

Hammond Academy of Science and Technology

Charter School Renewal Application

Submitted to Calumet College of St. Joseph on October 30, 2017

Proposed Grade Levels and Student Enrollment

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

Proposed School Name: Hammond Academy of Science and Technology

Academic Year	Grade Levels	Student Enrollment (Planned/Maximum)
2013-14	6-12	556/560
2014-15	6-12	575/575
2015-16	6-12	575/575
2016-17	6-12	575/575
2017-18	6-12	575/575
2018-19	6-12	575/575
2019-20	6-12	575/575
2020-21	6-12	575/575
2021-22	6-12	575/575
2022-23	6-12	575/575

The HAST Board of Directors has proposed the possible future expansion of HAST, to approximately double our current student enrollment, pending the availability of an appropriate building available for use in downtown Hammond. Middle school students would remain in the present building. High school students would move to the other building.

Do any of the proposed schools expect to contract or partner with an Education Service Provide (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? No

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:

Authorizer: Calumet College of Saint Joseph

Submission Date: August 15, 2014

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, businesses, 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 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 (now Purdue Northwest or PNW), between 2006 and 2009. The 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 sources for social services), and lower property values. Middle class loss often significantly impacts education.

In early 2005, the City of Hammond, School City of Hammond, and PUC (now PNW) joined together to form a task force to begin planning what was initially envisioned to be a magnet school that 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.

HAST has been and continues to be a school of choice for a strongly middle class segment of Hammond and Northwest Indiana. Our free/reduced lunch rate hovers around 50%, a marked distinction from the schools in the surrounding community, where this same indicator of student socio-economic status is typically in excess of 85%. As the survey and studies indicated over ten years ago, Hammond's middle class families were in search of an alternative to the local traditional public schools. HAST is clearly that choice.

Current Wait List Numbers

6 th grade	106
7 th grade	118
8 th grade	144
9 th grade	166
10 th grade	145
11 th grade	257
12 th grade	8
Total	944

Community engagement

HAST offers numerous opportunities to engage students, 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 in the classrooms.

Our annual Open House and quarterly Student-Led Conferences (the HAST equivalent of Parent-Teacher conferences, with the emphasis on our students portraying their learning, putting themselves at the center of the discussion), as well as a number of special programs and project displays, provide regular opportunities for local community organizations to participate and gain visibility with the school community. Regular participants are the Hammond Public Library, Books Brushes and Bands for Education, the Towle Theater, Porter's uniform company, EAT Enterprise school lunch provider, South Shore Arts, Downtown Hammond Council, Indiana National Guard, Ivy Tech, the Area Career Center, banks, and divisions of municipal government.

For a complete and detailed list of partnership programs between HAST and the community, see pages 38-40 of this document.

Education Plan/School Design

The school features state of the art technology, including SMART board, Apple TV projection systems, desktop computers, laptop computers, and tablet devices for all students and staff. We operate in a wireless, one-to-one environment throughout our school. This level of universal access to staff and students has been in existence since we opened our doors September 2010. At this point, we are on our third complete iteration of technology devices in the building. First, laptops for all everybody in 2010. Second, iPads for everybody in 2012. This year, new iPad devices for everybody in 2017. We have received grants to replace projectors, teacher laptops, and the most recent acquisition of new tablets for all students.

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. This 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 was created and continues to be project and inquiry based. Hands on application in all content areas, preferably using real life situation from students' lives and the region they inhabit, are central to the learning process. The math and science programs reflect an integrated approach these content areas, where standards and skills build upon each other from one grade to the next.

Initially, our courses reflected the integrated nature of curriculum. At the high school, we offered only Integrated Math 1, 2, and 3. Each of these courses reflected the inquiry approach used in the middle school grades. They blended elements of algebra, geometry, and trigonometry, with increasing complexity. This proved confusing to our students, our parents, and those schools from our

students came and to which they transferred. Science courses were equally blended, with elements of Biology, Chemistry, and Physics at all high school levels.

However, as we continue to refine and align our curriculum with regional high school programs, college requirements, and the State of Indiana testing protocols, we have specifically and deliberately returned to a somewhat more traditional format. The math program for the high school now includes Algebra, Geometry, Pre-Calculus, Calculus, and Finite Math. Science courses included Integrated Chemistry Physics, Biology, Earth Space, Animal Behavior, Chemistry, and Physics.

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. Teachers of both ELA and GS courses focus much of instruction on the analysis of fiction and non-fiction texts. Teachers have created a thorough, longitudinal approach to the teaching of writing at HAST. Students in 6th grade write their own novels. By the 11th and 12th grades, students prepare research papers following college-level guidelines.

