



## Charter School Application

to

Calumet College of St. Joseph  
2400 New York Avenue  
Whiting, IN 46394

August 15, 2014

Hammond Academy  
33 Muenich Court  
Hammond, Indiana 46320  
219/852-0500 Office  
219/852-4153 Fax  
[WWW.HAMMONDACADEMY.ORG](http://WWW.HAMMONDACADEMY.ORG)

### **Proposed Grade Levels and Student Enrollment**

The Hammond Academy of Science and Technology currently operates grades 6 through 12, with a planned maximum enrollment of 575 students. Target enrollment per grade is 80-85 students.

**Proposed School Name:** Hammond Academy of Science and Technology

<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>Grade Levels</b>	<b>Student Enrollment (Planned/Maximum)</b>
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2010-11	6-9	299/320
2011-12	6-10	399/400
2012-13	6-11	465/480
2013-14	6-12	556/560
2014-15	6-12	575/575

**Do any of the proposed schools expect to contract or partner with an Education Service Provider (ESP) or other organization for school management/operation?**

No

**Will an application for the same charter school be submitted to another authorizer in the near future?** Yes. HAST will be submitting a reauthorization proposal to Ball State University Office of Charter Schools. Submission deadline is October 1, 2014 for the electronic submission of Charter Renewal Application.

**Previous submission for request to authorize this charter school over the past five years, as required under IC 20--24-3-4**

**Authorizer:** Ball State University

**Submission Date:** March 25, 2009

## **Proposal Narrative**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

#### **Mission and Vision for Growth in Indiana**

The mission of the Hammond Academy of Science and Technology (HAST) is to provide the highest quality level of education to students by implementing state of the art technology and research-based instruction in an environment that is conducive to learning.

The mission is supported by HAST's vision/core beliefs:

- Every student deserves a quality education, one that is designed to best serve their developmental needs, and provide them with a holistic approach to education
- Technology should be embraced in the classroom and readily available to each and every student
- Education should be a collaborative effort of staff, faculty, parents, community, business, and most of all, students
- Our success will be demonstrated not only by the academic accomplishments of our students, but by our ability to share our instructional approaches, breakthroughs, and experiences with other educators and schools
- The education that we provide our students must emulate, correlate, and simulate the challenges that students will experience as they further their studies in college, as well as those that they will encounter as adults in the workplace
- We need to prepare students to be life-long learners
- Accomplishments of students should be celebrated and used as the basis of encouraging those students to pursue future successes and challenges

#### **Educational Need and Target Population**

The mission and vision core beliefs are supported by the findings of work undertaken by a joint task force between the City of Hammond and Purdue University Calumet (PUC) between 2006 and 2009. That task force came to the conclusion that Hammond was losing much of its middle class population due to substandard schools at the middle and high school level. The City had noted a trend among its families, indicating that they were leaving the city once their children reached the 5th grade.

The need to undertake efforts to stem the loss of the middle class in Hammond cannot be understated. The loss of a community's middle class has significant impact on revitalization and economic development efforts, and is viewed as a bellwether of the community's stability and viability. Erosion of the middle class often results in increased crime, a decline in infrastructure (due to the loss of property taxes and a redirection of existing fiscal resources for social services), and lower property values. Middle class loss often significantly impacts education.

In early 2005, the City of Hammond the School City of Hammond, and PUC joined together to form a task force to begin planning for what was initially envisioned to be a magnet school which would provide both improved academic learning opportunities and a demonstration of change. The task force saw the school as a laboratory for change where new approaches to education, study, and parental involvement could be showcased.

The concept received strong support from the community through a variety of forums and discussions. The school concept was presented to the attendees of the annual Educational Summit on November 5, 2005, which was attended by approximately 600 parents, teachers, and concerned citizens.

At the summit's conclusion, a survey was conducted of breakout session attendees. The results indicated strong and widespread support among community members of creating an alternative educational environment within the City to serve a representative population of the families of Northwest Indiana, particularly the middle class families of Hammond.

### **Community Engagement**

Since its inception, HAST has offered numerous opportunities to engage student, parent, and community involvement. Students and parents have been members of staff selection interview panels. Students provide regular feedback on staff performance through annual evaluations. Parents are welcome to enter the building throughout the school day, including visiting and observing their children and teachers in the classrooms.

Our annual Open House and quarterly Student-Led Conferences (the HAST equivalent of Parent-Teacher Conferences, but the emphasis on our students portraying their learning, putting themselves at the center of the discussion) provide regular opportunities for local community organizations to participate and gain visibility with our school community. Regular participants are the Towle Theater, Advanced Financial Credit Union, Hammond Public Library, Books, Brushes and Bands for Education, PUC, as well as our own clubs and school organizations.

HAST is built on principles detailed by the Comer Process, developed by Dr. James Comer. The Comer Process provides a structure as a process for mobilizing adults to support student learning and overall development. It is a different way of conceptualizing and working in schools and replaces traditional school organization and management with an operating system that works for schools and the students they serve. The three guiding principles are:

- **No fault--** Maintains the focus on problem-solving, rather than placing blame
- **Consensus Decision Making--**Through dialogue and understanding, builds consensus about what is good for children and adolescents
- **Collaboration--**Encourages the principal and teams to work together

The principles are exhibited at HAST through the collaborative nature of decision making involving key stakeholders. Students, parents, and staff are solicited appropriately regarding issues pertaining to school culture and performance. A parent team consisting of parents representing all grade levels serves as a consulting body to the principal in monthly or bi-monthly meetings.

This framework places the students' developmental needs at the center of the school's agenda and establishes shared responsibility. Concerned adults work together to provide students with the developmental activities that may be lacking outside the school, including the regular services of counselors, a social worker, a grade level team, and administrative team committed to recognizing the individual needs of each of our students. The adults, in concert with the parents, work together to make effective decisions about the program and curriculum of the school, based on student need.

### **Education Plan/School Design**

The school features state of the art technology, including SMART Boards, AppleTV projection systems, and notebook or tablet devices for all students and staff. We operate in a wireless environment throughout our school. This level of universal access to staff and students has been in existence since we opened our doors September 2010.

From 2008 to 2010, the HAST Curriculum Committee, sponsored by PUC's College of Education, met to review a wide range of research-based curricula, particularly in the content areas of Science and Mathematics. The Curriculum Committee was comprised of nearly twenty professional educators from all over Northwest Indiana, each selected for his or her creativity and expressed level of innovation in the classroom.

As a result of the dialogue that ensued in this committee, the school's curriculum is project and inquiry based. Hands on applications in all content areas, preferably using real life situations from students' lives and the region they inhabit, are central to the learning process. The math and science programs reflect an integrated approach to these content areas, where standards and skills are scaffolded from the 6th grade through the 12th grade.

This is best illustrated in the high school instructional program, where the math courses are not explicitly labeled as Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry, and Calculus. Rather, elements of each are introduced to students each year, with increased complexity at the correspondingly increasing grade level. The same is done with Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. Even course names reflect this different approach. These courses are labeled Integrated Math 1, 2, and 3. Seniors do have the option of Finite Math, Pre-Calculus, or Calculus, in anticipation of college requirements.

Course requirements in English/Language Arts and Social Studies, called Global Studies at HAST, are rich in literature, vocabulary development, and analysis of complex aspects of human development, as represented in literary and historical forms.

At HAST, students beginning in 9th grade have access to Dual Credit courses, continuing through the 12th grade. These electives include Project Lead the Way (STEM-integrated courses based on the various engineering disciplines), Sociology, Psychology, Speech, Composition, US Government, and Personal Finance. All of the aforementioned courses are dual credit options, through agreements with PUC, Indiana University Northwest, and Ivy Tech East Chicago campus. The school also offers Health, Physical Education, Choral and General Music, and Spanish 1,2, and 3. Students in the middle school grades study the four content areas, Health, Physical Education, and General Music.

Not only is the curriculum introduced to students in a hands-on, project and inquiry based approach, but the building is expressly and uniquely designed to facilitate cooperative and integrative learning. There are no individual desks for students. All classrooms are furnished with tables which allow for flexible grouping to best suit the content and the needs of that classroom.

At every grade level, there are four classrooms, one for each content area. The walls of these classrooms open, allowing two, three, or all four teachers at the grade level to teach collaboratively. At HAST, these walls are regularly open, providing students at entire grade levels the opportunity to experience learning together. It is impossible to be an isolated learner or an isolated instructor at HAST. While individual students are clearly responsible for their own learning, they always conduct this learning in a communal context, sharing and discussing their processes and results with colleagues. This instructional approach, design, and implementation is in full alignment with 21st century learning skills desired and required by the workforce our students will be entering.

### **Network Governance and Leadership**

Hammond Urban Academy, Inc, (doing business as HAST) is a not-for-profit corporation established to develop, own, and operate a charter school in Downtown Hammond,, Indiana. The corporation is dedicated solely to the purpose of developing, constructing, establishing, and operating a state of the art educational facility that meets the needs of local middle and high school students. The corporation is governed by an 11-member Board of Directors which oversees the operation of the school and the not-for-profit corporation. The directors are charged with serving as the school's governing board as well as being responsible for all fiduciary oversight of the corporation.

Board members are chosen under provisions as outlined in the corporation's By-Laws. Although members serve to represent local business and government interests, the community at large and parents of students attending the school, no member may serve on the board without the approval of a majority of the remaining board members.

Specific member nominations are made by the following entities:

- Mayor of Hammond (3 nominations)

- Hammond City Council (1 nomination)--The member may be a member of the City Council or a representative
- Hammond Development Corporation (1 nomination)--The member must also serve as a member of the Development Corporation's board of Directors
- Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce (1 nomination)--The member must also serve as a member of the Chamber's Board of Directors or as its executive director
- Hammond Downtown Council (1 nomination)--The member must also serve as a member of the Council's Board of Directors
- HAST parent representatives (2 nominations)--The members must have children presently attending HAST at the time of their nomination and service to the Board
- Members at-large (2 nominations)

As is evident by the composition of the Board of Directors, its members represent entities with vested interests in the well-being and viability of Hammond and Northwest Indiana, educationally, economically, and culturally.

The administrative leadership team is comprised of the School Leader, the AP/Dean of Students, Guidance Counselors and Business Manager/Assistant Business Manager. Leadership team meetings include not only the above administrators, but also the Director of Instructional Technology, the Director of Special Education, the Social Worker, and the office clerical staff. This broad collaboration again reflects the inclusive processes of dialogue and shared decision making in a relatively flat bureaucratic structure. Finally, at every grade level, there is a team leader responsible for oversight and support of their colleagues at that grade level.

The School Leader and Business Manager are responsible for providing monthly summaries of the educational, social, and financial well-being of the school to the Board of Directors. The transparent transmission of requests between school leadership and the governance body occurs monthly, with detailed dialogue on student and staff performance, parental involvement, and the fiscal and physical operations of the facility.

A number of Board members, the School Leader, and other key school staff (clerical, technical, instructional, and janitorial) have been with the school since its inaugural academic year. The stability of leadership on both sides of the table, school and board of directors, allows for comparatively smooth transitions from year to year. Just as the students operate in a collaborative environment of communal responsibility, school leadership and the school's governance also operate in a collaborative environment. Dialogue and decision-making occur in an environment fused with congenial and collegial respect.

## **SECTION I: EVIDENCE OF CAPACITY**

### **Current Board Group Membership**

This school is unique, given the partnership that has existed between HAST and PUC since the initial design phases. While the university served to lead the educational development process and continues to operate as a consultative body to the school in curriculum matters, the current board is structured to include individuals who have experience in education, community development, or are in community leadership positions necessary for the overall development of the school. Many board members are in positions that regularly interface with the City's residents and are well versed with the importance and demand for improved education at the middle and high school level in Hammond.

