U.S. Department of Education
2018 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [X] Title I   [X] Charter   [ ] Magnet   [ ] Choice

Name of Principal Mr. Scott Frye
          (Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Paramount School of Excellence
          (As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 3020 Nowland Avenue
          (If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

Indianapolis	IN	46201-1422
City	State	Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Marion

Telephone (317) 775-6660   Fax

Web site/URL http://paramountindy.org   E-mail   treddicks@paramountindy.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

                Date_____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Mr. Tommy Reddicks
          (Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)   E-mail treddicks@paramountindy.org

District Name Paramount School of Excellence   Tel.   (317) 519-4588
I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

                Date_____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. Tom Rude
          (Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

                Date_____
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.

Part I – Eligibility Certification

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)

2. All nominated public schools must meet the state's performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group and all subgroups, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.

3. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2018 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.

4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.

5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2012 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.

6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, or 2017.

7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.

8. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.

9. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.

10. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.

11. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.

12. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2017-2018) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district   0 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
   (per district designation):   0 Middle/Junior high schools
                                         0 High schools
                                         1 K-12 schools

                                         1 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

   [X] Urban or large central city
   [ ] Suburban
   [ ] Rural or small city/town

3. Number of students as of October 1, 2017 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	45	40	85
1	51	49	100
2	37	46	83
3	44	45	89
4	42	45	87
5	43	42	85
6	45	29	74
7	41	37	78
8	29	27	56
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	377	360	737

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:

0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
0 % Asian
47 % Black or African American
16 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
27 % White
10 % Two or more races
100 % Total

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2016 – 2017 school year: 14%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain.

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	**Answer**
(1) Number of students who transferred *to* the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	10
(2) Number of students who transferred *from* the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	91
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	101
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	699
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.14
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	14

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 7 %
   53 Total number ELL

   Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
   Spanish

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 85 %
   Total number students who qualify: 629

8. Students receiving special education services: 16 %
                                                         118 Total number of students served

    Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the
    Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that
    students may be classified in more than one condition.

11 Autism	0 Multiple Disabilities
0 Deafness	1 Orthopedic Impairment
0 Deaf-Blindness	14 Other Health Impaired
0 Developmentally Delayed	64 Specific Learning Disability
4 Emotional Disturbance	17 Speech or Language Impairment
0 Hearing Impairment	1 Traumatic Brain Injury
6 Intellectual Disability	0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 3

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school
    staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	4
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	27
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	15
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	9
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	9

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the
    school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1   27:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Daily student attendance	95%	95%	94%	94%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**
Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2017.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.
Yes _   No X

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school's mission or vision statement.

Inspire learning through an unparalleled academic approach and transform communities by changing lives.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

Paramount School of Excellence participates in the Enroll Indy program to fill available seats.

PART III – SUMMARY

Paramount School of Excellence (PSOE) was established in 2010 as a K-8th grade public charter school with the underlying philosophy to offer students an unparalleled academic approach and be a transformative force in its Near Eastside neighborhood. An Indianapolis locale that, with a 31% rate of poverty, is designated a Federal Promise Zone and documented as having one of the highest crime rates in Indiana. For Paramount students, these neighborhood indicators are more than numbers on a page. Currently, the school serves 725 students, of which 84% are from families with household incomes at or below the poverty level, 16% receive special education services, and 7.2% are English Language Learners. Paramount's student population is 47% African American, 27% Caucasian, 16% Hispanic and 10% multi-racial.

The school's statistics reflect a multitude of on-going challenges that students and staff face daily. New students enroll one to two grade levels below expectation; and overall, students' lack of social readiness, language barriers, and low parent involvement are persistent impediments to academic achievement. Paramount provides a full range of support services to remove obstacles that hamper student success while maximizing home and community assistance; this means providing breakfast, lunch and dinner meals, before and after school care, an extended school day option until 6 p.m., and offering a robust tutoring program, summer school, and enrichments activities. The school also maintains an in-school family resource center, Spanish speaking parent-school organization, a school-based health clinic, and supplemental on-site social and therapeutic services. Also, a parent team of three school staff exists to serve as a support resource for families. Parent team members share strategies for supporting students at home, coordinate the parent organization activities, conduct school-wide family enrichment nights, maintain a drop-in parent resource center and, when warranted, refer parents to additional community resources.

Paramount's education framework and hardworking staff have proven to be a successful combination. The Indiana Department of Education has announced PSOE as 1) a Four-Star School, 2) an "A" school for the fourth consecutive year, and 3) included the school as one of the 200 Promising Practices for Accessibility in STEM Education.

