Repeat findings include: (1) inadequate record keeping and incomplete records for employee service, and (2) invoices and claims paid to contractors that were not adequately itemized or detailed.

By maintaining current levels of financial compliance and ensuring that the school adequately attends to minor repeat findings outlined by the SBOA, the MET will continue to experience strong fiscal health.

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. The Indianapolis Metropolitan High School's enrollment has consistently fallen short of enrollment targets in the first four years of its charter term. The following table displays the school's target enrollment compared with its official fall enrollment reported to the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE). The school has been significantly under-enrolled, and the rate of underenrollment has increased in each of the first four years of its charter term.

School Year	Target Enrollment	Fall Enrollment	Percent Below
2004-2005	120	100	16.6%
2005-2006	240	174	27.5%
2006-2007	360	247	31.4%
2007-2008	512	342	33.2%

Source: Target Enrollment data are from the school's charter. Fall enrollment data are from the Indiana Department of Education. Except for the 2007-2008 academic year, target enrollment and fall enrollment numbers are the combination (i.e., sum) of data for IndyMETCA1 and IndyMETCA2.

Attendance rates at the Indianapolis Metropolitan High School were consistently below the IDOE's target of 95% over the last three years for which data are available.

School Year	Attendance Rate
2004-2005	91.5%
2005-2006	90.6%
2006-2007	88.5%

Source: Indiana Department of Education. Attendance rates are the average rates for IndyMETCA1 and IndyMETCA2.

No targets have been established for student retention rates for the Indianapolis Metropolitan High School. Retention rates increased from the school's second to third year of operation, but dropped slightly from the school's third to fourth year of operation.

Years	Students Enrolled Initial Year	Students Re-enrolled Following Year	Retention Rate
Fall 2004 to Fall 2005	117	68	58.1%
Fall 2005 to Fall 2006	176	119	67.6%
Fall 2006 to Fall 2007	250	163	65.2%

Source: Mayor’s Office analysis of fall enrollment reports submitted by the school.

In summary, the Indianapolis Metropolitan High School has been significantly underenrolled each year of its charter term, and consistently below the state’s target for attendance each of the last three years. It’s retention rate has been inconsistent, increasing significantly from it’s second to third year, but dropping slightly from its third to fourth year. In order to meet this standard, the school will need to improve its attendance rate, enrollment and 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.

Exceeds Standard. The Board at the Indianapolis Metropolitan High School (MET) is active and knowledgeable in its role. The effective governance structure is clearly defined in the by-laws, and the partnership with Goodwill Industries of Central Indiana is very beneficial. As one Board member reflected, “The success of the school proves the success of the Goodwill mission.”

There is a clear structure in the organization of the Board. By design the Board is not hands on; its members focus on policy adoption, fiscal matters, and oversight of school leadership. Yet, it is clear the members have the education and experience to lend expertise to the school. The Board’s membership and rules are specified in the by-laws, with the President of the Board serving as an ex officio member.

Meeting seven times a year, the Board is knowledgeable about what is happening in the school. Meeting minutes reflect that there is a structure to the meetings: there is a financial report by the

treasurer and a school report by the COO, covering things like standardized test scores, graduation rates, students and staff recruitment, uniforms, etc. From time to time a student attends the Board meetings to give a personal account of what his or her experiences at the MET have been. As the President said in his interview, the role of the Board is” to ask the tough questions and challenge” the school leaders, and then it is the school leaders’ job to carry out the mission.

The Board’s roles are clearly defined. They are concerned with the financial matters, facilities management, school recruitment, and student and staff retention. The daily operations, such as administration and advisor assignments are left to the President and Chief Operating Officer who are in the school every day.

Overall, the Board enhances the mission of the school by linking the school to Goodwill Industries thereby overseeing the use of Goodwill’s resources in personnel and facilities. These resources will help to carry the school until it can sustain itself. The Board sees the school as a way to fulfill the Goodwill mission, and it sees that the school is making “good progress” in “using passion as a core of development for the students and giving them opportunities at the post-secondary level.”

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 and across schools, 87% of parents surveyed indicated that they are satisfied overall with the Indianapolis Metropolitan High 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 82% and 88% of parents indicated overall satisfaction (see chart below).