Board members are well-respected members of the community and provide strong representation of the community, local business, and the City of Hammond. These members are well-versed in administration, education, finance, and operations. These professionals have helped and continue to help to guide the organization to be a solid player in the realm of education for the City of Hammond and the Northwest Indiana region.

**Sheldon Cutler-** Mr Cutler is an Executive Vice President with Peoples Bank, formerly First Federal Savings Bank, a merger in which he was a key player and organizer. Among his many duties and accomplishments was leading the bank's construction of the main office in downtown Hammond. He was a working board member of the Cooperative Office Education program with the former Hammond Tech High School for four years. He is a past president of the Downtown Hammond Council a current board member. He formerly served on the board of Hoosier Boy's Town and Civitan.

**Dr Howard Cohen-** Dr Cohen has recently served as the Interim President of the SUNY Buffalo campus. Prior to this appointment, he was the Chancellor of Purdue University Calumet for ten years. He has served as an academic leader, provost, professor, or vice chancellor for academic affairs at the Universities of Wisconsin, Green Bay and Parkside, as well as the University of Massachusetts, Boston. Dr. Cohen assists school leaders with executive coaching, development, and planning. He has served in over twenty civic and academic organizations and boards. He is a published author on the role of ethics in leadership.

**Owana Miller-** Ms Miller is the Director of Community Development for the City of Hammond. She serves clients including faith-based organizations, civic organizations, school corporations, neighborhood organizations, and social service agencies. She is involved in Books, Brushes, and Bands for Education, the Hammond NAACP, Little League, and various Hammond neighborhood organizations.

**Janet Venecz-** Ms Venecz currently represents the City of Hammond on the HAST Board, as a present Councilwoman at Large with the city. She has years of experience



in sales, insurance, and general office management. She is a dedicated member of the Hammond community, volunteers frequently, and is regularly visible throughout the city at public functions.

Dave Ryan- Mr Ryan is the current executive director of the Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce. Prior to this he served as Manager of Communications and Public Affairs for the Northern Indiana Public Service Company. He served as the President of the Kentland Town Council for six years. For twenty-eight years he owned and operated the Colonial Inn of Kentland.

Kris Sakelaris- Ms Sakelaris is a former Lake County Superior Court Magistrate and the current executive director of the Hammond Legal Aid Clinic. She has been involved in various classroom settings since 1993. She has taught lessons on the Constitution, Voting Rights, and Elections to students at the elementary, middle, and high school level. She has served as an adjunct faculty member at Davenport University in Merrillville, St. Joseph's College in Rensselaer, and Calumet College of St. Joseph in Whiting. Ms Sakelaris has over twenty years of experience working with non profits, specifically Haven House, where she also serves as Board President.

Robert Lendi- Mr Lendi holds two undergraduate degrees in Finance and Accounting, and a Masters in Business Administration from Indiana University. He has taught at the university level, and was the Director of Finance for the City of Hammond for nearly ten years. He currently serves as the Director of Finance for the American Society for Clinical Psychology. He has served on seven regional boards, including the Hammond Water Department, The Northwest Indiana Regional Bus Authority, and the City of Hammond Board of Public Works and Safety.

Jerry Gomez- A HAST parent, Mr Gomez holds the honor of having not just one, but two children graduate in the first Senior class of Hammond Academy. Mr Gomez has over thirty years experience working in financial institutions, starting as a bank teller, to bank manager, to assistant vice president. He is currently Executive Vice President of Operations of Advance Financial Credit Union in East Chicago. Through the efforts of Mr Gomez, Advance FCU opened a branch at HAST partially run by HAST students.

Anne Herbert- A Hammond native, Ms Herbert corporate business experiences working with the national firm MCI Telecommunications Corporation for over twenty years. She presently volunteers with a variety of organizations in Hammond and Northwest Indiana devoted to strong neighborhoods, equity, health, and education, such as the Hammond College Bound Program and the Disproportionate Minority Confinement Group of the Lake County Juvenile Detention Center.

Mark McLaughlin- Mr McLaughlin has been an economic development consultant or program supervisor for thirty years, with both international and domestic experience. The bulk of his career has been spent with the City of Hammond's Planning and Development Office and the Hammond Development Corporation. He has worked on numerous projects to revitalize the downtown of the City of Hammond, including a

business incubator and the restructuring of loan portfolios of local businesses in order to leverage a small business loan fund.

Heather Cook- Ms Cook serves as Graduate Academic Advisor at PUC's College of Nursing where she has been for six years, and has been in the field of academic advisement for over ten years. She is a skilled writer, author, and editor. She is the parent of a HAST student who entered the school when it first opened.

These group members, a combination of both current and founding have proven capacities in organizing large projects, innovative opportunities, educational programs, and not-for-profit operations. A number of the members have experience with large public construction projects (Mr Ryan, Mr Cutler, Ms Miller, Mr McLaughlin, Ms Sakelaris), including new educational construction.

All of the current board members are extremely active in a wide variety of not-for-profit organizations and community efforts, helping to cement the relationship between the school and the wider community. The presence of the Chief of Staff of the City of Hammond on the HAST board serves as an immediate liaison between the school and the city. The participation of the Executive Director of the Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce links the school to a numerous community organizations, commercial and other.

#### **Resumes of Current Board Members, see Attachment 1**

#### **School Leader and Leadership Team**

Since July 1, 2010, Dr Sean Egan has served as the School Leader at HAST. His present contract is in effect until June 30, 2015, fully completing the first five year term of the school's existence.

Dr Egan was selected to serve in the role of School Leader due to his years of service in the Chicago Public School system, his familiarity with the challenges facing urban schools, the academic performance of his prior schools, his experience with technology integration and one-to-one distribution of instructional technology for student use, and his ability to procure grants to support his school's mission.

Immediately prior to coming to HAST, Dr Egan served five years as the principal of Kinzie Elementary School in Chicago. The school had nearly 750 students, 33% of whom were identified with special needs. Yet the school consistently had test scores exceeding 80% in Math and Science. Under Dr Egan's leadership, Kinzie Elementary was included in the district's Region of Autonomous Schools, a designation given to only those schools whose education, fiscal, and operational performance were of the highest level for the district. Principals in the autonomous schools were allowed increased independence in hiring and budgetary decisions. Kinzie Elementary flourished under this designation.

During his tenure at Kinzie, Dr Egan was able to procure grants for a number of pilot programs. The school was one of the first in Chicago to have one-to-one student laptop program for all students grades 5-8. With the laptops came pilot grants for software related to student testing, student skill development, and student writing. Multi-year grants provided both in-school and after-school programs for all grade levels that integrated fine arts into the core curriculum areas, especially those of Math and Science.

Dr Egan came to HAST a respected member of the Chicago Public Schools administration, with fifteen years of administrative experience. He served and continues to serve on a number of boards that demonstrate commitment to community development, educational opportunities, and the arts.

The Board originally hired the School Leader, who in turn made all additional hiring decisions. Key initial hires included the Business Manager, Assistant Principal, and Lead Teacher/Curriculum Director. Each of these individuals have since taken advanced positions with other educational organizations, reflecting the development and quality of their skills at HAST. New positions for these individuals are the Vice Director of Business Operations with Valparaiso Community Schools, Regional Superintendent for Lighthouse Schools, and School Principal with the Hanover Central School District.

The school's recently hired Assistant Principal has worked over twenty years in public education in Gary and Merrillville schools, including six years as Assistant Principal. The school's current Business Manager is a recent graduate of the PUC Masters in Accounting program. The Assistant Business Manager served as the executive administrative assistant to the Executive Director of the Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce. The position of Curriculum Director has been vacant for a year, the initial search not yielding a candidate suitable to the school's staff and philosophy. Curriculum supervision is provided by PUC in the areas of Math and English/Language Arts instruction. Consulting professors are identified by PUC's College of Education to provide them release time to observe and provide feedback to HAST teachers.

The school's leadership team also includes two guidance counselors and a teacher of Special Education who are all devoted to the academic and social-emotional well-being of students at HAST. These three individuals provide the experience and the supports necessary to assure the high level of success and course completion currently enjoyed at Hammond Academy.

**Resumes of School Leader, See Attachment 2**

**Resumes of School Leadership Team, See Attachment 3**

**Legal Status and Governing Documents, See Attachment 4**

**Statement of Assurances Form, See Attachment 5**

## **Governing Board**

### **Governance Structure and Composition**

HAST operates with an independent governing Board of Directors, with no other school or entity under their purview or supervision.

The 11-member HAST Board of Directors has several primary responsibilities:

- to evaluate the administrators of the school
- to set educational and operational policies of the school
- to plan, approve, and oversee budgetary expenditures and annual budget/financial plans, and assure that proper accounting and financial procedures are followed
- develop long-range plans including a strategic plan

The intent is to operate an exemplary public school that uses research-based methods and techniques for organizing, operating, and supporting teaching and learning in the school.

The Board members are Kris Sakelaris (President), Dave Ryan (Vice-President), Sheldon Cutler (Treasurer), Owana Miller (Secretary), Mark McLaughlin, Robert Lendi, Janet Venecz, Jerry Gomez, Heather Cook, Howard Cohen, and Anne Herbert.

### **Charter School Board Member Informations, See Attachment 6**

The Board meets monthly, typically the third Thursday of each month. These meetings have been occurring since .Focus of the meetings for the first years was obviously the development of the school, its marketing, and the construction project of the new building to house the academy. The building was completed and available for staff and students on August 23, 2011. HAST has occupied the present building since that date. The Board continues to supervise any contractual issues related to the building as they arise.

Board meetings include monthly reports by the School Leader related to academic performance, school/community partnerships, building operations, and operational concerns. The Business Manager presents a monthly accounting of school expenditures, including cash flow statements, credit charges made by the school, actual budget expenditures vs. anticipated expenditures. Each meeting also includes any correspondence received by members of the Board relative to their duties, as well as public comment to allow any guests to express concerns, questions, or often praise related to the school's overall performance. HAST students regularly attend the monthly board meetings to report on specific projects, programs, teachers, or their own individual progress.

The HAST Board of Directors has a Personnel Committee to oversee issues related to the evaluation of the school leader, any pending grievances related to the school staff,

and board member solicitation. The Finance Committee reviews the annual proposed budget and ongoing expenditures and assists school administration to identify potential additional revenue streams. The Construction Committee, now essentially defunct, met regularly between 2009 and 2011 to offer direct and nearly weekly oversight and input to the actual construction project. These meetings took place directly across the street from the construction site and included regular visits to the site to monitor the construction project's progress.

The Board of Directors is in full compliance with Indiana's Public Access Laws. All public meetings by the board are advertised 48 hours in advance. This notice is provided not only on the school's main entrance, but also on the school's website (where the meetings dates are typically posted months in advance, due to their recurring regularity on the 3rd Thursday; exceptions are noted as well), through emails from the School Leader to the community, and by notification to local media outlets. Executive Session meetings are also advertised, and duly noted for their content and its compliance with the aforementioned Public Access Laws.

The Board of Directors Manual Policy section 3.2 states the Conflict of Interest policy for board members. Section 3.8 describes the code of conduct for board members.

#### **Ethics and Conflicts of Interest Policy: See Attachment 7**

The school level advisory bodies that exist and that do not have any voting power relative to the school's Board of Directors include the PATH PTO (parent fundraising arm of the school), HAST Booster Club (parent fundraising arm devoted to HAST athletic programs), and the HAST Parent Team (parent advisory body convened to share matters with the principal relating to student academic and social well-being). Both PATH and the Booster groups are purely voluntary and open to all staff, parents, and students for membership. They exist to support the school in its quest for extracurricular opportunities and program. Membership in the Parent Team is voted upon by the sitting members, most of whom were the only parents to respond to an open call by the School Leader prior to the school's opening. As members exit the Parent Team, a similar call is made for new members. Each of these groups report to the School Leader who in turn shares pertinent and relevant information with the Board of Directors.