At HAST, as early as the 9th grade, students have access to Dual Credit/Advanced Placement courses, continuing through the 12th grade. These electives have included the following courses over the past seven years: Project Lead the Way (STEM-integrated courses based on the various engineering disciplines, including a capstone, independent research project at the 12th grade level), Sociology, Psychology, Speech, Composition, US Government, Personal Finance, Calculus, and Computer Science. All of the aforementioned courses are run through agreements with PUC/PNW, Indiana University Northwest, Ivy Tech East Chicago Campus, and the College Board Advanced Placement catalog.

The school also offers Health, Physical Education, Choral and General Music, Spanish 1, 2, 3, and multiple other electives at the high school level. Students in the middle school grades study the four content areas, Health/Physical Education, General Music, Computer Science basics, and Personal Finance (at the 8th grade level only).

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 cooperate and integrative learning. There are no individual desks for students in any of the classrooms. All classrooms are furnished with tables that 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 core 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 entire grade levels the opportunity to experience learning together. It is impossible to be an isolated learner or an isolated instructor at AHST. 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 13 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 provision 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 thereof
- 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 its executive director
- Downtown Hammond Council (1 nomination)—the members must also serve on the council's board of directors
- HAST parent representative (2 nominations)—these members must have children presently attending HAST at the time of their nomination and service to the Board, approved by the Board of Directors
- HAST teacher representative (1 nomination)—member approved by the Board of Directors
- HAST student representative (1 nomination)—member approved by the Board of Directors

- Members at-large (2 nominations)—members approved by the Board of Directors

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 (Principal), Assistant Principal (who also serves as the director of Curriculum and Title I programs), Dean of Discipline, Guidance Counselors, Business Manager, and Instructional Technology director. Leadership team meetings include not only all the above administrators, but also the direction of Special Education, the Social Worker, and office clerical staff. This broad collaboration again reflects the inclusive process 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.

Four of the 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 a comparatively smooth transition 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 School Board Membership

HAST 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 real of education for the City of Hammond and the Northwest Indiana region.

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 NAACPS, Little League, and various Hammond neighborhood organizations.

Janet Venecz- Mrs Venecz currently represents the City of Hammond as the current president of the City Council. 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 at city events and HAST functions. Mrs Venecz also has three grandchildren at HAST.

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 NIPSCO (now NISOURCE). He served as the President for the Kentland (IN) Town Council for six years. For twenty-eight years, he owned and operated the Old Colonial Inn restaurant in Kentland (IN).

Kris Sakelaris- Mrs 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 levels. She has served as an adjunct faculty member at Davenport University in Merrillville, Calumet College of Saint Joseph in Whiting, and the former Saint Joseph College in Rensselaer. Mrs Sakelaris has over twenty years of experience working with non profits, especially Haven House, where she also serves as Board President.

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 vitalize the downtown of the City of Hammond, including a business incubator, a technology district, and

the restructuring of loan portfolios of local businesses in order to leverage a small business loan fund. Mr McLaughlin has also recently served as Chief of Staff to the Mayor of Hammond.

Heather Garay-- Ms Garay is a native of Northwest Indiana. She has been with the City of Hammond since 2008. She first served as an intern in the Mayor's office. She sits on the Hammond Human Rights Commission, the Hammond Water Works Development Board of Directors, and the Board of Public Works. In 2014, Ms Garay took over as the Comptroller for the City of Hammond. She holds degrees from Valparaiso University and the Northern Illinois College of Law.

Monico Rubio—Ms Rubio is a Hammond native. She has worked for First Midwest Bank for over 10 years, holding numerous positions with that organization. Presently, she is the Vice President, Market Sales Manager. Ms Rubio received her undergraduate degree in Finance from Purdue University Calumet. Members of her extended family have attended HAST over the past few years.

Lori Lambert—Ms Lambert holds a BA in Hospitality Administration and Management. She has worked for School City of Hammond in the past. Presently, she is the Purchasing Office Manager of Tribologik, a chemical laboratory located in Hammond. She has assisted numerous HAST students to get internships and employment at her company. Ms Lambert is the mother of three HAST students.

Gustavo Lopez—Mr Lopez brings over 10 years of human resources experience to the HAST school board. He is presently works for the office of Employee Labor Relations at the University of Chicago Medicine. He is a native of Northwest Indiana. He holds an undergraduate degree in Economics from Indiana University Bloomington and an MBA in Business Administration and Organization Development from Lewis University. Mr Lopez is the father of a HAST graduate and a current HAST student.