School Year	Percent Satisfied
2004-2005	82%
2005-2006	88%
2006-2007	88%
2007-2008	87%

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”. Data from 2004-2005 to 2006-2007 is the weighted average for the Indy METCA1 and IndyMETCA2. Data for 2007-2008 is the average for the merged high school.

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.

Approaching standard. The administration and leadership at Indianapolis Metropolitan High School has sufficient academic and business expertise that has been stable over time. Some roles and responsibilities in the leadership are a bit unclear; however, the school is in the process of more clearly defining leadership positions. This development and the process for school improvement are informal for the most part which lead to a rating of approaching standard.

As seen in the resumes of the school leaders, there is much expertise on staff. The COO has good business experience as the Director of Technology at Goodwill Industries and as a senior partner for The Strategy Group. He also has the business resources of Goodwill behind him. The school directors have academic and educational experience—some of these positions have grown from within the MET – and some have gained experience elsewhere and been brought in to further develop the school. The skills of the leadership are broadly based and all enhance the mission of the school.

There has been much growth at the MET (from 100 students in 04-05 school year to 343 students anticipated in the 07-08 school year). The leadership has continued to develop and to meet the growing student population. Most changes in personnel have been a result of meeting the demands of building the organization (i.e., adding additional personnel).

As a result of these necessary changes, there is some lack of clarity in the roles and responsibilities of the leadership, specifically in the area of curriculum and instruction. The advisors reported that the Big Picture Coach is the curricular leader; yet, the COO sees the school directors as the curricular leaders. Further, some advisors stated that they were “like principals” and reported that with regards to curriculum fellow teachers were their greatest resource. One advisor stated, “My peers help me more than anything.” This instructional leadership is still in the development stages.

There is a genuine concern and focus amongst school leadership for continuous school improvement; though, plans are fairly informal and in the conversation stage. Staff development days have been devoted to developing an essential skills framework, with grades 9-10 completed and grades 11-12 in process. A STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) Director was hired and is working to further develop the math curriculum with an emphasis on expanding students' math skills and preparing them for the ISTEP GQE. The school leadership reported that their school improvement plan is the 3rd year self-evaluation completed last year for the Mayor's Office. This document is detailed in information, but it is not a school improvement plan as it does not contain any student performance goals, which must be an important focus for school leadership and teacher professional development.

In summary, the school administration is satisfactory in its academic and organizational leadership. It does need to focus on school improvement processes and more clearly defining its leadership roles in order to meet the expectations of the fourth year review protocol.

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. The Indianapolis Metropolitan High School 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.

Meets Standard. The Indianapolis Metropolitan High School (MET) has substantially completed all of its organizational and governance obligations as specified in the Compliance and Governance Handbook. Maintenance of the compliance binder and documents have been the responsibility of the school's registrar beginning in 2006-07, and all documents were submitted in a timely manner. The school also documents that background checks have been conducted for all board members.

The MET complies with public access and open door policy by posting notices of board meetings. Board meeting minutes are always kept and have been sent to the Mayor's Office in a timely manner.

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 Indianapolis Metropolitan High 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.
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Meets Standard. The admission and enrollment practices at Indianapolis Metropolitan High School (MET) meet the requirements of Indiana's charter school law. 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, targeted mailings, job fairs, conventions, and word of mouth. The Mayor's Office annually receives copies of the MET's enrollment policies and marketing plans, and has observed the school's lottery process. 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 Indianapolis Metropolitan High School (MET) is currently approaching the standard established for proper maintenance of students' special education files. All files were in compliance and with few exceptions, the files were found to be good order with all the necessary components present.

In order to evaluate this question, a team of experts conducted a file review in the spring of 2008 of the school's special education files. The team's focus was to determine whether the files contained all required components, including items such as parent consent form, documentation of case conference notifications to parents and other conference participants, signatures of attendees at case conferences and up-to-date IEPs. In addition, the team reviewed IEPs to ensure inclusion of all necessary information, including measurable annual goals, a statement of how parents will be informed of the student's progress, and the date of the student's re-evaluation.