#### **Grievance Process**

Per section 4.3 of the Board of Directors Policy Manual, HAST supports voluntary resolution of conflicts, problems and concerns between two parties regardless of their positions or roles at the school. The school and board believe that most issues can be handled quickly and appropriately and to everyone's satisfaction. The following procedures are in place:

With regard to issues from parents or students involved a teacher the grievance process is as follows:

1. The issue or concern shall first be addressed in a one on one meeting between the parent/student and the teacher.
2. If a resolution is not established, the issue can then be taken to the entire team in the student's grade.
3. If there is still no resolution, and the matter is disciplinary in nature, then the concern will be addressed by the vice principal. If the issue involves a curriculum or educational issue then it will be addressed by the curriculum director.
4. If there is no resolution from the vice principal or the curriculum director then the issue can be taken to the principal.
5. If the parent/student is still not satisfied with the resolution then the concern can be taken to the HAST board personnel committee and finally to the entire HAST board if necessary.

With regard to issues from parents involving an administrator the grievance process is as follows:

1. The issue or concern shall first be addressed in a one on one meeting between the parent and the administrator.
2. If a resolution is not established, and the administrator involved in the conflict is not the principal, then the issue may be taken to the principal.
3. If the parent is not satisfied with the resolution with the principal, then the concern can be taken to the HAST board personnel committee and finally to the entire HAST board if necessary.

With regard to issues from teachers, staff or administrators the grievance process is as follows:

1. The issues should first be addressed to the person's immediate supervisors, as set forth in the HAST organizational chart.
2. If a resolution is not established with the immediate supervisor then the issue can be taken to the next person in the chain of command, and ultimately can be taken to the principal.
3. If the staff person is not satisfied with the resolution from the principal then the issue can be taken to the HAST board personnel committee and finally to the entire HAST board if necessary.

It is anticipated that most conflicts, whether they be parent initiated or staff initiated will not reach the board level. Any issue that does come before the board personnel committee or the full board will not be addressed unless the proper procedure was followed. In the rare instance where is an urgent situation that threatens the safety and security of HAST, the board reserves the right to directly address the issues. Additionally, if any conflict involves individual safety, a threat to the preservation or security of HAST facilities, or a direct or blatant violation of school policies or procedures, the board should be notified immediately by the school principal.

Through the school website, parents are able to view at no charge board minutes and the school budget. Also on the website are the following:

- Social Worker Consent form
- HAST Immunization form
- Asthma Action Plan
- Medical History
- IHSA physical form
- Gym Order form
- Request for Planned Absence
- Student application, incoming 6th grade or all other grades 7-12
- Student handbook
- Student AUP
- Lost/Broken iPad policy
- Dress Code policy
- Tutoring Schedule
- PowerSchool (student data management system) access for parents
- Extracurricular activities

### **School Management Contracts**

Not applicable

### **Growth Plan and Capacity**

Hammond Academy opened its doors in September 2010 with just under 300 students in grades 6-9. This number of students already exceeded total populations of a number of already existing charter schools. The feat was all the more incredible, as the school administrative team had only come into full existence July 1, 2010. Teachers were being hired up to the week before the school opened its doors. No school staff had access to the building until just a week prior to the temporary site being accessible for the school's use.

In that inaugural year, the school was able to transform a former diocesan elementary school, built in the 1950s, into something resembling a modern facility, through the introduction of wireless technology and one-to-one laptop distribution. Every room in the actual building was utilized by grades 6-8. The 9th grade as well as teachers of Spanish and Engineering were housed in three mobile trailers that were immediately adjacent to the school building. These were also made wireless to accommodate the instructional practices adopted by our school.

During this first year of the school's operations, the new and present building was under construction in downtown Hammond. School administrators, staff, and Board members regularly visited the site to monitor the construction progress.

In the successive years that followed 2010-2011, the school conducted a lottery for the incoming 6th grade. 80 students were selected from a blind lottery process. The remaining 100-150 students are placed on the wait list each year. This lottery typically

takes place in the month of February. It is well attended by parents and children alike. Those families who gain entrance through the lottery express joy and excitement. Those families whose children are placed on the waiting list express sadness and disappointment. For further details regarding the enrollment processes, especially as they pertain to siblings of current HAST students, see Attachment 14.

The school's population, originally 299, increased to 399, then 469, then 567 as each year it added another grade at the high school level. Student retention remains above 90% from one year to the next. For those students that leave HAST, others are called from the wait list. Middle and high school students come to HAST specifically for our academic programs and offerings. However, as students progress through the high school program, some students choose to return to larger schools who, by definition and size, are able to offer a much wider variety of school clubs, teams, and activities. As stated above, HAST administration makes every effort to fill all available spaces at HAST.

Fiscally, the school received start up funding as a new school which allowed the purchase of basic materials, supplies, and the salaries of the initial administrative team. The largest costs for the start up of the school were associated with the purchase of the laptops and SMART boards for the classroom. Operational costs at the temporary site of St. Catherine of Sienna were modest, including the rent of the building and the portable classroom trailers, and utilities.

In addition to receiving the per-pupil tuition reimbursements from the state Department of Indiana, which have remained at \$5700/pupil for the past four years, HAST receives additional federal grant supports for Special Education, Title I services to students, and Title II services for teacher improvement and retention. The school breakfast and lunch program is also supported by federal subsidies. These sums have increased each year proportional to our school's growth and the number of students eligible for the specific programs geared towards students (Special Education, Title I, and Free/Reduced lunch). The school receives Perkins funds for vocational and technical education programs, which are used to partially fund materials, supplies, and instructor costs for the Project Lead the Way program. The school's anticipated per pupil allocation for 2014-15 is \$6,131.

At present, there is no defined plan for growth of Hammond Academy. As of the 2013-14 school year, the school facility has expanded to include its full complement of 6th through 12th grade students. Each year, the school has nearly reached its goal student population. For the 2014-15 school year, the school's ultimate goal is to reach 575 students, and maintain this level for the ongoing future. The building, as constructed, and the charter, as devoted to small class sizes and individualized attention for the students, is unable to house much more exceeding that number. Grade levels in the middle school typically contain 83-85 students, while high school grades contain approximately 75 per grade level. There are waiting lists for all grade levels. Typically, the demand for the incoming 6th grade lottery is three times the number of students for whom we are able to grant admission.



The original charter included a 5-year plan of Yearly Operational Goals. These goals reflected the need to develop and refine the initial school curriculum; recruit incoming 6th grade students each successive year; design and deliver the new curriculum required to expand to the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades as we progressed from year to year; assess the growth of student achievement in all academic areas with the goal to increase achievement annually; and continue the development of the Comer School Processes in the HAST environment. The school has made efforts and progress in all of these areas.

Hammond Academy is a viable, sustainable educational institution, now integral to the City of Hammond and the surrounding communities. Staff retention improves each year. Student retention remains at 90% or higher from year to year. Waiting lists remain stable, as students are admitted into the school to fill vacancies, while other families continue to place their children on the waiting lists. The fiscal support of the City of Hammond, guarantor of the bond which allowed the construction of the new facility, is a key factor undergirding the school's solvency. The long-range commitment of school governance and leadership to the school's growth and improvement is also a contributing factor to the school's sustainability.

Anticipated risks and challenges for HAST as it moves into its next 5-year cycle are very simple and straightforward. We do not foresee reduced demand for our school; we continue to attract students to fill seats in our school. Over time we have greatly reduced staff turnover. Thirty percent of staff members have been present since our inaugural season. Another twenty-five percent of staff are entering their third year of service with the school. Governance and leadership positions are held largely by the same individuals who have been in place prior to the school's existence.

HAST recognizes the academic performance measures which must be met each year in order to fulfill school, local, regional, state, and charter goals and mandates. Fiscally, the school has operated and continues to operate with measured frugality. The school's Finance Committee, including outside consultants, have reviewed the budget many times to search for any superfluous expenses. There are none. Though the bond payment requirements place stress on the school's budget, the school is able to meet its expenses and outlays each year, with support from the City of Hammond as required.

**Organization Chart, See Attachment 10**

## **SECTION II: SCHOOL DESIGN**

Initially, HAST's ability to develop a school that was fully aligned with Indiana Academic Standards to serve the school's mission and needs of the students in the Hammond area was both a challenge and an opportunity. The school is in partnership with Purdue University Calumet School of Education. The curriculum committee, convened by PUC, assisted to develop the school's recommended curriculum, instructional methods, and standards. This relationship is defined by written agreement, a copy of which is enclosed, between the academy and PUC. From its earliest stages of development to present stage of existence, there has been a strong partnership and personal support by the Chancellors and Deans of Education, both former and present.

### **Curriculum and Instructional Design**

The school's curriculum focuses on national and state academic standards in the core content areas. HAST teachers integrate Common Core and Indiana Academic Standards into their instructional planning. At all grade levels, core content areas are taught in isolation. Students work, typically in small groups, with teams of teachers to complete interdisciplinary inquiry projects correlated to the standards in respective content areas. At the middle school level, the interdisciplinary instruction is formalized and occurs in the context of a course title Discovery. Students have Discovery from 60-90 minutes per day, Monday through Thursday. The four content area teachers at each grade, 6th through 8th, create units of study together, with a broad theme unifying projects that will incorporate skills and standards that span all four of the content areas.

At the high school level, co-teaching occurs often between two of the content areas at each grade level, 9 through 12. This co-teaching is not as formalized as the middle grades Discovery program. It often involves the Math and Science teacher working together. Similarly, teachers of English and Global/Social Studies also create lessons that tie content across the subject areas.

The project-based or problem-based learning approach was chosen because of its extensive base of support from the research literature and in practice for secondary, undergraduate, and graduate education. This approach has been widely used in medical education. It has been adopted by the university engineering departments at MIT and the Naval Academy as well as secondary schools focused on conceptual and inquiry skill learning of science, mathematics and engineering. Purdue University, among others, has adopted 'experiential learning' as a core tenet of its educational program. This is very similar to what HAST is doing already at the middle and high school levels, in all content areas.

The project and inquiry approach utilized at HAST is ideal for urban students who need to see a direct relationship between schoolwork and 'real' work. This approach captures the student's interest by focusing their attention on a problem that really matters to them. In the process, they learn concepts, content, skills, and dispositions in support of the academy's mission. Projects are developed from regional issues facing the citizenry

of Northwest Indiana, such as economic development proposals for the region, invasive species of our water and land, and water quality of the Calumet rivers and marshes.

The school's teachers and students use and interact with stakeholder groups to identify key problems. Together with these groups, the students conduct problem solving and develop and present solutions. Students regularly develop presentations and portfolios that detail their data analysis and solutions. The community has adopted a number of solutions that HAST students have proposed. Specific examples include the participation of our 9th grade Biology students to work with the EPA on the clean-up of Roxana Marsh. HAST students worked with BP Whiting on an environmental project that culminated in the school's landscaping and a school greenhouse. HAST students have prepared and distributed flyers for local marinas and outdoor outfitting stores to educate the public on methods to control zebra population invasion in our waterways. HAST students worked with the City of Hammond to design the intricate traffic flow surrounding the school building. HAST students developed business proposals for small, start-up enterprises which they took to a panel of local entrepreneurs, seeking financial support for these proposals. HAST students worked with the Center for Innovation through Visualization and Simulation at PUC on projects related to wind energy, 3-D printing, virtual reality mapping, and interactive training modules for the repair of industrial turbines.

The basic learning environment at HAST is defined and assisted by the building itself. Each grade level is housed in a self-contained pod consisting of four adjacent rooms centered around a central column. The inner walls of these rooms are retractable, allowing teachers flexibility in co-teaching and whole grade instruction. Two, three, or four classrooms can be completely opened to each other. This design was intentional and deliberate, as the architect and engineers worked directly with the curriculum committee at PUC.

Class sizes at HAST are much smaller than those found at most public schools. Typically, a teacher has approximately 20 students per course section. This is in comparison with typical public schools in the region, where 30 or more students is the norm. Some electives courses at the high school have fewer than 10 students. These reduced class sizes at HAST permit more intimate instruction, more individualized instruction, and greater focus on each student's specific learning needs.