The Education Equality Index recognized Paramount for closing the achievement gap irrespective of a family's income. Chalkbeat Indiana profiled the school as the state's top ranked charter school based on 2015 ISTEP scores. This year's ISTEP rankings place Paramount among the top two public school districts in Indiana. Such accolades are significant accomplishments, but the school strives to not rest on laurels. It remains essential that the school continually find concrete ways to remove barriers that hamper academic achievement so Paramount's students reach their full potential.

Examples of initiatives that demonstrate Paramount's commitment to continual improvement of service to students and families is the creation of the family-school partnership team and the student Recovery program; a multi-tiered system of behavior and academic support. The Recovery Process supports teachers in maintaining a peaceful academic setting that is conducive to learning while also providing a parallel setting where students continue to work and be academically challenged. In addition, a school guidance counselor is available in Recovery for students to unpack with and provide for their emotional and social needs.

The school accomplishes its academic mission and teaches the mastery of Indiana Academic Standards through an emphasis of rigorous academics and on-campus hands-on experiences. Integral to the school's delivery of world-class student experiences is the school-wide use of technology and three Discovery Centers. Paramount's integrated model is a sequential, content-rich curriculum. The school continually uses student data to plan and differentiate instruction. Performance goals are established and measured across grade levels and content areas, as well as for each student. The purpose of performance benchmarks is to increase student achievement in all subject areas at each grade level, challenging state and national norm groups. This approach has enabled Paramount students to gain an academic foothold and thrive.

Paramount has set out to be a catalyst and true anchor of support for the community. This involvement is evident in the staff's active participation in neighborhood associations, community festivals, summits, and

clean-ups. These experiences build a depth of understanding for staff members and tighten the bond between school and the greater community. The school also has been instrumental in establishing a community pocket park (www. ParamountPeacePark.com) and annual city-wide festival that draws 2,500 attendees (www.TURNFestival.com).

At Paramount School of Excellence, our mission, "to inspire learning through an unparalleled academic approach and transform communities by changing lives," is more than words on a page. It is the central creed to the school's educational model, community outreach efforts and commitment to providing a high-quality educational experience to the students we serve.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Paramount students follow Indiana Academic Standards, supplemented with the Core Knowledge sequence, and Pearson curricular program guidelines. By following these standards and guidelines, students demonstrate strong reading, writing, listening, and presentation skills using multiple forms of age and grade appropriate expression. Students read and interpret poetry, literature, and informative articles. They comprehend and critically interpret multiple forms of expression, including literature from various time periods, cultures, and languages, which blends with social studies standards to produce vivid understandings of our world in both the past and present.

Students develop age and grade appropriate abilities to understand patterns and classification, understand numbers and number sense, money, computation, measurement, and geometry. As they progress mathematically, they master the concepts of ratio and percent, fractions and decimals, probability and statistics, and pre-algebra. These skills are blended with an understanding for age and grade appropriate scientific methods through observation and hands-on direct experience in the realms of physical, life, and earth science. They ask questions about nature and learn to seek answers and make qualitative observations.

Paramount's curriculum is designed to assist those students who have not had the benefits of a home rich in literature or the opportunity to experience the world through multiple venues. Pearson and Core Knowledge bring these experiences to the classroom. The design of the school allows students to interact with the world through literature, mathematics, and technology within the auspices of the school building. Concurrently, it encourages teachers to use the world as an expansion of the classroom; constructing thematic and project-based activities as a platform to engage varied learning styles to expand, enrich, and validate what is happening in the classroom. The design invites and encourages opportunities for school/business partnerships that further the learning experiences of all students.

Additionally, for those students who have had the opportunity to augment their cognitive world with experiences, the Pearson and Core Knowledge curriculum creates a setting for students to question their assumptions. As these two enhanced learning opportunities occur in parallel, all students have the opportunity to learn through the experiences and philosophical thought of others. The design builds on knowledge and allows students to explore learning and build from a foundation of skills – developing rigor and relevancy through real-world application of knowledge. All students maximize their potential; developing both knowledge and wisdom through the basic state standards that are enriched by student interaction and community involvement as designed by the curriculum.

Reading Street, enVision Math, and Smekens writing is also used across grade levels. Along with the regular curriculum, the Honors program provides challenging coursework for high ability students as identified through the school's identification process. This ensures a full spectrum of differentiation is being provided, especially for students that are twice exceptional. If a child has an area of disability, as well as an area of giftedness, both aspects of a student's cognitive development are fully addressed and nurtured.