None of the files at the MET were found to be fully out of compliance, indicating that case conferences and triennial reviews are being completed in a timely fashion. Documentation in the files indicated that typically, timely notification was given (e.g., letter, telephone). In three instances, however, parents were notified less than ten days prior to the case conference. Using the current procedure, the school does not know and/or cannot document that parents understood prior to the conference their legal rights, including the right to invite other parties. The team did not interview parents or evaluate the school's provision of special education services beyond the information included in the special education files.

In regards to annual goals, all relevant student files noted they were pursuing a high school diploma. None of the goals mentioned whether or not students intended to pursue higher education. In four instances the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) only included transition plans and did not list academic goals even though the need for them was indicated. In addition, in 2008 the school received notification of noncompliance on Indicator 13: Secondary Student IEP Goals and Transition Services from the Indiana Department of Education's Division of Exceptional Learners (DEL).

According to documentation within the special education files, the appropriate participants were at each case conference in all but three instances. In one instance the records do not indicate that the student was present. In another instance the parent did not initial or sign the case conference report. In a final instance, the presence of the school representative who can commit funds was not indicated.

In summary, there are minor concerns about the maintenance of special education files at the MET. Staff should consider how timely notification of case conferences can be given while ensuring and documenting parents' understanding of their rights. Staff should ensure that all case conference participants initial or sign appropriate paperwork. Staff should also consider its process for determining transition goals and developing appropriate transition plans.

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 Indianapolis Metropolitan High 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.

Does not meet standard. Indianapolis Metropolitan High School has a curriculum that grows from the school's mission to work with "one student at a time." The school has yet to establish a rigorous academic curriculum that ensures students achieve the necessary content and skills.

The curriculum for each student is based on his or her personal learning plan. There are many different forms for this plan, and each advisor uses the plan differently. Some advisors use the plan for student self-reflection, some track mastery of state standards, some advisors provide feedback to the students on this plan and some do not. When asked how a student proves mastery of a standard, an advisor relayed that the proof is in the student portfolio work samples, and the advisor went on to say that an outsider "may not be able to see the evidence, but the advisor would know." Because there is no consistent policy for using the personal learning plan, and because the state standards are not uniformly aligned to the personal learning plans, there is a concern in this area.

In interviews with school leadership, a plan for review of curriculum gaps was described, but there is little documentation to show that the school conducts systematic review of curriculum in order to identify learning gaps in student performance. Some advisors have developed documents to communicate gaps with students. For example, at least one advisor uses a "One-

on-One Gap Check” document, and a gateway rubric was given as an example by other advisors; however, there is no systematic policy for the implementation of such documents and no evidence of consistent feedback on these documents. Also, there are very few content skills associated with these documents: the majority of the measurements are based on personal growth in areas such as time management, organizational skills, and character traits.

As mentioned in Standard 2.5, the MET is developing an essential skills framework that would function much like a scope and sequence. As the school looks to improve in the area of curriculum, it will be important that the document aligns with the Indiana state standards. One school leader reported that once the essential skills document is completed, one of the advisors will take on the role of essential skills coordinator and will be responsible for systematically reviewing the curriculum with the advisors.

The emerging essential skills framework will help advisors focus on core learning objectives and content skills. This document is a start to developing an academically rigorous curriculum.

A majority of the faculty and staff see the Big Picture model as the school's curriculum. There is a great deal of understanding and buy-in to this model. Advisors see their main role at the school as a “coordinator of resources” for the students. One advisor said, “My job is to lead [the student] to the places where he can get instruction.” All advisors are committed to the Big Picture learning goals: empirical reasoning, quantitative reasoning, communication, social reasoning, and personal qualities, but as a “coordinator of resources,” the advisors do not spend significant time in direct instruction of students. Instead, they guide the students to instruct themselves. The visiting team conducted 18 classroom observations, each lasting approximately 30 minutes. In classroom observations, 27% (5 of 18) of the classes observed did not have any guided practice of content skills while 72% (13 of 18) of the classes observed had students working independently. In one class (5%) the review team did see an advisor question the students for higher order thinking skills, and in 17% (3 of 18) of the classes observed, the team saw students receive corrective feedback.

The advisors have programs and materials available to them in order to deliver the curriculum effectively. Each teacher is given a budget of \$1000 per year for student projects and another \$700 per year for classroom supplies. The advisors also see the community and parents as instructional resources and attempt to include them when they can. Each classroom has about six computers available for student use, and many students use them to complete course work on-line or to document their personal learning plans using Big Picture On-Line.