Students typically work in small groups on inquiry projects and skill units assisted and mediated by state of the art instructional technology, with wireless high-speed internet access and one-to-one devices (iPads or MacBooks) available for each student.

Teachers at HAST are required to have a valid and current teacher license from the State of Indiana. Teachers coming from other states, particularly the neighboring state of Illinois, are required to apply for reciprocal licenses. A number of teachers at HAST were on the original curriculum committee and were highly recommended by the PUC College of Education for their expertise in their subject areas as well as their years of experience working in schools in Northwest Indiana. Many of those original teachers

are still at HAST presently. Newer and less experienced teachers often seek to work at HAST because they are particularly drawn to the inquiry approach, the daily use of technology, the small class sizes, and the collegiality among our staff.

HAST relies on the PUC College of Education to recommend graduates who are best suited and skilled for the unique environment. At each grade level, among the four content area teachers, there is at least one graduate from PUC and one or more teachers with a Masters degree. Three HAST instructors hold doctoral degrees.

HAST teachers embody excellence in the teaching profession; they display brilliance in their content area, passion for learning and teaching, and compassion for students. The combination of these factors is made evident by student results in testing, quarterly grades (over 1/3 of the school's students make it to the A/B Honor Roll), student discipline, and school climate. Students complete surveys to rate their teachers annually. This, combined with administrative teacher reviews, also helps to assure that HAST's teachers are effective in all domains, academic and affective.

### **Core Curriculum Scope and Sequence, see Attachment 11**

#### **Pupil Performance Standards**

HAST uses numerous measures to quantify and qualify student progress as evidence of student learning. Internally, Study Island and IXL software are used as testing, retesting, and tutoring supports. Teachers at all grade levels are able to tailor the software so that it tests the students on specific standards in English and Math. The grade level teams use student performance in the classrooms, as well as the curriculum scope and sequence, to determine which standards to test. They are able to adjust these standards in the software as frequently as they deem necessary, but particularly relative to student mastery.

In addition to the Special Education teacher and teacher aides, HAST teachers at all grade levels incorporate a Response To Intervention program into daily instruction. For a minimum of 15 to 25 minutes daily, students at each grade level are arranged in group's reflecting ability based on specific standards in Reading and Math. Study Island and IXL assist to identify student deficiencies in these areas. The four content area teachers use the RTI time to develop focused lessons to assist students to master or excel in the standards.

Student performance standards are consistent with Indiana's Academic Standards. Pre-assessments and pre-tests are regularly used in the core academic areas to allow teachers to individualize learning expectations.

Formative assessments are conducted on a regular basis. Typically this includes student performance assessments and portfolios on each unity of study or project. Quarterly reviews of student performance inform teachers on the effectiveness of the curriculum and the learning environment.

Summative assessments are conducted on a yearly basis. These include ISTEP in various content areas, grades 6-8, and the End of Course Assessments for Algebra I and English 10. These tests are used to report the achievement of all students as well as the sub-categories of students. The tests are used to assist in the continuous study of the effectiveness of the learning environment for all students in the academy.

The Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) has partnered with school districts and educational agencies across the nation to provide comprehensive assessment since 1977. More than 2 million students in the United States participate in NWEA assessments each year, providing an ample body of reference data for achievement norms. With a variety of support services, resource materials, and training, NWEA is a leader in longitudinal research for student achievement and growth and school improvement.

In keeping with the NWEA mission to help all students learn, the organization uses assessment data to provide instructional tools for educators. Tests results are available for immediate use, with detailed reports and interpretation of student performance. We use the MAP standardized tests in the fall and spring of each year. We are considering returning to our former implementation of three annual testing periods, fall, winter, and spring. Target growth rates are individualized, based on the average for comparison students in the norm group who received a similar score. The percentage of students meeting their target growth rate is reported to the charter authorizer as one measure of school success. Teachers and students track individual and group performance to gauge growth over time. NWEA data has been collected for each grade level cohort since Fall 2010.

Students in the middle school and high school are promoted based on classroom performance, standardized test results, and teacher recommendation. Retention is used in the middle school grades when a child has consistently performed at an 'F' level in a majority of the core subjects throughout the year. To date, there have been fewer than five retentions in the middle school grades at HAST. In each of the cases, the students were under a performance contract. If the student's performance is at A/B level in the core content areas for the first quarter of the school year, the student is advanced into the grade level with their original student cohort.

At the high school, there is not a practice of retention, primarily due to the continuous credit recovery program that takes place during the summer program and the regular school year. Because the daily schedule at HAST allows for students to gain credits above and beyond the minimum diploma requirements (i.e. 7 semester credit hours available at HAST vs. 5 semester credit hours available at surrounding public schools), students have the opportunity to advance to the next grade level, but are still required to retake those classes that they have failed prior, yet are required for the Core 40 diploma. No student may graduate if they have not met the Core 40 requirements, which is largely feasible when four years of study equate to 56 credit hours possible.

**Exit Standards, see Attachment 12**

## **High School Graduation Requirements**

HAST students must meet the Indiana Core 40 course and credit requirements in order to graduate. These include:

- English Language Arts (8 credits)
- Mathematics (6 credits, Integrated Math I, II, and III)
- Science (6 credits, including Biology, Integrated Chemistry-Physics, and any Core 40 science course)
- Social Studies (6 credits, U.S. History, U.S. Government, Economics, World History/Civilization)
- Directed Electives (5 credits, World Languages, Fine Arts, Career-Technical)
- Physical Education (2 credits)
- Health and Wellness (1 credit)
- Electives (6 credits)

In addition, HAST promotes the completion of Core 40 with Academic Honors for its graduates. In order to receive the Academic Honors diploma, students must

- complete all requirements for Core 40
- Earn 2 additional Core 40 Math credits
- Earn 6-8 Core 40 world language credits (6 credits in one language or 4 credits each in two languages)
- Earn 2 Core 40 fine arts credits
- Earn a grade of C or better in courses that count towards the diploma
- Have a grade point average of a B or better
- Complete one of the following
  - Earn a combined score of 1200 or higher on the SAT critical reading and mathematics
  - Score a 26 or higher composite on the ACT
  - Complete dual high school/college credit courses from an accredited postsecondary institution (6 transferrable college credits)

In order to participate in graduation activities, seniors must also:

- Fulfill all academic requirements, or completed courses within two credits of the minimum required to graduate within their course of study option,
- Resolve all financial obligations, and
- Comply with all rules and standards of conduct

Students at HAST are able to meet graduation requirements with relative ease, as the State of Indiana Core 40 diploma credits are integral to our educational program at the high school. Students take seven courses per semester, four of which represent the four core content areas, grades 9-11. Electives complete the daily schedule. By the end of their third year at HAST, students who pass all classes will already have 42 credits, whereas the state of Indiana only requires 40. For students who have

completed all required electives, the only courses that they must take their Senior year are a Math and an English course. Grades are all calculated in the following manner:  
$$\text{Sum of (Credits Attempted X Corresponding Grade Points) / Total Number of Credits} = \text{GPA}$$

Each course (or at least their credits) is counted equally.

#### Grade Points

A+ 4.3  
A 4.0  
A- 3.7  
B+ 3.3  
B 3.0  
B- 2.7  
C+ 2.3  
C 2.0  
C- 1.7  
D+ 1.3  
D 1.0  
D- 0.7  
F 0.0

HAST transcripts contain lists of courses taken, by year, with first and second semester grades and credits earned. End of year transcript indicate the courses for the coming year. HAST transcripts include specific student demographic information, name, student identification number, grade level, gender, date of birth, and address. The school's address, phone number, and administrative team are listed on the transcripts. Finally, the transcript shows the school grading scales, that which was used from 2010-2012 and the second grading scale in use from Fall 2012 to present,, as well as the students Grade Point Average year to year, cumulative Grade Point Average, Class Rank, and Total Credits Earned.

Due to the number and variety of dual credit courses offered beginning in 9th grade at HAST, students have the opportunity to be familiar with the content, structure, and expectations of college level coursework throughout the high school experience. Internships during the 12th grade year provide students with career experience in their fields of interest, ranging from medical to engineering to retail to computer programming and more. For the 2014-15 year, students interns will work with CIVS-PUC, St Margaret Hospital, StaffSource, City of Hammond, and the Humane Society of the Calumet Region

HAST teachers and guidance counselors regularly review student progress towards graduation, especially for those students at risk of dropping out. Specific intervention measures used with these students at risk have included providing a total on-line program of study, adjusting student schedule hours, home schooling, and extensive tutoring. Efforts to retain students and reach program completion have been highly

successful. HAST has only had four students not complete all graduation requirements on time. To date, no student has dropped out of HAST.

#### **2014-2015 Electives:**

Introduction to Engineering  
Principles in Engineering  
Civil Engineering and Architecture  
Spanish I  
Spanish II  
Spanish III  
ELA Lab  
Math Lab  
Preparing for Colleges and Careers  
Advanced Science Topics- Ethical Problems in Biology  
Advanced Science Topics- Anatomy  
Advanced Science Topics- Animal Science  
Advanced Science Topics- Genetics  
Topics in Social Science  
Political Science  
Current Problems  
Ethnic Studies  
PE I/ II  
Health and Wellness  
Choir  
Theatre Arts History  
Music History and Appreciation  
Business Foundations  
Personal Finance  
Journalism  
Mass Media  
Creative Writing  
Debate  
Film Literature  
Short Stories  
Psychology  
Sociology  
Photography

#### **School Calendar and Schedule**

The school calendar is prepared in consultation with the School City of Hammond so that school holidays are concurrent between the two districts. HAST students attend the requisite 180 days. Teachers have a 5-day preparation week prior to the school year beginning. There are also quarterly non-attendance days built into the calendar to allow full days for Student-Led Conferences, our alternative to Parent-Teacher



Conferences. School hours are 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday. Students have a four-hour day on Fridays, leaving the building at 12 noon. Teachers use Friday afternoons for professional development, teacher plan time, content area coordinating meetings, data review, technology training, parent communication, and off-site trainings.

At the high school level, students have 50-55 minutes per day in each of the core content areas. At the middle school level, students have 60-65 minutes per day in each of the core content areas. High school students have three additional elective courses per day. Middle school students have two additional elective courses per day.

There is optional academic tutoring available for students at all levels from 7:30 to 8:00 daily, beginning in September/October and continuing through the end of the year. After-school tutoring is also provided from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. following a similar timeframe.

### **School Calendar and Master Schedule, See Attachment 13**

### **School Culture**

HAST provides an environment that is conducive to learning. The school provides a handbook on the school website, that is available for all parents, students, and teachers to review. This handbook outlines policies on discipline, attendance, grades, activities, and emergencies. A separate Acceptable Use Policy, or AUP, exists to address the use of school owned technology and our network. Discipline is used to help students learn from their mistakes and to avoid a repeat of undesired behaviors. There is a no tolerance policy for violence, substance use or distribution, harassment, or unlawful activity by a student. The application and administration of this policy makes it clear to all students that the staff of the academy work daily to provide a safe and positive environment.

HAST school culture emphasizes personal responsibility, engagement, and respect. This is visible in hallways and classrooms by the level of student involvement in classes, and the style and content of the interactions that occur between students and students, and students and staff. While there is a handbook and clear expectations of excellence in conduct and performance, there are not posters and signs throughout the building to remind students of these expectations. Respect given, respect received. This concept permeates all levels of interaction in our school.

The typical day for an 8th grade student includes arrival at school between 7:30 and 8:00 a.m. There is breakfast service available prior to the start of the school day. Middle school students congregate in the gym and are dismissed to the grade level pods at 7:55. There are lockers available for students, but most students in 8th grade do not use them. Teachers collect student lunches and coats in bins in their classrooms. Students do not have much to carry besides their backpacks, because the majority of their work is found on their iPad, not in textbooks. For each of their courses, students typically maintain a paper notebook, in addition to the electronic file.