Marty Wielgos—Mr Wielgos has the distinction of being a founding and a returning member of the HAST Board of Directors. He has numerous years of experience in both the private and public sectors. He has owned and managed radio stations in the Chicago and Northwest Indiana markets. He has worked for the City of Hammond since 2004, where he first served as Chief of Staff to the Mayor before becoming the District Manager of the Hammond Sanitary District. He sits on a number of boards for regional non-profits, including the Crisis Center, Challenger Learning Center, Lake County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Blue Skies Hospice, and the South Shore Promotions Board of Directors.

Mira Projovic—A native of Northwest Indiana, Ms Projovic is the teacher representative on the HAST Board of Directors. She has worked at HAST since the school's first year, starting first as a substitute teacher, then as the 6th grade

Science teacher, and presently as a high school Global Studies teacher. Ms Projovic has taught a wide variety of courses, many of them dual credit. These courses include Sociology, Psychology, Women Studies, Law, Government, and Economics. Prior to entering the field of education, Ms Projovic was a small business owner and entrepreneur.

Daliz Suarez—Ms Suarez is the student representative on the HAST Board of Directors. She is presently in the 12th grade. She has attended HAST since 6th grade, following two older siblings who also attended our school since our first year of operation. Ms Suarez is presently in the first group of HAST students to attend the Hammond Area Career Center, where she is in the health studies program. She intend to further her studies in the field of medicine and public health.

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, 2018, fully completing his second concurrent contract. Dr Egan has requested that his next contract be equal to the length of the reauthorization contract period with Calumet College of St. Joseph, which both he and the HAST Board of Directors hopes will be for a 5-year period.

The Board of Directors hired Dr Egan in 2010 to serve in the role of School Leader due to his years of service in the Chicago Public Schools 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 and partnerships to support his school's mission.

Dr Egan has brought these same skills to the Hammond Academy of Science and Technology. Of note are grants to support costly technology acquisitions, physical property improvements, the purchase of new kitchen equipment, landscape and horticulture projects, science laboratory construction, and teacher performance and leadership funding. The list of partnerships at HAST is impressive for a school of such small size. Many of these partnerships will be explained in detail in sections on Curriculum and Instructional Design, as well as the Parents and Community section.

Dr Egan came to HAST a respected member of the Chicago Public Schools administration, with fifteen years of administrative experience. He served on numerous boards in the metropolitan Chicago region. He continues to be an active member of a number of regional boards that demonstrate commitment to community development, educational opportunities, social services, and the arts, including the Indiana Association of School Principals, National Quality Education

charter member, Miller Beach Arts and Creative District, Hammond Optimist Club, PNW advisory board for the Center for Innovation through Visualization and Simulation, Indiana University Northwest College of Education advisory board, the Jewish Federation of Northwest Indiana, and Temple Israel (Gary, IN).

Dr Egan has been responsible for hiring all members of the administrative team, as well as all members of the school staff. He takes great pains to include key stakeholders in all hiring processes, be they other administrative team members, teachers, students, and parents. The HAST Board of Directors has approved every contract recommendation that Dr Egan has brought before the board since July 2010.

The school's Assistant Principal, Mr Jeffrey Wood, has worked over twenty years in public education in Gary and Merrillville schools, before coming to HAST. He is an active participant in regional and state conferences. He is responsible for numerous tasks, including the Title I student academic assistance program, curriculum and instruction supervision, new teacher mentor program, and staff professional development.

The school's current Business Manager, Mr Dennis Small, has worked at HAST just over one year. He trained for two months under his predecessor. He comes from corporate accounting, finance, and human resources experience. In this brief time at HAST, he has become adept at the creation and submission of all required financial board and state reports. He is in charge of running the complicated school lunch program for free/reduced assistance. He processes all payroll and accounts payable. He is in regular contact with various grant offices at the Indiana Department of Education. He does this to be sure that HAST applies for and receives all possible funds for which we are eligible.

For the third consecutive year, HAST has a Dean of Discipline on staff. Mr Arthur Young handles all student behavioral issues in accordance with the school handbook, which he reviews and revises each year as necessary, with the assistance of a handbook committee. Mr Young meets regularly with students, parents, counselors, and officials charged with the supervision of our students. He has brought much order and support to those students in need of greater guidance. Serious disciplinary issues and concerns have become nearly non-existent at HAST. Nearly 90% of our students report feeling safe at school. We are working to improve and increase this every year. Mr Young also endeavors to bring incentive programs for those students who show exemplary behavior at all times.

In addition to these key members of the administrative team, we have an Instructional Technology director who has worked at HAST since 2010, first as a teacher, and now as the IT director. He has been in this role for over three years.

We have two guidance counselors, both with Masters degrees. The guidance team works with every single student to develop an academic program that not only suits the student, but also meets all requirements for general and honors diplomas. The guidance department applied for and received a sizable grant from the Lilly Endowment to support their work with students.