Overall, the school was rated “does not meet standard” in this area because it does not have the curriculum aligned with state standards and does not consistently implement a curriculum to ensure that all students are mastering the content skills necessary to graduate from high school in the state of Indiana.

4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?

Does not meet standard

The school presents significant concerns in two or more 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.

Does not meet standard. It is not clear that instruction at the MET provides the necessary rigor to ensure students achieve at high levels. It is also not clear that instruction is based on learning objectives or that pace and rigor of instruction is sufficient to ensure that students achieve the necessary content and skills. While staff is receiving feedback, it is not explicitly focused on instruction.

The school works to incorporate the Big Picture learning goals into the classroom activities and the Learning Through Internship (LTI) experiences, an experiential internship in which 61% of the student body was participating at the time of the site visit. However, these programs are not a complete curriculum. There are plans to integrate the developing essential skills with the Big Picture learning goals in order to have a more complete curriculum, but that is still in the developmental stage (see Standard 4.1 for more details).

As currently delivered, instruction is not based on core learning objectives. In all of the classes that were observed by the visiting team, there were no learning objectives or state standards posted for the students. Observers consistently saw a daily agenda posted, but this agenda was limited to a list of items to be completed, which do not define desired learning outcomes. Though the objectives were not posted, in 11% (2 of 18) of the classes the teacher did explain to the students the learning objectives for the class. As noted in Standard 4.1 of this report, there was little content instruction taking place in the classes observed by the review team; the exception to this was the math classes. All 27% of the guided practice that was observed was noted in the math classes.

Because the mission of the school is “one student at a time,” the pace and variety of the instruction is determined by the need of the student. Students spend most of their time working independently and pacing their activities based on the agenda the advisor helps them set. In classroom observations the following details related to instructional time and variety were noted:

- Effective use of instructional time: 67% (12 of 18). Examples included: discussion on projects and grades, math content instruction, students working on computers.
- Inappropriate pace of content delivery: 61% (11 of 18). Examples included: students socializing, no content delivery, group of students struggling, students eating, “Please be quiet.” “Please hurry up.” “Please pay attention.”
- Students simultaneously participate in different activities: 83% (15 of 18). Examples included: computer use, discussion, reading silently, working in small groups.

The school leadership provides feedback to the advisors, but it is unclear how much of that feedback focuses on instructional practices. In focus groups, advisors report that the school leadership is “supportive, effective, and helpful” with their feedback to advisors. The advisors highly value the monthly one-on-one meetings outside of the building. It is also reported that much of the feedback is student-centered: student goals, student discipline issues, individualized learning plans. There is a formal evaluation process that takes place each year and includes a self-evaluation and the evaluation by the school director.

Generally, the instructional practices at the MET are consistent with the Big Picture learning goals, but there is not evidence that instruction is adequately focused on the content and skills students should have at the completion of a secondary education or to prepare students for post-secondary opportunities.

4.3. For secondary students, does the school provide sufficient guidance on and support preparation for post-secondary options?	
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 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.

Approaching standard. The school provides some guidance and support to prepare students for post-secondary options. An overall goal of Indianapolis Metropolitan High School, according to the executive summary, is to “significantly increase the high school graduation rate and the enrollment of high school graduates in degree programs at post-secondary institutions...” Much of what the faculty and staff strive to do at the MET revolves around this goal. There is still some work to be done in the documentation of this goal. The school does not yet meet Indiana Core 40 graduation standard requirements for all students.

Because the curriculum is individualized for each student, coursework is challenging for some, but it is not consistently challenging across grade levels and content areas. The school does provide opportunities for the students to engage in challenging coursework through the Learning Through Internships (LTI's) and through the chance to take college-level courses at Ivy Tech. However, student progress with the LTI experience and learning goals is not well documented. In a review of four advisor's LTI binders, which were randomly selected, the review team found completed and signed LTI agreement contracts for 43% of the students (26 of 61), completed time sheets for 3% of the students (2 of 61), and mentor completed evaluation forms for 3% of the students (2 of 61).