The aforementioned curricular materials all provide multiple points of entry for limited language learners and students with IEPs. In addition to the intentionality of the differentiation, all three products utilize online licenses for students, allowing students time receiving individualized remediation from teachers who work with them individually or in small groups to further alleviate barriers to learning.

Paramount uses an integrated design, blurring the lines of typical blocks of time that segment content areas. Instead, a cross-curricular model encourages students to touch and explore learning through a variety of approaches. For instance, a STEM lesson may lead out with a math standard, and history often leads out with a language arts perspective (or vice-versa).

To add an application approach to the math curriculum, Paramount has introduced Math Congress in grades 3-8. In this process, a set of story problems are given and collectively solved in various student groups. The

focus of Math Congress is to illustrate there are multiple paths to solve a problem. Math Congress also provides an opportunity to reinforce the core learning objectives, such as persistence, listening skills, acknowledging others' points of view, providing clear explanations of answers, and modeling problem solving behaviors. These objectives serve to promote both basic and more complex metacognitive skills.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Paramount focuses on readying each child for success at top post-secondary institutions; embracing and promoting a path for college bound students throughout our school's community. The staff integrates a researched based curriculum taught through the standards that allows each student to exit the school with the foundation to begin a college preparatory curriculum. Each grade level teams provides a "focus form" to the extended core team that indicates the College and Career Standards as well as other objectives that will be addressed in the upcoming week. The art, music, world language, and physical education teachers then integrate this information into their lessons. Students see how what they are learning in the classroom can be applied to other aspects of their lives.

At Paramount, students have access to a wide variety of technology. Examples of technology include: iPads, laptops, interactive televisions, and a state-of-the-art planetarium. PSOE believes strongly in providing all students with opportunities to inquire and construct new knowledge through the use of technology; therefore, all aspects of the curriculum are implemented through innovative technology and effective instructional practices as a hybrid design for delivery. Instruction showcases technology as a global resource for enriching curriculum and exploring content, foreign language development, urban farming, and character development. These foci allow students to select paths for demonstrating and presenting their understanding of standards. The foundation of Paramount's hybrid design incorporates technology with the irreplaceable 'human factor' of teacher interaction.

Art, music, physical education (PE), and world language are provided for all grade levels per a rotating instructional schedule. The music and art teachers follow Indiana Academic Standards and the Core Knowledge Curriculum in grades K-8. Art and music are integrated throughout the curriculum, aligning with the scope and sequence of the core classroom teachers, to create a more meaningful learning experience. Students will write original lyrics based on a prompt tied to a work of literature as a way to integrate English/Language Arts and music. It is common to find students using measuring tools and math skills in art, such as when they construct scale models and blue prints of original architecture.

Physical Education instruction is tailored to the student's level of proficiency. An emphasis is placed on developing an awareness and appreciation of lifelong healthful activities. Health education is also a part of the PE program. This portion of the curriculum increases the students' awareness of healthful living habits. Intertwining the PE program with the academic program maximizes the instructional day and infuses small group instruction.

Students receive foreign language instruction beginning in kindergarten, with the complexity building as they progress through eighth grade. The linguistic and cultural components of Paramount's language program align with the Indiana Academic Standards of developing proficiency and appreciation for languages other than English, create an appreciation for cultures other than their own, and gain a perspective as a global citizen. There are two additional virtues of learning a second language. Language instruction trains the brain by enhancing the logical and reasoning powers of the mind while promoting the skills of analysis, memory, and drawing inferences. Second, mastery of a second language enhances students' access to post-secondary programs since many colleges and universities require second language classes for admission.

Character education is another major focus for Paramount. Following thorough research of available character curriculum options, Project Wisdom which complements the school's educational goals was selected. The program allows delivery of 30-second messages within daily announcements and provides powerful monthly themes that fit with a projects-based and integrated curriculum. Project Wisdom offers online access for each staff; providing resources for integration in lesson and unit designs. This program

emphasizes the development of learners as caring, responsible, contributing members of society, and teaches children to care for and respect themselves and others.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Instruction at Paramount is planned with the understanding that academic success is not dependent on a student's community demographics. It is the State's expectation that students who attend school for the mandatory number of days will pass the state exam. Paramount believes in this expectation and staff must work under that premise in serving children as effectively as possible.