Our Special Education director has nearly twenty years experience working with special needs populations. Our school Social Worker, a part-time position, spends Tuesdays and Thursdays at HAST working with individuals and small groups to provide therapy as needed, be it episodic or ongoing.

The above individuals, plus clerical and data support team members, meet at least monthly to review processes, procedures, successes, and challenges that we face in our school community. This administrative team exemplifies to our staff and students the role of team work at play at HAST.

Resume of School Leader, See Attachment 2

Resumes of School Leadership, 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 presently under their purview or supervision.

The 13-member HAST Board of Directors has several primary responsibilities:

- To evaluate the School Leader
- To set and approve educational and operational policies of the school
- To plan, approve, and oversee budgetary expenditures and annual budgets and financial plans, and assure that proper accounting and financial procedures are followed
- To review the annual financial audit and assure remediation and reparation of any audit exceptions
- To develop long range plans, including potential expansion of the school

The intent is to operate an exemplary public charter 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), Heather Garay (Treasurer), Mira Projovic (Secretary), Mark McLaughlin, Janet Venecz, Lori Lambert, Gustavo Lopez, Anne Herbert, Marty Wielgos, Owana Miller, Monica Rubio, and Daliz Suarez.

Charter School Board Member Information, See Attachment 6

The Board meets monthly, typically the third Thursday of each month. These meetings have occurred since 2008. The focus of the meetings for the first few years was the development of the school, marketing the school, and the construction project of the new building to house the academy. The building was complete and available for staff and students on August 23, 2011. The Board continues to supervise any contractual issues related to the building as they arise, which is very infrequent.

Board meetings include monthly reports by the School Leader, related to academic performance, senior class graduation rate, post-graduation plans for HAST seniors, student scholarships and awards, school/community partnerships, building operations, human resource management, and community concerns, as applicable. The Business Manager presents a monthly accounting of school expenditures, including cash flow statement, credit card charges, the budget year to date, the budget actual versus budget historical (i.e. 2017 in comparison to 2016 and 2015), and actual expenditures v. anticipated expenditures.

Each meeting also includes any correspondence received by members of the Board relative to their duties. Each of the three de facto committees, Personal, Finance, and Fundraising, provide reports when applicable. Public comment allows any guest to express concerns, questions, or comments relative to the school's overall performance. Public attendance is usually limited to a few students, staff, and/or parents. These individuals typically report on specific projects, programs, teachers or their own individual progress, as a means of keeping the Board informed about the state of the school from a non-administrative community member perspective.

The Personnel Committee oversees issues related to the evaluation of the school leader, any pending grievances related to the school staff (there have been none since the school opened), and board member solicitation. The Finance Committee annually reviews and promotes the school budget, which is prepared by the school Business Manager. The Finance Committee each year looks at what it can do to increase staff salaries and provide additional financial incentives, such as stipends and bonuses for non-teaching duties. The Fundraising Committee is in its third year of existence. For each of the past two years, with

the help of HAST staff and students, this committee has organized a talent show and sought sponsorship from community members and businesses. Each year, this event has netted over \$6,000, which is set aside specifically for special programs and school community needs.

The Board of Directors is in full compliance with Indiana's Public Access Laws. All public meetings of the board are advertised minimally 48 hours in advance. This notice is provided not only on the school's main entrance, but also on the school's website and school calendar (where the meetings dates are typically posted months in advance, due to their recurring regularity on the 3rd Thursday; exceptions 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 Policy Manual 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 body that exists and that does not have any voting power relative to the school's Board of Directors is PATH (Parents and Teachers of HAST) PTO. This organization is purely voluntary and open to all staff, parents and students for membership. PATH exists to support the school in its quest for extracurricular opportunities and programs. The School Leader provides a monthly update on school activities, academic and non-academic, to the PATH meeting. A summary of the monthly meeting minutes and action items are forwarded to the School Leader as well. The School Leader 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 involving 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 parents/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 Dean of Discipline. If the issue involves a curriculum or educational issue, then it will be addressed by the Assistant Principal, who also serves as Curriculum Director.
4. If there is no resolution from the Dean of Discipline or the Assistant Principal, 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 or students 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 issue 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 not anticipated that most conflicts, whether they be parent initiated or staff initiated will not reach the board level. Any issue that does not 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 there is an urgent situation that threatens the safety and security of HAST, the board reserves the right to directly address the issue. 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 form
- Immunization form
- IHSA physical form
- Request for Planned Absence
- Student application for incoming 6th grade or all other grades 7-12
- Student handbook
- Student Acceptable Use Policy
- Lost/Broken iPad
- Tech Support Ticket
- Dress Code Policy
- Tutoring Schedule
- PowerSchool access for parents
- Free/Reduced lunch application
- Military in Education explanation
- Active Military Form
- HAST Bullying Policy
- School supply lists
- Transcript request form
- Uniform order website
- iPad insurance policy
- National Honor Society bylaws
- Lunch menus
- Title I program information

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 hired up to the week before the school opened its doors. No school staff had access to the rented building that would

serve as our school for that initial year until just a week prior to the temporary site being accessible for school 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, one to one laptop distribution, and classroom interior designs made specifically to promote team learning. The school used every corner of space available in the small building, including four rental trailer units that served as classrooms for the high school campus. Every corner of these buildings had access to the wireless network, something that was new to nearly every student at that time.