The LTI experiences are a driving force in helping students to find their passions in life and using that passion to further their education. Parents report that the school is living up to its commitment to help the students find their passions:

- “The school has helped [my son] find his passion. He was unmotivated and stayed below the radar before. Now he is confident and believes in himself. He's never below the radar.”
- “My son was unmotivated, but here he has been accepted to three colleges. He's got a career path laid out.”
- “Kids get to take ownership.”

Advisors see the benefit in students being passionate about what they are learning, but they also report that this model is not for every student. One advisor commented, “Kids who work the model go straight to the top. Students who don't—I don't know what happens to them.”

Sufficient material resources and personnel guidance are available to inform students of post-secondary options. There is a full-time college coordinator on staff as well as an internship coordinator for each school. The classroom advisors also see college counseling as part of their job, and they require each senior to apply to at least three colleges or universities. In addition, the school schedules college tours over breaks from school in order to expose the students to the choices available to them. Advisors post college acceptance letters on the walls of the classrooms for motivation, and the seniors use a GRAB checklist to record when they reach targets as they progress toward graduation; this checklist includes college admissions benchmarks.

As the school continues to grow, so too do the extracurricular activities. The school is a member of the Indiana High School Athletic Association (IHSAA) and has several athletic team options for the students, including cross country, track, baseball, and dance. The students play on club teams with students from other schools. The school also supports a student council and has after school activities associated with Goodwill Industries of Central Indiana. A partnership with the Indianapolis Civic Theater is being pursued for next school year.

The school does not yet meet Indiana Core 40 graduation standard requirements for all students. There are no clearly defined graduation requirements at the MET or a course sequence for all students. The school leadership reported that the “essential skills will coordinate with the Core 40.” But, the essential skills framework is still in the developmental stages. School leadership indicated that they “want to accommodate the Core 40 requirements because they want to get [students] into schools.” As reported by the leadership, for the school year 2007-2008, 32% (16 of 50) of the seniors will graduate with the Core 40 diploma.

In general, the review team found that the school does provide guidance on, and support preparation for post-secondary options, but it needs to work on a systematic approach for the documentation of this guidance and support, and the advisors need to be held accountable for their part in this documentation.

4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?	
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 guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.
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 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.

Does not meet standard. Indianapolis Metropolitan High School does not effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction on a systematic basis. Several different types of assessments are used, and while some teachers use the assessment data to improve instruction, the school does not systematically use the data to improve instruction across the board. Also, the feedback that students receive on the assessments varies depending on the advisor.

As described by school leadership, advisors, students, and parents, throughout the school year, the MET uses the following assessments in order to measure student performance:

- ISTEP
- NWEA
- Trimester exhibitions
- Gateway exhibitions
- Pre- and post-assessments in math classes
- Student portfolios
- Personal learning plan meetings
- Individual observations of activity progress
- Student self-reflection

As stated previously, learning standards used at the MET are based upon a broad set of Big Picture learning goals. These learning goals are addressed in the students' personal learning plans as major categories of focus along with other criteria: empirical reasoning, quantitative

reasoning, communication, social reasoning, personal qualities, resources, how will my advisor know, and what will I show at my exhibition. However, the feedback on these learning goals is individualized and varies from advisor to advisor. As one advisor said, “the quality of the feedback depends on the advisor.”

Subject-specific content and skills assessments were absent from classroom observations conducted by the review team. In order to give students credit for a course, students need to prove competency. The school leadership, advisors, and students all reported to the review team that the proof of mastery is in the student portfolios, but a review of portfolios by the team indicated this was inconsistent. For example, there was little feedback from advisors on any of the work in the student portfolios. It is not evident that students are being assessed appropriately in the classroom.

School leadership reported that NWEA and ISTEP results are used in the math department for placement and as formative assessment to guide instruction. The math department also uses pre- and post-assessments to guide instruction. NWEA is used by “some” advisors to help the students select appropriate reading materials as well. Advisors reported that some attended a workshop on interpreting NWEA results, but there was no expectation that they return to the school community and share what they learned.

There is variety in the assessments at the MET as a result of the individualized nature of the program. But, the documentation of the assessments and how they are used is unclear. Much of the documentation focuses on checklists for students. This measures completion, but it does not measure mastery of skills.

There is no evidence that the school in order to guide instruction or make adjustments to the curriculum uses the standardized test results.