Paramount uses student data to plan and differentiate instruction, which is included on the weekly teacher and instructional assistant lesson plans. Student data and differentiated instruction are further utilized to focus observation feedback meetings, weekly team meetings, and to determine recommendations for MTSS, Special Education, small groups, recovery, or attendance office referrals, and ELL reevaluations. Lesson plans are developed in teams that include classroom teachers, instructional assistants, special education, ELL, and extended core teachers to ensure individual student needs are met with each lesson's delivery and implementation.

Typical instruction is modeled after a cyclical framework that moves through these steps: 1) mini-lesson on academic concept(s) with an optional pre-assessment, 2) traditional work (reading, writing, mathematics, etc.) with reiteration of mini-lesson concept(s), 3) concept assessment, and 4) concept extension to real-world application or hands-on activity. Each content-based lesson starts with a mini-lesson. The teacher explains one focused-concept/standard and then models the thought process of what "excellence" from the students looks like. Teachers do not presume the students have mastered the standard and start with the assumption that this is an introduction (not a review). Following the mini-lesson, teachers use a gradually release model to ensure students are set up for success.

Teachers balance grade level instruction and assignments with student readiness levels. This allows teachers to deliver skill specific differentiated instruction below, at, or above grade level. The content and skill will be the same for all students, but the level, complexity or difficulty will differ based on an individual student's mastery and performance. This individualized instruction is achieved through developing project-based learning opportunities, utilizing adaptive technology programs, or one-on-one or small group push-in with an instructional assistant.

Paramount uses a variety of assessment data to improve student and school performance, such as cumulative assessments, mClass, enGrade/Acuity, and ISTEP+.
Unit assessment data is used in various formats to map against levels of understanding – rethinking, re-teaching and guiding instructional strategies. The state ISTEP+ test provides the school with vital information on how students are performing relative to the state requirements and other schools and districts in the state.

Data discussions, involving administration and teachers focused on classrooms/students not meeting their academic goal, have a structured, intentional agenda. The conversation frameworks should involve all parties taking responsibility for the data and center on what each staff member will do to meet future goals. These conversations are focused-forward, with the primary goal of impacting student success.

Data collected from standardized assessments, such as Acuity and mClass, is disseminated to the teaching staff within 24 hours. Upon receiving their class's updated benchmark data, teachers organize the students into above, at, bubble, or below grade level performance on a spreadsheet that is submitted to administration. This data is shared across departments and with grade level teams, so everyone who has instructional time with a student knows how to help them excel. An individual's learning plan includes analysis of the testing data and addresses a student's specific strengths and areas of growth. These comprehensive and systematic reviews of student data identify gaps in student performance which can then be addressed through a variety of strategies, such as standards-based quizzes and Fast Fives.

Ongoing assessment ensures appropriate measures are implemented to address all students' needs and

guides the instructional process, professional development offerings and informs curriculum revisions. Data discussions between administration and teachers regarding classrooms/students not meeting their academic goal have a structured, intentional, focused-forward agenda. Conversation frameworks prescribe educators take responsibility for the data and develop a plan of interventions, supports, and alterations to meet future goals.

Currently, Paramount utilizes school-wide, data-driven identification, targeted intervention and integrated behavioral, academic and emotional counseling support services. These endeavors are supported by two accredited full-time counselors. Teachers use a color-coded system that identifies attendance and behavioral issues, along with students receiving services from special education, MTSS, ELL, and instructional assistant small groups.

1. **School Climate/Culture:**

Paramount realizes the importance of creating a positive and healthy school environment. It is the school's intent to provide a safe school for all students and staff. Paramount strives to be a school focused on a holistic, wrap-around model, providing a triangulation of support in three critical areas – education, social/emotional health, and the security of a place to call home. Paramount believes that when a child's fundamental needs are addressed, and a culture is established that fosters safety, well-being, and consistency, the child can focus on learning and maximizing potential.

To sustain the academic achievement, a continuous and structured system of checks and balances has been established. Teachers and administrators meet on a weekly basis to discuss the successes and struggles occurring within each grade level. Administrators and educators create frameworks that are implemented daily. This creates an atmosphere of constant communication and consistency. Teachers share with administration how they are progressing through their curriculum maps and document changes that need to be made for the following school year. In this process, academic success remains the focus. The Recovery process provides a parallel means for a disrupted student to be challenged academically while receiving counseling services. Students receive the support of a school guidance counselor to address social/emotional needs partnered with a licensed teacher who keeps the students on track academically.