8th grade students have six class periods during the day, the four core content areas, quarterly rotation of electives between Music, Health, PE and ....(What's the fourth). They also have a period of Discovery, the integrated, interdisciplinary class taught by all four teachers together. There is a 20-25 minute lunch period and another 15-25 minutes used for RTI. Friday is a shortened version of Monday through Thursday, but much of the Friday schedule is often used as a day for presentation of group projects in front of the entire grade level.

A typical day for a 10th grade core content teacher is quite straightforward. Teachers arrive by 7:30 a.m. There is a weekly rotation of morning supervision duty in the halls, which means that each teacher serves one week per month. There are seven periods in the high school day. One of these periods is reserved for common planning time for the team. Four periods are used to instruct the core content area. The two additional periods are used to instruct electives. Electives are either based on Core 40 elective requirements, but are typically reflective of teachers' individual passions, related to the content area of instruction. For example, 10th grade Global Studies teacher will instruct four periods of United States History, one period of Current Events, and one period of Comparative Government. Teachers have a lunch period at the same time as their grade level has lunch. There are no supervisory duties required of teachers during lunch periods. Teachers leave when students leave at 3:30 p.m. Many students stay afterwards for tutoring or to lead student clubs and organizations. Teachers use the Friday early student dismissal for professional development time and planning.

HAST has operated summer school since the 2011-2012 academic year. The first year, the program included a Project Lead the Way course, health, physical education, and credit recovery. In 2012-13, an online course in United States History was added, as was an online course in Personal Finance. 2013-14, the program included Health, Physical Education, Credit Recovery, Personal Finance and Spanish 3. All of these courses were online, with the exception of the Physical Education. Each class had approximately 10 students enrolled. All students entering a high school grade for the coming year were eligible to participate. Students who failed coursework in the past year in classes required for the Core 40 diploma were particularly encouraged to enroll in Credit Recovery. Summer school officially lasts 6 weeks. Physical Education meets 2 hours per day. The online courses each had weekly sections of 1-2 hours for students to meet with the teacher and review the course. Credit Recovery students had the option to come in every day between the hours of 8 a.m. and 12 noon to work on their courses. This program is funded through the State Department of Education.

### **Supplemental Programming**

The school offers a wide variety of extra-curricular activities.

Volleyball: open to girls grades 7-12, tryouts required, Fall season

Cross-Country: open to boys and girls, grades 7-12, tryouts required, Fall season

Basketball: open to boys and girls, grades 7-12, tryouts required, Winter season

Baseball: open to boys, grades 9-12, tryouts required, Spring season  
Softball: open to girls, grades 9-12, tryouts required, Spring season  
Track: open to boys and girls, grades 7-12, tryouts required, Spring season  
Cheerleading: open to all students, tryouts required, year-long season  
Science Olympiad: open to all students, tryouts required, year-long season  
Chess Club: open to all students, year-long season  
Anime Club; open to all students, year-long season  
Drama Club: open to all students, year-long season  
Speech and Debate: open to all students, year-long season  
Dance Club: open to students grades 9-12, year-long season  
Choir: open to all students, year-long season  
National Honor Society: open to students grades 11-12, qualification and application process, year-long season

Athletic organizations are funded primarily through fees charged for participation. The HAST Booster Club also assists to raise funds for the cost of referees. HAST pays modest stipends to the faculty who serve as coaches. Non-athletic organizations are funded by the groups' fundraising efforts. Non-athletic club sponsors volunteer their time to lead these organizations.

HAST employs a part-time Social Worker who meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays with students and parents to discuss socio-emotional issues. Students are also able to meet at any time with the school's guidance counselors if the Social Worker is not available. The social worker and guidance counselors work in concert with school administration and teachers to provide comprehensive and appropriate services to those students in need. For those situations that require more professional services, HAST staff provides recommendations to outside resources.

HAST has a parent volunteer and certified LPN who serves as the school nurse. The nurse is available to monitor student physical well-being, maintain student health records, coordinate training for teachers and staff who work with students with specific medical needs, and supervise the administration of medicines.

The school received grants in 2012-13 and 2013-14 to provide in-school and after-school programs for students in 6th and 7th grades whose focus was positive choices for social, emotional, and physical well-being. Students were invited to join these programs based on teacher recommendations.

### **Special Populations and At-Risk Students**

As a school that serves students of a wide range of abilities and backgrounds, HAST provides a comprehensive education program for students with Individualized Education Programs and Section 504 plans, for those for whom English is a second language, the gifted/talented students, and those at risk of failure or dropping out. School employees or contracted vendors working with the school provide a variety of services that directly benefit our students.

The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act* of 2004 (IDEA), Indiana *Article 7* of 2008, the *Americans with Disabilities Act* of 1990 (ADA), and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act* of 1973 (504) proved the same entitlements, protections, and rights to students with special needs attending charter schools and their families that are mandated in any other educational setting. The academy embraces the mission of these civil rights laws to maximize opportunities for learners with special needs to achieve their potential, to promote positive self-concept, enhance independence, and inspire self-advocacy.

Policies affecting students with disabilities, their families, and their service providers are driven by the normalization principal, the belief that learners with disabilities are best served when opportunities are made available to them of everyday experiences that come as close as possible to those of students who are not disabled and that educational and social decision-making are as close as possible to the decisions made on behalf of peers who are developing typically.

Operating also under the principal of Least Restrictive Environment, HAST recognizes that segregation of most learners with special needs is restrictive because, as a group, students with disabilities who are integrated perform significantly better and achieve more than their peers with disabilities who are segregated. Support services are the key to successful integration. Therefore, students with special needs will be educated to maximum extent appropriate with students who are not disabled.

At HAST, students are identified for special education through a series of assessments. All students are given baseline assessments at the beginning of each year and grouped accordingly. Parents of students with low baseline assessment scores are notified and the identified students immediately receive intervention services aligned with their individual skill deficits during daily Response to Intervention (RTI) time. RTI team meetings are scheduled with the parents of those students making insufficient gains following their initial six weeks of RTI to discuss possible reasons for their lack of progress and an achievement plan is developed and implemented.

Students who continue to show insufficient progress are recommended for evaluation, either academic and/or behavioral, to determine whether special education services are warranted. Following the academic and/or behavioral evaluations, recommendations for services are made. Ongoing identification is achieved through RTI regrouping every six weeks based on teachers' assessments of student mastery of core skills. Additionally, students' district (biannually) and state (annually) test scores are monitored closely to gauge student performance.

HAST staff employs a variety of evidence-based instructional programs, practices, and strategies to provide a continuum of services, ensure student access to the general education curriculum, and ensure academic success for students with special needs. All students at HAST receive iPads which have accessibility options to meet the needs of students with exceptionalities. In addition, student skill gaps are addressed through

the use of several online programs including Study Island, Write to Learn, and IXL. Students with reading and writing deficiencies receive weekly services with the school's Reading Coach and additional weekly reading practice with volunteers through the school's volunteer reading program. High school students with special needs receive additional academic support from the Special Education support team during daily advisory time, after school tutoring, and Saturday school. All students with special needs receive in-class academic support from the team's special education paraprofessional.

HAST staff regularly monitors the progress of the school's special education population through the use of weekly assessments, biannual and annual district and state testing, respectively, and RTI data collection. Progress is also monitored through the use of quarterly progress monitoring forms that teachers complete and submit to the Special Education Director and quarterly progress and grade reports to parents. In addition, the school's Special Education Director meets monthly grade level teams to discuss individual student progress, reevaluate effectiveness of implemented strategies and interventions, and review appropriateness of accommodations and modifications.

High school graduation is the goal for all students at HAST, including those with special needs. Guidance counselors and the special education teacher are present to guide the students to a successful completion of the academic program in our school. While it is not the intention of the academy to apply for waivers for students who have not met the requirements for graduation, including the Core 40 academic requirements and passing scores on the state's End of Course Assessments, if necessary, HAST would exercise this option for students with IEPs who have otherwise met all internal and external criteria.

HAST currently employs one full time highly qualified special education teacher and one special education paraprofessional. Additional support is provided by two full-time qualified school counselors, and part-time social worker, speech therapist, and psychologist.

Integral factors at HAST that assist in the support and success of students with diverse learning needs include:

- administrative vision, leadership, and direction
- response to intervention
- prereferral services
- consultation and collaboration among general educators, the special education teacher, paraprofessional, therapist, and social worker
- special education teacher as a resource room administrator and least restrictive environment facilitator
- differentiated instruction
- counseling
- speech and language therapy
- social worker support
- paraeducator support and tutoring

- team teaching
- universal design for learning
- technology, including adaptive, assistive software
- peer buddies, peer tutoring, and cooperative learning
- family involvement
- enrichment activities and materials
- mentoring for students and families

In order to meet the diverse needs of our students, they are allowed unlimited access to Special Education professionals throughout the day for both academic and behavioral support. Additional support staff are routinely utilized to provide in-class support for our students with special needs to ensure the Special Education Director's availability throughout the day for testing, as well as any necessary additional student and teacher support.

The school does not presently have a separate and distinct program for students identified as English Language Learners. All students have access to the school's project-based and interactive curriculum, where demonstration of mastery is as much through physical demonstration as it is through the use of written or oral language.

Intellectually gifted students at HAST have a number of options. 8th grade students who demonstrate particular acuity in mathematics are advanced into the 9th grade mathematics curriculum. Dual credit engineering courses begin in the 9th grade with Project Lead the Way. These engineering courses require high performance in Math, Reading, Writing, and the use of technology. Additional dual credit college level courses are available beginning in 11th grade, permitting talented and earnest students to acquire credits in a variety of courses typically a part of the general education requirements of regional, state, and national universities, such as Psychology, Sociology, Calculus, Speech, Composition, and Government and Economics.

### **Student Recruitment and Enrollment**

Hammond Academy presently relies on a number of methods to recruit and market the school. The most reliable element of these efforts are the parents of HAST students past and present. These parents and their children serve as the best marketing tool for our school. Local news media, print and radio, and their coverage of the school serve a similar purpose, as local writers and reports learn more about our school and report on it throughout the year. The City of Hammond includes a link to the school's website and lottery information on their own website, [www.gohammond.com](http://www.gohammond.com). Many residents of Hammond and the surrounding area use this website as a general information tool; it is a boost to HAST to have the endorsement of the city.

Access to Hammond Academy is fairly and equally provided to any family who is interested in our programs, assuming that they follow the procedures outlined in Attachment 14.

## **Enrollment Policy, See Attachment 14.**

### **Student Discipline**

The school provides an environment that is conducive to learning. Policies and the student handbook were created to preserve that environment. The school provides its handbook through the school website. The handbook outlines the policies on discipline, attendance, grades, activities, and emergencies.

Our philosophy and approach to student discipline is firm, yet fair. We hold each student responsible to self and to others. We recognize the impact of the individual on the community and the community on the individual. It is with this respect for the individual and community well-being that dialogue occurs to address behavior issues as they arise.

The handbook clearly delineates and describes offenses and their attendant consequences. There is typically a three-strikes approach, and increasing severity of consequences with repeated frequency of offenses.

### **School Discipline Policy, see Attachment 15**

In the area surrounding our targeted population, there are only two schools with a similar grade configuration, grades 6-12. These two schools are Gavit and Clark Middle and High Schools, both public schools belonging to the School City of Hammond. Each of these schools is significantly larger than HAST by almost three times. Like HAST, both Gavit and Clark have an A-F letter grade of D for the 2012-13 school year.

Other schools in the area include but are not limited to Scott Middle School (public), grades 6-8, Bishop Noll (private), grades 9-12, East Chicago Central (public), grades 9-12, East Chicago Urban Academy (charter), grades 6-8. The majority of schools in the area are either much larger (public, i.e. Morton, East Chicago Central), much smaller (private, i.e. St Stanislaus), or approximately the same size, yet with a different grade level configuration (charter, i.e. East Chicago Urban Academy and East Chicago Lighthouse).