August 2011, the school opened its doors at the present site, with a well attended public ribbon cutting ceremony. Again, the HAST staff proved itself to be flexible and determined. The landlord at the initial site asked the school to vacate the premises entirely by June 15, 2010. The new school was not ready for occupancy. All physical belongings of the school (tables, chairs, desks, projection screens, SMART boards, computers, etc.) were placed in storage. The entire staff operated via virtual communication.

Just one week prior to opening of the new school, the staff and school community had the right to occupy the building. No time was wasted in moving all the school's belongings into their designated space. With no visible outward obstacles, the doors opened and the school began to operate just three days after it received the right to occupy the new building officially.

In the years that followed after 2010-11, the school has conducted a lottery for the incoming 6th grade. Eighty students are selected from a blind lottery. Each year, there has been anywhere from 150 to 230 students vying for a space in the incoming 6th grade class. This lottery takes place in the middle of February. It is well attended by parents, children, and staff. 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 population has stabilized at approximately 550 students each year since 2014. The enrollment goal is 575, but the school registrar faces the difficulty of trying to recruit students to come for their junior or senior year, as that is typically where the vacancies occur due to students transferring out of HAST at that point in their academic career. 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.

In addition to receiving the per pupil tuition reimbursement from the Indiana Department of Education, which is currently at \$6033 per student for fiscal year 2018, HAST receives federal grant supports for Special Education, Title I services to students who are academically at-risk, Title II funds for high quality recruitment and retention, especially in the high needs areas of Math and Science, and Title III funds for the English Language Learner student population. 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.

The school receives Perkins funds for vocational and technical education programs, which are used in part to fund materials, supplies, and instructor costs for Project Lead the Way. The Perkins fund allocation to HAST will increase dramatically in the coming year, as HAST students are now taking classes at the Hammond Area Career Center. 2017-18 is the pilot year for HAST students to participate in the program. Only a small group of seniors is presently participating in the programs at the career center. In 2018-19, both Juniors and Seniors will have the opportunity to attend the career center. HAST receives a per pupil per program amount that in turn will subsidize the cost of this program per the contractual agreement between the two institutions.

At present, the HAST Board of Directors and the school administration are beginning to investigate the possibility of expanding HAST beyond our present walls. The wait list currently has 944 students on it, 368 at the middle school level, and 586 at the high school level. The present building, as constructed, and the charter, devoted to small class sizes and individualized student programs, is unable to house many more students than we presently hold. Grade levels in the middle school typically contain 83-85 students, while high school grades contain approximately 75 per grade level. Class sizes in the middle school are in the 23-25 students range. Class sizes in the high school are in the 15-23 students range.

With a high demand, and limited room for expansion of the current physical plant of the school, the need is evident to look for a potential location for expansion. The present facility would be used to house all middle school students, effectively doubling our middle school population. The high school would move into a renovated or repurposed commercial building in downtown Hammond, within walking distance of the present structure. The high school campus would reflect the school's mission to produce students who understand the current economy and our need to produce students who are both college and career ready.

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 student achievement annually, and continue the development of a school climate and culture with the students at the center. The school has made great progress in all of these areas, as proven through community surveys and the results of numerous visits by our authorizing agents and the Indiana Department of Education regional liaisons.

Hammond Academy is a viable, sustainable educational institution, now integral to the City of Hammond and the surround communities. Staff retention has been only a minimal issue. When staff vacancies occur, school administration acts proactively and immediately, to find qualified candidates who will serve the students' needs. As stated previously, student retention remains above 90% 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 these waiting lists.

The continued, assured fiscal support from the City of Hammond, guarantor to the bond that funded the construction of the 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 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 more students than we can accommodate. With concerted efforts to increase salaries and maintain staff satisfaction, nearly 25% of our staff has been here since our inception in 2010. Over 40% of our present staff began their career in education at our school and know no other educational environment. Teachers range in years of experience in the classroom from 1 to 27. Teacher educational attainment ranges from undergraduate degrees to doctorates. Governance and leadership positions are held largely by the same individuals who have been in place prior to and at the time of the school's actual existence.