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.

Approaching standard. The MET has developed adequate human resource systems, but it has not deployed its staff effectively. The school has a thorough hiring process, but the review team has concerns about the advisory concept and the lack of connection between professional development (PD) and student achievement.

The school has a clear and purposeful hiring process. The school leadership reported they “are trying hard to expand the pool of candidates.” Candidates go through several days of extensive interviews and meet with school leadership, advisors, students, and parents. They are asked to teach lessons, both in their content areas and outside of them, and their writing skills are assessed. Because the relationship between students and advisors are the core of the school’s model, hiring the right advisors is very important to the school leadership.

The teacher evaluation plan is explicit and regularly implemented with a clear process and criteria. As reported by both school leadership and advisors, the advisors are evaluated each year based on a uniform and consistently used document. The evaluation tool covers the same Big Picture learning goals that the students are responsible for exhibiting at the end of each trimester. Advisors do a self-evaluation, and then they go over their evaluations with the school directors who evaluate the advisors using the same criteria. The advisors find this process clear and helpful.

The school deploys sufficient number of faculty and staff to maximize instructional time and capacity. Aside from the COO, School Directors, and 24 Classroom Advisors, the school employs the following:

- 3 LTI Coordinators
- College Counselor
- 4 Special Education Tutors
- 2 Student Services Staff Members
- 4 Title I Staff Members
- 3 Math Teachers
- 3 Math Tutors
- A STEM Director
- Student and Family Services Director
- Special Education Director
- Big Picture Coach

Faculty and staff are not always certified in areas to which they are assigned. The school has a certified teacher in each subject area on staff; however, the classroom advisers are responsible for instruction in most content areas and for awarding credit for courses they are not certified to teach. The degree of collaboration between licensed, content certified teachers and licensed, non-content certified teachers in instructional design and awarding of credits is unclear.

PD is sometimes related to demonstrated needs for instructional improvement. The topics covered include learning plans and goals, development of student activities, instructional methodology, technology, school climate, scheduling and planning, among others. One group of advisors report that the PD for school year 2007-2008 has been more helpful than in years past and is a result of their concerns and suggestions; some of the topics they have found beneficial this year are the NWEA conference and Big Picture meetings that were off-site. Another group of advisors reported that the school plans the requisite time for PD, but one advisor doesn’t “feel like I get professionally developed from it.” Another advisor reported that PD is “hit and miss.”

It is not clear how the school has used student attainment and improvement initiatives to drive PD. For example, there is no evidence that the school NWEA or ISTEP results drive PD

activities. However, the MET is in the initial phases of beginning to increase the rigor of the academic program. The school is in the process of building a curriculum. The school needs to look to standardized assessments to improve academic instruction and continue to build rigor into this curriculum (see Standards 4.1 and 4.4). As these aspects of the program develop, providing training opportunities for staff will be critical.

Taken as a whole, the school has developed adequate human resource systems. While professional development activities are in place, the school needs to have a greater focus on professional development opportunities that focus on increasing the rigor of the academic program.

4.6. Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?	
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.
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. It was clear to the visiting team that the school has a mission that is shared by all stakeholders, and they possess widespread knowledge and commitment to the intentions of the school's mission.

The mission of IndyMET is to strengthen communities by helping high school students achieve their full potential. The school will achieve this mission by educating "one student at a time," fostering students' individual interests, engaging them with teachers, parents and mentors through Individual Learning Plans that focus on those interests, and integrating academic and applied learning both inside and outside of the classroom.

All stakeholder groups quoted "one student at a time" as the mission of the school. Students said things like, "follow your passion," "real world experiences," "and "successful adults who help in the community." The parents expanded on the mission by saying, "the school wants young people to own their education. They are educating the person for life-long learning." Advisors added that post-secondary education is part of the mission.

The mission is further evidenced by the widespread commitment to the school's model. The Big Picture learning goals are present in learning plans, LTI documentation, and exhibition rubrics. Students complete Who Am I? projects, write autobiographies, and do regular journaling. These are just a few examples of individualized activities that show students are the focus of the school's mission.

There is clear evidence of a strong commitment to the mission at the MET.

4.7. Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success?	
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) interactions between faculty and administration are unprofessional and /or unproductive.
Meets standard	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.