Hammond Academy of Science and Technology is unique and compelling for a variety of reasons. Students, parents, and staff typically point to the safe school environment, the small class sizes, the connection between students and teachers, the engagement level of students in the classrooms, and the technology-rich curriculum as just a few of the factors that set us apart from other schools in the region. Additionally, the high school program offers a wide variety of electives and dual credit courses, despite our relatively small size. HAST teachers are devoted to student success and achievement. Their devotion and commitment to the school and our students draws families to HAST and keeps them here for years. Demand for our educational program continues each year.

## Enrollment 2013-2014

	HAS T	Gavi t	Clar k	Scott	Hammond High	Bishop Noll	EC Urban Academy
6th	88	219	191	277			51
7th	88	242	208	279			42
8th	84	271	195	267			45
9th	82	200	225		224	138	
10th	78	196	201		205	132	
11th	82	202	232		167	132	
12th	65	188	222		184	109	
Total	567	1518	1474	823	780	511	422
12/13 A-F grade	D	D	D	F	D	A	C

### Parents and Community

Parental and community involvement is both a reality and a goal at HAST. A reality, because we offer many opportunities for parents and the community to be involved. A goal, because we can always improve our efforts.

When the school's doors opened, parents were invited to visit and observe regularly. We recognized that there was much trepidation about the new school. The best way to allay any concerns was to be as completely transparent as possible. Presently, parents are visible and present as much as we invite them to be. We have new student orientation each year just before the new school year begins. This is always very well attended. Open House is held mid-September. Student-led conferences take place quarterly. Parent participation at these events is over 90%.

In addition to the large-scale events that our parents attend in the school, we see most of our parents daily as they bring their students in their morning and pick them up in the afternoon. HAST staff use email daily to communicate with individual or whole group distribution lists of parents. HAST staff phone parents not only to report concerns, but also to share successes. When there are projects and presentations occurring in the classrooms, parents are welcome to attend, which they do regularly.

From the beginning, we informed parents that we would require their participation in the learning process and the school overall in order for HAST to succeed. A number of parents have contributed and continue to contribute their time, efforts, and money, as coaches, sponsors, mentors, guides, and helpers at the schools. Currently, HAST parents and former HAST parents serve as coaches to a number of our athletic teams,



our Science Olympiad team, and our Chess team. As this is usually done in partnership with a HAST staff member, the school-home connection is further enhanced, as the parent and the staff member work side by side for a shared goal.

The community has been the classroom and a partner in education from the school's inception. Below are examples of a number of projects in which HAST has engaged the community or the community has engaged HAST.

- BP Whiting: \$40,000 grant to HAST for initial planning, supplies, and planting of school landscape in context of 9th grade Biology class; \$20,000 grant to HAST for greenhouse project to enhance Biology and Horticulture curricula
- Purdue University Calumet: teacher and student observers at HAST, students teacher placement at HAST, curriculum consultants to HAST teaching staff
- Books, Brushes, and Bands for Education: after school band program at HAST 2010-11 school year; ongoing participation of HAST students in BBB4E programs
- South Shore Arts: in school and after school arts programs
- Legacy Foundation: after school wellness and homework support program
- Caring Corner: after school mentor program
- Towle Theatre: after school theater program
- Midwest Talent Search: enrichment programs at PUC for HAST students
- 21st Century Scholars: enrichment program and college preparatory workshops for HAST students
- Environmental Protection Agency: clean-up project at Roxana Marsh
- Downtown Hammond Council: organization of a 5K run in conjunction with Bizarre Bazaar, and volunteer opportunities at DHC-sponsored events
- Advanced Federal Credit Union: in-school credit union, student and school organization accounts
- Regional Mental Health: therapeutic services as prescribed by school social worker for students and families
- Hammond Parks Department: HAST students clean up of Harrison Park for Earth Day
- Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore: annual 6th grade multi-day outdoor education program
- Hammond Port Authority: student-created brochures on invasive species prevention
- St. Margaret Mercy Healthcare Center: student interns serving rotations in various hospital departments
- Center for Innovation through Visualization and Simulation at PUC: student engineering partner projects in conjunction with industry and PUC/PU-West Lafayette graduate students in engineering
- Hammond Public Library: library card distribution program for HAST students, library tour and instruction in traditional research methods, using information databases and printed text

With the exception of BBB4E and the Towle Theatre programs, there have been no fees associated with any of the remaining projects in which HAST has worked alongside community partners.

**Demand from the Community and Evidence of Support from Community Partners, see Attachment 16**

### **Performance Management**

HAST students grades 6-8 will take the ISTEP+ as required by the Indiana Department of Education. High school students will take the End of Course Assessments in English, Algebra, and Biology. For the past five years, HAST students have taken the ECA tests in the 10th grade, to align with the completion of instruction of Algebra from the Integrated Math curriculum. Beginning 2014-15, the Integrated Math program will be adjusted to condense the instruction of Algebra in the 9th grade program. This will allow students to take the Algebra portion of the ECA at the end of the 9th grade year. Our goal is to experience a 3-5% growth rate for each subtest at each grade level per year in the Reading and Math portions of the ISTEP. Our goal for the ECA Algebra performance is to reach a 70% pass rate in Algebra for the 2014-15 academic year, and increase 3-5% points per year. Our goal for the ECA English performance is to surpass 80% pass rate for the 2014-15 academic year, with an additional increase of 3-5% points per year. The school also works with Indiana Department of Education regional administrators and supervises on the development, implementation, and monitoring of a student achievement plan, aligned with the aforementioned goals.

The school places great emphasis on an accountability system that places students first, with high expectations for all. These high expectations emerge from strong governance and leadership committed to innovation and a system of accountability that is both transparent and rigorous.

HAST welcomes site visits by the DOE, members of the PUC faculty, and the authorizer to monitor the implementation of standards and expectations at the school. Each year the school has aimed for growth that is feasible and sustainable for all tested categories and subcategories. Yet, HAST goes beyond the test scores to reach the whole student with an academic program that is interesting and engaging. Beyond the tests, HAST wants to see students that want to learn. This is part of the innovation and rigor that sets HAST apart from surrounding schools. Classroom grades, student improvement, student self-worth, and student personal involvement in the learning process are equally strong indicators of the high settings that the schools reaches and, in many cases, attains.

Our students will take the NWEA assessments in the Fall, Winter, and Spring in Math and English, and also in Science. Our goal is for all students taking the NWEA test to show growth equivalent to the growth rate norms and means for students at that grade level, which is typically between 5-10 points at the middle school grade levels, yet narrows to few than 3 points per year or fewer at the high school. As a collective, HAST students have reached the cohort performance level requirements by the 11th grade.

Each grade level teacher cohort collects, maintains, and analyzes regularly student performance on ISTEP and NWEA grades 6-8, and the additional ECA data at the high school level. This data is collected in a spreadsheet that moves with the student cohort as they progress through the school. The grade level teams identify performance standards for Math and English each month, based on student deficiencies. Using the student data, teachers identify three performance goals per month; these goals are aligned to the grade level standards and the curriculum. Goals may recur or change, depending upon student mastery. While the burden of instruction of the Math and English goals rests upon the content area instructors at each grade level, the Science and Social Studies teachers also integrate the goal standards into their content classroom instruction. In addition, all content area instructors at all grade levels are involved in the RTI process, teaching Math and English standards to students of all performance levels. HAST instructor Carrie Hutton is responsible for working with grade level teams to review monthly data collections, goals, and student performance. Rigorous data review sessions occur during the Friday afternoon professional development sections.

HAST uses PowerSchool as the overall student data management system for attendance and academic performance, as well as a number of other information pieces, such as student demographic, school fees, and student health files. The assistant business manager and assistant principal are the individuals responsible internally for the maintenance of the network and student files, assisted by administrative personnel who enter student data related to enrollment, registration, and attendance. Administrative personnel responsible for the implementation and use of PowerSchool will train teachers in the use of the data management system.

Select HAST administrative and instructional staff will attend annual NWEA professional development and report back to the full staff on system updates, improved data collection techniques, and the interpretation of student performance data.

HAST welcomes an authorizer that is committed to guiding the school to its highest academic performance, financial health, and organizational compliance. Regular, ongoing, and rigorous involvement from the authorizer in the school's operations has the opportunity to take an already stable and well-established institution and raise it to as yet unseen levels of excellence. Staff, students, parents, and the community are prepared to witness Hammond Academy move to a next level, a level not typically seen by public or charter schools in the surrounding community. Within the first five years, HAST has proven that it can outperform its local peers by a large margin. HAST does not use these comparable school communities as a gage of success. Within 3-5 years, HAST expects to perform at the same level as schools in communities like Munster or Crown Point.

In the event that HAST does not meet the prescribed performance goals, grade level teachers will review individual student performance, both in NWEA and ISTEP. They will identify those students who have failed to meet target goals. Students will be placed in before and after school tutoring and/or remedial Math or English learning labs

(at the high school level) to address learning deficiencies. Staffing of the Math and English classes may be altered if teacher effectiveness is determined to be a factor of collective student performance failure. School administration is responsible for the evaluation of teacher performance and any staffing changes pursuant to this. The school Board of Directors may determine that change in school administration is necessary to guide teacher and student performance.

### SECTION III: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

#### Network-wide Staffing

	<b>Year 1</b> <i>2014-15</i>	<b>Year 2</b> <i>2015-16</i>	<b>Year 3</b> <i>2016-17</i>	<b>Year 4</b> <i>2017-18</i>	<b>Year 5</b> <i>2018-19</i>
Number of Elementary Schools	0	0	0	0	0
Number of Middle Schools	1	1	1	1	1
Number of High Schools	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Total Schools</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
Student Enrollment	548	575	600	600	600

<b>Management Organization Positions</b>					
	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
School Leader	1	1	1	1	1
Business Manager	1	1	1	1	1
Assistant Principal	1	1	1	1	1
Assistant Business Manager	1	1	1	1	1
Registrar	1	1	1	1	1
IT Director	1	1	1	1	1
Special Ed Director	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Total Back-Office FTEs</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>

<b>Middle School Staff</b>					
	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
Principals					
Assistant Principals					
Classroom Teachers (Core Subjects)	12	12	12	12	12
Classroom Teachers (Specials)	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
Student Support Positions	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
Specialized School Staff	1	1	1	1	1
Teacher Aides	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5

School Operations Support Staff	2	2	2	2	2
<b>Total FTEs at Middle School</b>	<b>20.5</b>	<b>20.5</b>	<b>20.5</b>	<b>20.5</b>	<b>20.5</b>

<b>High School Staff</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
Principals					
Assistant Principals					
Classroom Teachers (Core Subjects)	15	15	15	15	15
Classroom Teachers (Specials)	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5
Student Support Positions	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
Specialized School Staff	1	1	1	1	1
Teacher Aides	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
School Operations Support Staff	2	2	2	2	2
<b>Total FTEs at Middle School</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>24.5</b>

### **School Leadership and Staff Hiring, Management and Evaluation**

HAST utilizes the AppliTrak management system, linked to [k12.jobspot.com](http://k12.jobspot.com) website, as the primary information source for the recruitment of new instructors, in addition to employee referrals and regional networks for teachers. Key selection criteria include state certification in the content area and proven effectiveness in the classroom, particularly related to technology integration. HAST seeks a blend of experienced and novice teachers at each grade level. The school works with the faculties of teacher preparation at PUC, Calumet College of St. Joseph, and St. Joseph College (Rensselaer, IN) to identify promising graduates from the respective schools.

New teachers to HAST and new teachers to the professional are assigned teacher mentors to assist both in content area and overall classroom and school performance.