Paramount strongly believes in doing whatever it takes to ensure our teachers know they are valued and cared for. We do this through a robust benefits package in addition to creating a school culture of support and respect. We offer differentiated professional development and unprecedented supports for first-year teachers through our New Teacher Academy. Our customized career path plans allow each staff member to gain experience and leadership in the areas they are most passionate about. We offer a highly competitive salary and benefit structure, including 403(b) matching and opportunities to participate in our student loan forgiveness program. School Grounds, our on-site complimentary coffee shop, is open daily from 7 a.m. to noon, serving any caffeinated drink you can imagine, delivered right to the classroom in ten minutes or less. Employees enjoy a complimentary YMCA family membership. Teachers have the option to purchase company cellphone plans, starting at less than $10 per month, and there are opportunities to use our company suite for events at Bankers Life Fieldhouse.

2. **Engaging Families and Community:**

In addition to a multitude of existing family and student support strategies in place, in 2014 Paramount launched a family-school engagement partnership. The initiative is based on family-school connections research that reveals that regardless of ethnicity, culture or economic status, parents are interested in their children's academic success. With this belief, the partnership focuses on the two strongest predictors of student academic success: educational preparedness and student-family engagement.

Three trained family support specialists offer a proactive pathway for school-family engagement and age appropriate school readiness resources directly to parents, families, and guardians. The major components of the expanded family engagement initiative include: 1) 1 on 1 outreach to families; 2) family support backpacks for kindergarten students, first grade students and preschool siblings filled with easy to understand materials, books, and ideas for parents, grandparents and older siblings; 3) Family Academic Activity Nights: Fall – Family Jam Literacy Night and Spring – Family Jam Math Night; and 4) monthly School Community Organization programming. With a goal of at least one interaction with each of Paramount's 400+ families, the school is reimaging family-school partnerships by building authentic peer support for families, while bridging learning from school to home in meaningful and engaging ways.

This commitment to active meaningful engagement is also the basis for Paramount's community involvement. Located in a dense and impoverished area on Indianapolis's Near Eastside, the school has set out to act as a stimulus for neighborhood revitalization. This involvement means being an integral participant in the local neighborhood associations, organizing community events and partnering with area

support organizations to provide families with additional resources. Examples of such collaborations include: working with the Near Eastside Education AmeriCorps for a Parent Empowerment Fellow, Community Health East for school nurses, and The Mind Trust for an Administration Fellow. Paramount also presents the Near East Side Community Organization's annual week-long community games (nesco.org) and the TURN (Transforming Urban Neighborhoods) Festival annual celebration of urban sustainability that focuses on farm, food, health and environment. This event attracts more than 2,500 visitors for exhibits, workshops, children's activities and farm demonstrations. Proceeds from the festival's food offerings are shared with the neighborhood association and Slow Food Indy to fund community outreach efforts.

A desolate and overgrown portion of the school campus was transformed into a welcoming pocket park for the Brookside Neighborhood. After reformation of the physical site, three Near Eastside place-making art endeavors converged, culminating with seven art installations. Central to the Paramount Peace Park's origin is the belief that art is an active component of "place-making." The subsequent installations represent a unique incorporation of the space's physical assets and thoughtful connectivity to the local community.

3. Professional Development:

Paramount utilizes all tests and evaluations to ensure appropriate measures are implemented to address all student needs and guide the instructional process. These findings guide professional development. The continual use of formal and informal testing, along with standardized testing in the form of Acuity, mClass, ISTEP+, and IREAD-3, provides teachers and administration with a constant flow of data. It opens the door for developmental communication on what best practices are working within individual classrooms.

An ongoing practice of an administrator observing teachers is used to hold teachers accountable, ensure frameworks are followed with fidelity and strengthen the academic process. After each observation, administration meets with each teacher for a post-observation review. To better facilitate conversation, a rubric has been created that aligns RISE expectations with Paramount frameworks. Teachers are provided with this document and can see how personal goals are being met. The process of feedback and professional ownership establishes individual classroom goals with a shared vision of improving student achievement.

Paramount provides professional development focused on reviewing and revising the current curriculum to reflect both Indiana Academic Standards and College and Career Readiness Standards. Indiana Academic Standards are prioritized based on skills that will appear on ISTEP+ based on the State's assessment blueprints. Administration then reviews and offers feedback on the curriculum maps and calendars. It has always been the expectation for lesson plans to be submitted the week prior to instruction at Paramount. The creation of a lesson plan rubric allows teachers to receive immediate feedback on their lessons. It also provides feedback regarding structure and lesson details. This provides consistency and structure so teachers are provided feedback on how well their lessons align with Paramount frameworks.