The School City of Hammond is preparing to put before the community a referendum to increase property taxes in the city that will be earmarked for teacher salaries and new construction for the School City itself. If this passes, then there may be increased competition for the staff and students at HAST. But, if this does not pass, there will only be continually increasing demand for the education that HAST offers, namely one that is relevant to current technologies, instructional practices, and preparation for 21st century careers and beyond in a building that

is clean, safe, and one of the newest schools in Northwest Indiana, in terms of construction.

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 and Board of Directors review the budget and expenditures regularly to search for any superfluous expenses. There are none. Though the bond payment requirements place stress on the school budget, the school is able to meet its expenses and outlays each year, with support from the City of Hammond.

As a significant indicator of the school's dedication to maintaining, and even decreasing expenses, in 2015 and 2016 the Finance Committee worked with the school administration to renew the school's bond payment structure after the first five years of payments. This has decreased the annual bond payments by 50%, which equals an increase in funds available to school operations of over \$500,000.

Organization Chart, See Attachment 10

SECTION II: SCHOOL DESIGN

Curriculum and Instructional Design

The school's curriculum focuses on state academic standards in the core content areas. HAST teachers integrate Indiana Academic Standards into their instructional planning and preparation. Standards-based objectives are at the core of instruction. At all grade levels, core content areas are taught primarily in isolation. Students work, typically in small groups, with teacher grade level teams to complete interdisciplinary inquiry projects correlated to the standards in the prospective 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 incorporate skills and standards that span all four content areas.

At the high school level, co-teaching occurs often between two or more of the content areas grade level, 9 through 12. This co-teaching is not as formalized as the middle grades Discovery program. It often involves Math and Science teachers working together. Similarly, teachers of English and Global 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 is widely used in science and engineering programs across the country, including MIT and the Naval Academy. Purdue University Northwest, our curriculum partner, offers 'experiential learning' as a core tenet of its education program. This is very similar to what HAST is doing 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 school work and the 'real' world. 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 River and surrounding marshland.

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 over time include the participation of our 9th grade Biology students on an EPA project to clean the Roxana Marsh, an area of the Calumet River flowing through Hammond that, over time, was reduced to a stagnant, trash-filled wasteland and is now a recovered wetland, with fish and water fowl.

HAST students worked with BP Whiting on an environmental project that culminated in the landscaping of the new building's exterior campus and the construction of a school greenhouse, still in use by teachers and students. HAST students have prepared and distributed flyers for local marinas and outdoor gear supply centers, in order to educate the public on methods to control zebra mussel 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 that 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 PNW on projects related to wind energy, 3-D printing, virtual reality mapping, interactive training modules for the repair of industrial turbines, and increased energy efficiency for automobiles through frame design and construction.

Mock trials, mock elections, mock automobile design competitions, mock product innovation development, HAST brings all of these topics, and so many more, alive throughout the year. HAST teachers invite professionals from the field to speak with and consult our students as they learn applications to current problems, be those purely practical (a new machine) to purely theoretical (a new system of local government).

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 classrooms, 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 design committee at PNW, to envision and realize a school that met the instructional needs of its staff.

Class sizes at HAST are much smaller than those found at most regional 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 level 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 PNW (then 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 these 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 teachers embody excellence in the teaching profession; they display brilliance in their content area, passion for learning and teaching, and compassion for students. They use data religiously and vigorously to determine learning needs and opportunities for their students. The combination of these factors is made evident in student results in testing, quarterly grades (i.e. 43% of the total school population made it to the A and A/B Honor Rolls for first quarter 2017-18, and this is not an anomaly), student discipline, and school climate. Students complete surveys annually to rate their teachers. 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, IXL software is used as a testing, retesting, and tutorial support for students. 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 in relation to student mastery of the content.

In addition to the Special Education teacher and teacher aides, HAST teachers at all grade levels incorporate Response to Intervention programs in daily instruction. For 50-75 minutes each day, Monday through Thursday, students in the middle school grades are grouped according to their mastery of key standards in Reading and Math. IXL and ISTEP test data 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.

At the high school level, students in grades 9-12 are placed in Math and/or English lab classes to provide remedial instruction and prepare the students to pass those standardized tests that the state of Indiana requires for high school graduation as proof of competency in Math and Reading. These lab sections last a full class period each day. The numbers of participating students decrease from 9th to 12th grade, as students take and pass the required standardized tests.