The school principal and assistant principal are responsible for the teacher evaluation process. A minimum of two formal observations will take place each year prior to April 30. New teachers will have multiple informal observations as well throughout the year. Students will also complete teacher evaluation surveys each semester, to provide feedback on the quality of the classroom experience. The teacher evaluation process primarily reviews the domains of planning/preparation, the classroom environment, instruction, and professional practices and responsibilities.

In the event of unsatisfactory teacher performance, school administration will meet with individual teachers to address areas of concern and needed improvement, with a timeline for improvement to take place, as determined either by student performance and/or teacher effectiveness in the classroom. If the teacher improvement goals are not met within the prescribed timeframe, the teacher may be moved to a different grade level team or removed from the school entirely.

The school's Board of Directors is responsible for the annual evaluation of school leadership. This evaluation will occur primarily through the distribution of evaluation surveys to school staff and members of the Board. The survey will review the performance of the leader in the management of fiscal, educational, and physical plant operation, as well as professional conduct with staff and the larger community. This evaluation process is overseen directly by the Personnel Committee of the Board of Directors. If school leadership is deemed unsatisfactory by the board, they may either prepare a remediation plan for the school leader or make recommendation for a change in leadership.

The school provides compensation for staff that is commensurate to its operational budget, the per-pupil funding, and the budgetary constraints that are inherent to a school that limits class sizes. There is not a formal salary scale in place. Teacher contracts range from \$30,000 per year for new teachers with no prior teaching experience and an undergraduate university diploma to \$45,000 for experienced teachers and those with advanced degrees. The average teacher salary at HAST is \$34,801.85 for instructional staff. HAST provides health, dental, and vision programs for teachers, with a 90/10 contribution share between the school and staff. HAST also provides each contract employee with \$10,000 life insurance policy. HAST makes the full contribution of 10% of teacher salary to the state Teacher Retirement Fund.

### **Professional Development**

The week prior to the opening of school includes 5 days of directed and self-directed planning and preparation, including Technology Integration, Inquiry Method in the Classroom, Content planning and standards alignment, Diversity Training, Grant Writing for Teachers, and learning software incorporation for a blended classroom instructional environment using on-line course libraries.

Each Friday afternoon, teachers have a three hour professional development period which, is typically a blend of time used for small group training, whole staff training, and grade level team meetings to review student progress, data, performance, and planning for integrated unit instruction.

The rotation of themed topics within the year's professional development calendar include:

- Student health issues (i.e. diabetes management)

- Special Education laws
- Student IEP implementation and review
- Reading and writing in all content areas
- Effective technology integration techniques
- Classroom management
- Curriculum and standards alignment
- Response to Intervention
- Differentiated instruction
- Science notebook maintenance
- Mentor teacher coaching with new staff
- Weekly collaboration meeting for grade level teams
- Content area literacy
- Integrated lesson development and planning
- Writing workshop
- Reading circles
- Math intervention coaching with PUC staff
- Literacy intervention coaching with PUC staff
- Smekens methodology (on-site peer to peer training by staff who have attended Smekens workshops off-site)
- Student discipline
- SMART board
- Goal setting
- Data analysis
- Vertical and horizontal curriculum alignment
- Grading rubrics
- School and student safety
- CPR and First Aid
- Health and wellness for teachers
- Financial planning for teachers

The school engages outside trainers from PUC, the Indiana DOE, St. Margaret's Hospital, the Urban League of Gary, other school districts and charter schools. The school relies on the effective peer-to-peer training method for a number of the topics listed above. HAST staff attends workshops and conferences on a number of these topics and in return then serve as on-site trainers to the staff.

The school calendar and week has been built each year to provide an ongoing professional dialogue among staff specifically during the Friday afternoon professional development time. As a complement to the three hour development time each Friday, every grade level has a common planning period daily during which they are able to meet to discuss student learning and social-emotional needs. Teachers record meeting content, meeting goals, and the progress made towards the achievement of these goals as a means of gauging effectiveness. Informal and formal surveys assess the overall effectiveness of teacher professional development activities.



## **Start-Up and Operations**

**Not applicable**

## **Safety and Security**

The safety and security of students and staff at Hammond Academy is a priority of all teachers and staff. There are internal and external cameras to provide 24-hour surveillance of the building. The camera footage is reviewed regularly by HAST administration and maintenance personnel at any of the three monitors in the building. HAST works in collaboration with the Hammond Police Department to provide daily walk-throughs of the building to assess the general safety and security of our learning environment. HAST conducts random checks on student storage spaces (lockers) for the presence of any illicit materials and substances.

The school works with the Hammond Fire Department to conduct monthly fire drills and evaluate their efficiency. Internally, the school conducts tornado and code red drills. HAST has invited the Hammond SWAT team and the police departments of neighboring municipalities to consult our administration and staff on pertinent regional issues of safety and security, especially those related to gang and drug awareness.

Entrance to the building by visitors and families is allowed only through main entrance A. The camera/speaker equipment allow staff to review individuals prior to admitting them into the building. There are three sets of locked doors that individuals must pass before reaching the main office or zones of student instruction. All doors leading to student areas are locked throughout the school day. Visitors, students, and staff who come into the main office can only gain admittance into the student area by first checking in with and then crossing through the main office quarters.

Classroom doors are to be locked during the school day. Staff and students do not allow entry to unknown individuals through any emergency doors directly leading to the outside from the student instruction areas. The safety and security of HAST staff and students is ensured by these numerous processes.

## **Technology Specifications and Requirements**

### ***Technology equipment and services available***

Hammond Academy of Science and Technology (HAST) provides equipment to serve our students and staff in both educational and administrative capacities.

1. **Hardware** – MacBook Pros, Macbooks, iPads, and PCs are provided for staff and students. IT maintains student and staff files on 5 Mac XServe servers. IT maintains this system using Apple Server Admin tools and Casper Suite by JAMF (for laptops and iPad management.) Our content filter is a Lightspeed Bottlerocket system which keeps students from accessing inappropriate and

explicit content. Our firewall is a Sonic Wall. Our wireless system is run by a Rukus ZoneDirector.

**2. Software** – Our students and staff receive the iWork Suite on provided laptops and iPads. Our iPads are formatted through Apple Configurator. We use this to add a base of Apps to each student iPad, along with additional Apps requested by staff administration and students.

**3. Connectivity** – Our bandwidth is provided by ENA, managed by a Rukus ZoneDirector, and delivered through 49 Rukus Zoneflex Access points and Ethernet ports throughout the building. HAST's connectivity was just upgraded to 100MBS speed up and down.

**4. Property controls** – All laptops and iPads are physically asset tagged, and kept on several lists, along with corresponding serial numbers. The Casper Suite and Apple Configurator also provide inventory and information. Every iPad has the Find My Device App on it, which can be used by students as well as administrators, where the student can enter his or her Apple ID on any other Apple device and locate his or her iPad. Digital and physical lists kept by IT and staff by grade level give us another form of inventory control.

**5.** The only expenditure is an insurance premium and deductible to cover damaged iPads.

### ***Scope of Technical Support***

Students and staff have several avenues for technical support.

Each grade level team has a designated tech person to assess and assist student issues that may arise. Depending on the nature of the problem, the device may be sent to IT for further service. This is available during school hours, and students can reach out to staff and IT via email as needed. HAST also has staff created materials accessible via our website 24/7, and all our devices have AppleCare support that can be utilized by students and families as well as HAST staff 24/7.

The majority of HAST students are very self sufficient and tech savvy. They provide and share many solutions with classmates and teachers, and students are also invited serve as technology helpers and leaders in their classes. Some even assist IT directly as student aides. Solutions and support are as likely to come from bottom up as top down. HAST strives to create a culture of student responsibility for problem solving on all levels, including technology.

### ***Data retention, security, and confidentiality procedures***

HAST data is saved in several areas depending on the nature of the data. Staff and administrative data and instructional items are saved on each staff laptop, our servers, and staff owned portable drives. Our XServe units are also backed up by a LaCie 8TB drive.

Many of the services we use are cloud-based, and are thus stored there. However, sensitive student data is never stored in systems deemed to be unsecure or unreliable. In some cases, as in NWEA testing, for example, we archive our testing data through secure means. In the case of NWEA, testing data is housed through the NWEA web database. Counseling and IT work together on the majority of these processes to ensure that student data is handled appropriately. Along these same lines, our Gmail accounts are stored by Google and managed through archive accounts that HAST manages, through the Google Apps for Education service.

Students are responsible for managing and protecting their own iPad data, such as homework and media, using iCloud, DropBox, or by emailing assignments to Gmail or saving to Google Drive.

### ***Procedures related to equipment, software, and connectivity***

During instructional time, when connectivity becomes impaired teachers are trained to be able to think "on their feet" and use a variety of instructional strategies. This includes using didactic discussion and other methods that do not rely on technology as heavily. Also, many activities can be performed on the students' iPads offline; in other words, not all apps require the Internet and thus, students can still do work as needed.

The school covers the costs of Internet connectivity within the building through a five year agreement with ENA that secures our prices and provides relief via state connectivity grant funds, while families cover the costs of Internet connectivity at home.

### ***Data protection and recovery procedures***

*Depending on nature of the lost data, we would go to staff laptops or portable storage maintained by staff, use portable storage maintained by IT, or turn to Xserve units or the LaCie backup drive. Data is typically stored redundantly in several forms. Much of our data, Gmail & Google Drive, Study Island, and Plato are cloud-based, and therefore backed up and maintained by the service providers.*

## **Facility Plan**

The school presently occupies a new building commissioned by the Board of Directors. Building construction was completed in August 2011 and the school officially took possession and occupation of the building on August 23, 2011. The board and the building's architectural firm of Hutton and Hutton worked with city and state officials to insure full compliance with all building codes for a public education facility. The school is located at 33 Muenich Court, Hammond, Indiana 46320, and occupies the site of the former Masonic Temple.

**For proof of Insurance coverage, and building floor plans, see Attachment 18**

## **Budget and Finance**

### **Budget and Finance**

The Hammond Academy of Science and Technology has 2 staff members in the business office, a Business Manager and a Vice Business Manager. The exact separation of duties as a risk mitigation measure is explained below under financial controls. For additional internal controls, the Hammond Academy of Science and Technology hires the services of Bookkeeping Plus Inc., a bookkeeping firm who keep record of all expenses, purchasing, payroll and in accordance with each fund.

*Accounting:* All funds received have to be confirmed via a numbered deposit tickets and numbered receipts are given to the payer.

The Hammond Academy of Science and Technology uses separate kinds of receipts for Textbook Rental fees collected from students and all other revenues. Students and parents make payments for a variety of reasons including iPad insurance fees, purchase of gym uniforms, gear with the school logo, lunch fees among others. For each payment, the Vice Business Manager gives the payer a general receipt, or a special Textbook Rental Receipt if they are paying for Textbook Rental Fees. Before making aggregated deposits to the school's bank account, the Business Manager inspects all the numbered receipt copies to make sure all funds for which receipts have been given are accounted for. The deposit ticket for the total funds accompanied with a detailed summary and an aggregated receipt is then sent to Bookkeeping Plus Inc. for record keeping purposes.

All funds received from the State and other parties excluding parents and students are also recorded on a numbered receipt, including funds coming in electronically, and sent to Bookkeeping Plus Inc. for record keeping.

*Purchasing:* Purchasing occurs in one of three ways: through a purchase order, through a regular vendor or using the school credit card. High value purchases are usually made using a purchase order. The vendor sends a quote for the products or services, the

Business Manager completes a requisition form and sends the completed form along with the quote to Bookkeeping Plus Inc. who print and send the purchase order to the school. The purchase order is then sent to the vendor, who upon satisfactorily delivering the product or service sends an invoice to the school. The business manager then fills out and signs a voucher with an expense code identifying which fund or account the payment is to be made out of and sends the voucher along with the invoice to Bookkeeping Plus Inc. who print checks and send them back to the school. The school has the Business Manager, who is also the treasurer, along with the school leader, sign those checks and mail them out to the vendor.