External professional development, while not devalued, is used with discretion. The school feels presentations by external specialists should directly correlate to an ongoing site-based need and is not effective in the form of a "one and done" training. Teachers are given opportunities to share their individual talents, building on each other's strengths rather than bringing in external workshops. This allows educators to use what they know. In this process, student academic success remains the focus. Professional development opportunities are offered within the educational setting; allowing educators to use the resources and tools provided to make the most educational gain.

4. School Leadership:

An independent board of directors, composed of eight members, is responsible for the fiscal management, basic education and policy development of the school. The board members ensure 1) the philosophy and mission of the school are followed and in compliance with Indiana law, 2) student performance is monitored and the school is meeting performance standards, 3) operational efficiency by approving and

monitoring annual budgets, plans and performance, and that school management, parents, teachers, and students are supported by an exceptional learning environment, 4) legal and ethical integrity, and 5) accountability is maintained and policies are established that help the school achieve its mission and educational objectives. The school administrative staff includes the Executive Director, Principal, Elementary and Middle School Assistant Principals and Operations Manager.

Paramount School of Excellence has a five-pillar set of guiding principles that are designed to focus growth and performance alignment with the school's mission to serve students with an unparalleled academic approach. Each pillar supports the next in a progression, with the initial emphasis on Pillars I, II and II. Teachers are evaluated on their development in the Pillar proficiencies. Staff receives ongoing feedback and support to facilitate growth in the areas of: Pillar I: Character and Community Development; Pillar II: Paramount Values; Pillar III: Standards-Based Instruction; Pillar IV: Data Driven Instruction; and Pillar V: Differentiated and Integrated Instruction.

The five-pillars are the foundation for the established school frameworks that uniformly articulate Paramount's high expectations for how instruction occurs. The frameworks form the basis for the teacher feedback and support tools that the administration uses on a regular basis. Over the course of the 2016-17 academic cycle, Paramount documented its system of academic frameworks. "Designs for Learning" is the internal document that serves as a structural guard-rail for site-based implementation and to maintain the integrity of Paramount's impactful education model.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Paramount exists to educate K-8 students in an innovative environment that instills high expectations for success. The school balances students' hard work and classroom rigor with scaffolded excitement on campus. This focus on student outcomes paired with enthusiasm for learning is present in the hallways, on the school grounds and spills out to the community. Paramount's brightly colored building greets students with an explosion of color that is continued on the school's five-acre campus.

The school's farm provides a unique platform that is abundant with environmental and STEM activities. Farm assets include: vegetable gardens, an orchard, water cistern system, shipping container barn, a hoop greenhouse, and is home to 23 chickens, 8 dairy goats, and a 4-hive apiary. Three environmental educators manage the farm and tie farm activities to State academic standards. Additional green initiatives at Paramount include: five wind turbines, a school-wide recycling program and STEAM (Success Through Education, Agriculture and Mentoring), an eight-week, summer middle school agro-ecology program.

Inside the school building, two Discovery Centers offer additional on-site learning opportunities to support the rigorous classroom instruction. The Eco Center's resources include: a butterfly hatchery, observation bee hive, and a number of micro-habitats. A Time and Space Discovery Center sparks students' imagination with a planetarium, a room-size scale model of the solar system, live NASA video feed, and 25 laptops for research. Also, with more than 10% of the student population participating in the school's robotics program, and VEX IQ teams qualifying for five consecutive World Championships, a portion of a multi-purpose space has been transformed into robotics design stations and practice spaces.

Paramount School of Excellence exemplifies the community school model by blending a consistent and dedicated focus on the community with a desire to protect and grow the academic environment. Cross-curricular, project-based investigations include partnerships with Purdue University, the Indianapolis Children's Museum, and other community education entities. Use of exciting components, like community fairs, neighborhood clean-ups, and farm activities, focus scaffolded excitement alongside academics to support the challenging pace within our classrooms.

At Paramount, we work to make students and communities thrive. Excellence is not determined by our students' zip code. It is available to anyone willing to put in the hard work. Our goal is to instill values that make our students, graduates, parents and staff continue to seek excellence throughout their lives. Excellence is found in the school's inspired learning and inventive approach that is focused, supportive and proven. And because excellence does not happen in a day, at Paramount we work toward it every day.