Student performance standards are consistent with the Indiana 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 unit 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 assessments are presently the ISTEP series, as developed by the Indiana Department of Education. Students in grades 6-8 and grade 10 are required to take these tests, primarily in Math and Reading, but also including Writing, Science, and Social Studies. These tests are used to report the achievement and academic growth of our students, including detailed data on student sub-group populations. These 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 research 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 NWEA mission to help all students learn, HAST uses the assessment data to provide instructional tools for our teachers. Test 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. Target growth rates are individualized, based on the average for similar comparison of 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. At HAST, students monitor their individual progress on NWEA. Teachers illustrate group and individual performance through public data walls, with performance charts to show individual and cohort growth. HAST student cohorts typically achieve growth greater than the national norm during each annual testing cycle. NWEA data has been collected for each grade level cohort since Fall 2010 to the present.

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 has consistently performed at an 'F' level in a majority of the core subjects throughout the year. To date, there have been few retentions in the middle school grades at HAST. In each of the cases, the students were placed 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 in which the student has been retained, 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 to pass for the Core 40 diploma. No student may graduate if they have not met the Core 40 requirements, which is easily attainable at HAST, where four years of study equate 56 credit hours possible, instead of the 40 total hours of the Core 40 diploma.

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, Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II)
- Science (6 credits, including Integrated Chemistry Physics, Biology, 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 Language, Fine Arts, Career/Technical)
- Physical Education (2 credits)
- Health and Wellness (1 credit)
- General Electives (6 credits)

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 (detailed above)
- 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 2 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 post-secondary institution (6 transferrable college credits)

In addition, HAST students have the option to earn a Technical Honors diploma

- Complete all requirements for Core 40
- Earn a grade of C or better in courses that will count toward the diploma
- Have a grade point average of B or better
- Complete one of the following
 - Any one of the options of the Core 40 with Academic Honors
 - Earn the following scores or higher on WorkKeys: Reading for Information- Level 6, Applied Mathematics- Level 6, and Locating Information- Level 5
 - Earn the following minimum score on Accuplacer: Writing 80, Reading 90, Math 75
 - Earn the following minimum score on Compass: Algebra 66, Writing 70, Reading 80
- Earn 6 credits in the college and career preparation courses in a state-approved College and Career Pathway and one of the following:
 - Pathway designated industry-based certification or credential, or
 - Pathway dual credits from the approved dual credit list resulting in 6 transcribed college credits

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

- Fulfill all academic requirements, including passing all final exams for the final semester
- 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 total for graduation. For students who have complete 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: $\text{Sum of (Credits attempted} \times \text{Corresponding Grade Points)} / \text{Total Number of Credits} = \text{GPA}$.

Each course is counted equally.

Grade Points scale for the high school:

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 transcripts 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 that school grading scale, as well as the student's Grade Point Average year to year, cumulative Grade Point Average, Class Rank, and Total Credits Earned.

In recent years, HAST has worked with regional institutions to provide dual college credit courses for our high school students. Ivy Tech East Chicago is our certifying partner for Project Lead the Way (PLTW) courses. Indiana University Northwest is our certifying partner for Calculus. Purdue University Northwest is our certifying partner for Sociology, Psychology, Speech, Composition, Advanced Literature, and Government.

In years past, HAST seniors have had the opportunity to participate in internship program with local businesses and the city government. Placements have included CIVS-PNW, St. Margaret Hospital, StaffSource, City of Hammond, HUB center for innovation, and the Humane Society of Hammond. For the 2017-18 school year, all interns are partnered with classroom teachers and building administrators. These seniors assist teachers and administrators with daily tasks in the classroom, the school, and throughout the community, as student representatives of HAST.

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.

2017-18 Electives:

Creative Writing
Debate
Ethnic Literature
Film Literature
Language Arts Lab
Poetry
Short Stories
Music History and Appreciation
Electronic Music
Piano and Electronic Keyboard
Theater Arts
Introduction to Three Dimensional Art
Photography
Career Exploration Internship
Interactive Media
Introduction to Computer Science
Personal Finance
Preparing for College and Careers
Web Design
Advanced Science, Special Topics
Anatomy and Physiology
Chemistry
Earth and Space Science
Physics
Current Problems
Economics
Ethnic Studies
Geography
Indiana Studies
Psychology
Sociology
Topics in History
Topics in Social Science
United States Government
Spanish I
Spanish II
Spanish III
Physical Education II
Advanced Composition
AP Computer Science Principals
Calculus
Civil Engineering and Architecture
Digital Electronics
Engineering Design and Development
Introduction to Engineering Design

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 3-day preparation week prior to the school year beginning (5 days for new hires). There are also quarterly non-attendance days built into the calendar to allow full days for Student-Led conferences for the first and second quarters, our alternative to Parent-Teacher Conferences. School hours are from 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, data review, technology training, parent communication, off-site training, and other relevant professional activities.

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, and an RTI (Response to Intervention) period.