A regular or registered vendor is one from whom the school periodically purchases supplies or services. The vendor first delivers products or services then sends invoice to the Business Manager usually with a 30-day payment term. The business manager then fills out and signs a voucher with an expense code for which fund or account the payment is to be made out of and sends the voucher along with the invoice to Bookkeeping Plus Inc. who print checks and send them back to the school. The school has the Business Manager, who is also the treasurer, along with the school leader, sign those checks and mail them out to the vendor.

The processes described above take about eight to ten business days to process. For quicker purchasing, the school credit card is used. There are only four authorized users: The School Leader, Business Manager, Vice Business Manager and the Maintenance Engineer. All receipts and invoices related to credit card purchases are sent to Bookkeeping Plus Inc. along with a backup summary of what each purchase was for, the amount and the vendor along with the monthly credit card statements. A list of credit card expenses incurred during the month is provided to the board at monthly board meeting for review. A voucher register is also provided to the board to review every check made out to vendors from the school.

*Payroll:* Full time employees are employed based on an annual contract outlining their salary for the contracted period. This annual pay is paid throughout the year in 26 installments to the employee. For any additional work performed and for hourly staff, a timesheet has to be submitted to the Business Manager at the end of every week. The Business Manager reviews those hours and adds them on a payroll sheet. This payroll sheet is sent to Bookkeeping Plus Inc. to keep records and also sent to Paychex Inc., a payroll company that keeps employee tax information, makes the appropriate withholdings and makes a direct deposit to the employee's bank account.

*Audit:* The school hires an auditing firm every year to audit the financial records of the school. Internal audits are not structured but are conducted on an as needed basis, implementing additions to existing controls when necessary.

Bookkeeping services are contracted to Bookkeeping Plus Inc. and payroll services are contracted to Paychex Inc., currently the school has no other administrative services contracted to outside parties.

All business processes and financial transactions are broadly controlled using an annual

budget. All expense categories are allotted amounts for the whole year at the beginning of the school year. This budget has to be approved by the board, it is subsequently compared to incurred expenses accumulated each month during the following months' board meeting. This is the broadest level of financial control and budget categories in which expenditures go beyond allotments come under scrutiny from the Board, most often the board treasurer. During the monthly board meetings, board members are also provided with a voucher list of all checks printed in the last month and all credit card purchases. Any suspicious or unknown items are to be explained by the Business Manager.

Since all checks are printed at Bookkeeping Plus Inc., they require an invoice accompany all vouchers with invoice numbers and dates. This measure not only helps identify the vendor but also prevents double payment for the same invoices since some vendors may send an invoice multiple times due to delay in updating records or plain error. Once checks are printed they need to be signed by the Business Manager and the School Leader or any one of three board members listed on the bank account as a signee. This measure ensures that at least another official has overseen all payments made. Checks are also numbered so that a missing number in the sequence raises a red flag that would prompt further investigation. The Business Manager, requiring every purchase to carry with it a signature in acknowledgement of responsibility, strictly supervises all authorized purchasers of the school. The Board of Directors holds Business Manager accountable for all purchases.

The process of receiving money is safeguarded using numbered receipts, no money is received without giving the payee a receipt which has a copy with the same number. Sequentially arranging receipts ensures no money received is misplaced. The responsibility for collecting and the responsibility for depositing and recording the money received are divided between two personnel, the Vice Business Manager and the Business Manager respectively.

The Business Manager and the Vice Business Manager have both signed fidelity bonding documents with the Hammond National Insurance Company.

**5-Year Pro Forma Budget, see Attachment 19**

**Budget Narrative, see Attachment 20**

## SECTION IV: INNOVATION

The educational program and instructional facility differ from typical school models in simple, yet significant ways. HAST teachers work together in planning and alignment of instruction across the content at all grade levels. This approach to integrative or interdisciplinary curriculum design and instruction has been present at the university level for decades, with a number of colleges and universities offering interdisciplinary studies as the foundation or core of their academic program. In its simplest definition, this approach takes two or more academic disciplines and merges them through the use of themes and project-based learning. The practice has been formalized, described, and reviewed by the likes of Heidi Hayes Jacobs (1991), Caine and Caine (1991), Schmidt (1983), and Shoemaker (1989). TITLES? DESCRIPTIONS?

Examples of projects developed and utilized for teachers at the different grade levels include:

### *21st Century Student*

This project is completed in the first quarter of 6th grade. Students are introduced to the seven skills identified as 21st Century Skills, namely critical thinking and problem solving, collaboration across networks and leading by influence, agility and adaptability, initiative and entrepreneurialism, effective oral and written communication, accessing and analyzing information, and curiosity and imagination. The culminating active and assessment is the Invention Convention. Students create an original invention, create a prototype, and prepare a presentation which includes an advertisement and budget.

### *Country Project*

Students are given specific details about a country they will run. These details include population, climate, natural resources, and currency. After creating an initial identify for their country, student teams then work together or in isolation to address various scenarios typically faced by governments around the world, limited resources, fiscal insolvency, natural disaster, monetary system collapse. The ability to forge alliances and maximize resources provides students with understandings of interactions between governments and methods of conflict resolution. This project is conducted as a collaborative effort between the 6th grade teacher team and various teachers at the high school, whose students introduce the causes and content of conflicts between the nations, as part of their Economics, Government, and Sociology courses.

### *Shark Tank*

HAST students in high school economics classes did a survey of Hammond area businesses, identified needs that were not currently being met, and then prepared business plans and models. They presented these models to local area business people with the intent of securing hypothetical funding for the proposals.

### *MyCountryisWorseThanYours*

7th grade students work in teams to research the health, educational, financial, governmental and physical well-being of various actual countries around the globe. They then debate the historical and present data that their research has provided to determine whose country is the least desirable. A winner may not necessarily represent the worst country, but rather the best debating team and research methods.

Few, if any, of these units and projects exist as pre-packaged consumable packets for teachers and students. HAST teacher teams spend hours taking learning standards in the content area, merging them together around a central theme, and making them come alive in a project whose value and utility are nearly immediately recognizable to the student. The students and parents appreciate the effort that the teachers take to create a learning environment that is stimulating and real. The teachers appreciate the fact that they get to be creative and even have some fun in the process.

Teacher and student partnerships throughout the building and the curriculum are core to the innovations at HAST. The teaching profession is typically practiced in near isolation, with little dialogue between peers at a same grade or content level, let alone regularly, daily, weekly, and integral planning time to unite teachers and content.

Our students learn to take theory and make practical applications to real-life and real-world experiences. In all content areas, students seek larger understandings than the rote memorization of facts and figures. While these facts and figures are important, it is more important for a student to understand why and how things operate as they do. Once they master the larger concepts, they are able to drill down into discrete information.

HAST students literally build their learning. From personal inventions, roller coasters, and museum displays in the 6th grade, to earthquake-resistant towers and Rube Goldberg machines in the 7th grade, to volcanoes, kites, truss suspensions, and 3-D laser printer modeling at the high school level, HAST students take the theoretical and make it real.

This simple yet significant innovation in learning results in a level of student engagement that is unrivaled in the schools in the surrounding community. HAST students enjoy the learning process. These students want to learn what they do not already know. These students want to seek knowledge around them and use it to assist themselves and others. These students want to share their knowledge with others. Our cooperative model of education has brought in visitors from local industry who want to expand our model of shared decision-making in their workplace. Our model has been viewed by members of a provincial Chinese government and education minister who would like to bring this level of innovation and engagement to Chinese youth, who continue to learn in a rote, repetitive manner.



## SECTION V: PORTFOLIO REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE RECORD

Performance Review and Narrative, see Attachment 21

Audited Financial Statements, see Attachment 22

### Enrollment 2013-2014

	HAS T	Gavi t	Clar k	Scott	Hammond High	Bishop Noll	EC Urban Academy
6th	88	219	191	277			51
7th	88	242	208	279			42
8th	84	271	195	267			45
9th	82	200	225		224	138	
10th	78	196	201		205	132	
11th	82	202	232		167	132	
12th	65	188	222		184	109	
Total	567	1518	1474	823	780	511	422
12/13 A-F grade	D	D	D	F	D	A	C

Hammond Gavit (6-12) has consistently shown subpar academic performance over the last four years. After the 2009-10 school year Gavit was placed on Academic Watch. A grade of D was earned with a designation of Academic watch after the 2010-2011 school year and received a grade of D for the subsequent two years.

Improvement, however, has been shown in ECA scores. In the 09/10 school year only 36.7% of students passed both the English 10 and Algebra I ECA. That percent rose to 52.1% in 12/13. This percent is still significantly lower than the state average. Improvement also was seen in the percent of students passing Algebra I only. 47.9% of students passed in 09/10 but it increased to 73.2% in 11/12 before dipping to 61.5% in 12/13. The passing rate for English 10 has remained relatively steady over the four years. The passing rate has fluctuated during this time between 63% and 54%.

ISTEP+ scores during this four year period suffer from lower achievement. In mathematics the overall passing rate has risen from 57.4% to 63.8%. Again, this is significantly lower than the state average. However each of the four years the results are plagued with lower growth and lower achievement with median growth percents in the 30% range with the exception of 12/13 which saw a 48% median growth rate. Overall English/Language Arts passing rates have declined from 66.2% to 58.2% in the

span of four years. In the 09/10 school year E/LA scores saw a median growth of 59% resulting in a high growth status yet lower achievement. The 2010/11 school year also saw high growth but lower achievement.

Primary causes for the school's problems: One contributing factor to the poor achievement could be related to the high poverty rate of the students. 82.8% of the student body receives free or reduced lunch. Another contributing factor could be the the percent of students who are English Language Learners. The percent of students who are ELL is 23.7%.

Whiting High School and Whiting Middle Schools have consistently shown high performance over the last several years. The combination of these two schools was chosen as a benchmark for comparison due to similar racial compositions, socioeconomic statuses and enrollment numbers. Four years ago Whiting High School was on academic probation. The following year it earned a C from the state grading system and was noted as attaining academic progress. In both the 2011-12 and 2012-13 school year Whiting High School elevated their school grade to an A. During that four year stretch the percent of students passing both the English 10 and Algebra I ECA rose from 40.4% in 09/10 to 75.3% in 12/13 which is an increase of 86.4%. In the 09/10 school year 65.2% of students taking the English 10 ECA passed. The percent increased to 90.1% in the 12/13 school year, an increase of 38.2%. Similar results were achieved for the Algebra I ECA. In the 12/13 school year 71.3% percent passed, up from 46.3% in the 09/10 school year, illustrating an increase of 54%.

Whiting Middle School has experienced a decrease in their schoolwide grade from the state. They were an exemplary school in 09/10 and slipped from a B in 10/11 to a C in 12/13. This is mostly attributed to the E/LA scores that were rated as high growth but lower achievement the last two years. The decrease in the percent of students passing the E/LA test was slight, from 79.1% in 09/10 down to 77.8% in 12/13. The positive from this was that students were still exhibiting high growth even though the percent passing dipped slightly. In mathematics students were showing low growth, another reason for the slip to a C. Even though low growth was being shown, the percent of students passing rose from 71.3% in 09/10 to 83.3% in 12/13. The last two years showed lower growth but higher achievement. Additionally Whiting Middle School had some students take the Algebra I ECA as 8th graders with excellent results. Passing rates for the four years were all in the 90% range with 100% passing in the 12/13 school year.

Primary causes attributed to the school's distinctive performance:

Challenges: Whiting's student population is 59.3% free/reduced lunch recipients. The school system has a significant number of students living in poverty which can result in poor academic performance. Whiting seems to have overcome this obstacle, getting students to perform at a higher achievement level and attaining higher growth. The high school had a graduation rate in the 80% area prior to the academic improvement. Their graduation rate in 12/13 was 93.5%.49