Approaching standard. The school climate at the Met is positive, and strong relationships are exhibited throughout the school community. However, there are not clearly stated, school-wide rules, and high expectations for student behavior are not always evident.

For the most part interactions between faculty and students are respectful and supportive, but the processes for resolution of conflicts are sometimes unclear. In 83% (15 of 18) of the classroom observations, students complied with the directions of the advisors and completed activities, and in advisor focus groups, it was reported that the teachers feel respected by the students. However, in the student focus groups, it was reported that the students do not feel that all students treat their advisors and teachers respectfully.

Interactions between faculty and administration are professional and constructive. The advisors appreciate the one on one time with the administrative and report that they feel supported. They report a collaborative relationship with the administration when dealing with individual students. The advisors also report an appreciation for the Big Picture Coach and like the fact that she attends grade level meetings.

The school's redirection specialist, a full-time position, is in the process of implementing a behavior plan across all four schools, but this is in the planning stage. Evidence of the school's philosophy of one student at a time, currently, behavior expectations are posted in only 17% (3 of 18) of the classrooms. In advisor focus groups, it was reported that there are individual rules for individual students. While this is consistent with the school's model to individualize the program for each student, there is a mixed opinion from the advisors if this is a good thing or not: some teachers reported they desire a unified behavior plan, and others want to keep the authority over student behavior in their classroom.

Because there is no school-wide behavior plan, the expectations for student behavior vary greatly from advisory to advisory. In classroom observations, the visiting team noted that in only 17% (3 of 18) did there seem to be at least some consequences for student misbehavior. And, there was reward or reinforcement of positive student behavior in only 17% (3 of 18) of the classrooms. The redirection specialist reported that it is a difficult mission because "we are trying to redirect those who don't realize they need it." He went on to say that sometimes the advisors work to develop a strong, positive relationship with the students, but at times the

consequence of that relationship is a diminishing of authority. It is difficult for some advisors because “friends can’t be in charge.” Some behavior goals are documented in the students’ personal learning plans, so there is evidence of some behavior management, goal setting, and self-discipline on the parts of the students.

In summary, the school climate is a positive one because all stakeholder groups report positively about the mission of the school and believe deeply in approach and model of working with students one an individual basis. However, several groups also report the need for a more structured and uniform policy in dealing with student misbehavior.

4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?	
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. Ongoing communication with students and parents at Indianapolis Metropolitan High School is clear and helpful. There is strong communication between the school, parents, and students that report academic performance and meet the needs of a diverse set of parents.

Stakeholder groups all report an “open door policy” at the school and are positive about the many different forms of communication. School leaders and advisors both report that home visits are a non-negotiable that should happen at least once a year. Students report that these visits are sometimes inconsistent, but there is evidence that they are happening. Several advisors also report that they have parent phone numbers in their cell phones, and they call regularly for both academic and behavior reasons. Parents report that it is the informal communication, like calls in the middle of the week, which they most appreciate. One parent added, “Lots of schools talk about parental involvement. This one walks the talk. They listen to us and take action. They listen to the kids...”

The school reports students’ academic performance at the end of each trimester in a Trimester Narrative. This document clearly communicates students’ progress in the Big Picture learning

model, however, it does not consistently communicate students' progress with academic standards, a part of the program that is still under development. There is plenty of room on the report for advisors to make individual comments to the parents, and the school leadership reports that they make changes to the document as necessary to meet the diverse needs of parents: for example, they simplified a report for a parent who struggled to read.

Overall, the school is meeting the diverse needs of the parents in their communications by providing variety in their methods of communication: monthly newsletters, informal phone calls, exhibition and learning plan meetings, home visits, e-mails, parent shadowing, etc.

APPENDIX A

FOURTH YEAR CHARTER REVIEW TEAM

The Fourth Year Charter Review site visit to the Indianapolis Metropolitan High School was conducted on March 3-5, 2008, by a team of educators.

Megan Tupa, Team Leader, Project Manager, SchoolWorks, LLC

Spencer Blasdale, Team Member, Chief Executive Officer, SchoolWorks, LLC

Kelly Hamilton, Team Member, Assistant Principal, St. Theodore Guerin High School

Dina Stephens, Team Member, Consultant, Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School