There is optional academic tutoring available for students at all grade levels from 7:30 to 8:00 a.m., beginning in September and continuing through the end of the year. After-school tutoring is also provided from 3:30 to 4:30, Monday through Thursday, following a similar timeframe. Title I tutoring and ISTEP test preparation tutoring also occur both first and second semesters.

School Calendar and Master Schedule, See Attachment 13

School Culture

HAST provides an environment that is conducive to learning. This is evident to anyone who enters the building and visits the classrooms. Students are engaged. Halls are quiet. The school provides a handbook on the school website. This is available for all parents, students, and staff to review. The handbook outlines policies on discipline, attendance, grades, activities, emergencies, and more. A separate Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) exists to address the use of school-owned technology and our network. Disciplinary procedures are 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.

In an exit survey of all students at the end of the 2016-17 academic year, over 90% of the students responding stated that they felt safe at school. A similar percentage replied that they are personally responsible for their academic percentage. 95% of HAST students stated that they do their best on standardized tests. Nearly 100% stated that they put forth their best efforts regularly. These numbers, as well as the other results of this same survey, indicate that students recognize their role, and that of their parents and teachers, in the educational and social environment at HAST.

The typical day for an 8th grade student involves 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 in bins. Coats are hung outside of the classroom on a rack donated by a staff member. Students do not have much to carry besides their backpacks, because the majority of their instructional materials can be found and accessed on the iPad, not in textbooks or workbooks. For each of their courses, students typically maintain a paper notebook, in addition to the electronic files.

8th grade students have six class periods during the day, the four content areas, quarterly rotations of electives (Music, Health, Physical Education, and Personal Finance), and one period of Discovery, the integrated, interdisciplinary class taught by all four teachers together. There is a 20-25 minute lunch period. Nearly 60 minutes are devoted to RTI, Monday through Thursday. Friday is a shortened version of Monday through Thursday, but much of the Friday half day is used for presentations of group projects in front of the entire grade level.

A typical day for a 10th grade core content teacher is 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 a teacher's individual passions, related to the content of instruction. For example, 10th grade Global Studies will instruct four periods of United States History, one period of Current Events, and one period of Geography. Teachers have a lunch

period at the same time as their grade level lunch. There are no supervisory duties required of teachers during lunch periods. Teachers leave at 3:35 p.m., shortly after the students. Many teachers stay afterward for tutoring or to lead student clubs and organizations. Teachers use the Friday early dismissal for professional development and planning.

HAST has operated summer school every since 2011-12. Typical course offerings for the summer program include Health, Physical Education, Personal Finance, Spanish 3, and credit recovery for any and all core content courses that a student has failed and needs to retake for diploma credit. With the exception of Physical Education, all courses are offered in an on-line format. Students are encouraged, but not required to come to the school to work on the school laptops. Teachers are available on site for the duration of the course. Courses are six weeks long, four hours per day, Monday-Thursday. Physical Education classes last two hours per day. Students in the PE classes must attend daily for credit. This program is funded through the Indiana Department of Education.

Supplemental Programming

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

Volleyball: open to girls in all grades, tryouts required, Fall season

Cross Country: open to boys and girls in all grades, Fall season

Soccer: open to high school boys and girls, tryouts required, Fall season

Basketball: open to boys and girls in all grades, 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

Tennis: open to boys and girls, grades 9-12, tryouts required, Fall and Spring season

Track: open to boys and girls in all grades, Spring season

Cheerleading: open to all students, tryouts required, year-long season

Science Olympiad: open to all students, tryouts required, year-long season

Drama Club: open to all students, year-long season

Art Club: open to all students, year-long season

Star Wars Club: open to all students, year-long season

Dance/Spirit Club: open to high school students, interviews required, year-long season

Choir: open to all students, year-long season

National Honor Society: open to students grades 10-12, qualification and application process, year-long season

National Junior Honor Society: open to students grades 6-8, qualification and application process, year-long season

Museum of Science and Industry Club: open to all students, year-long season

Poetry Club: open to all students, year-long season

Athletic organizations are funded primarily through fees charged for participation. The Athletic Director leads fundraising efforts to support the program, including payment of referee fees and student transportation to competitions. HAST pays modest stipends to staff members who serve as coaches. Non-athletic organizations are funded by the groups' fundraising efforts. While most club sponsors receive a modest stipend for their time and efforts, the HAST Board of Directors and administrators are working to create a stipend payment schedule that reflects time and effort of staff during after-school hours.

HAST employs a part-time Social Worker who meets on Tuesday and Thursdays with students, parents, and staff to discuss social-emotional issues. Students are also able to meet 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. The social worker has been with HAST since the school opened. She is very familiar with our staff and our student population and their needs. For those situations that require more professional services, HAST staff provides recommendations to outside resources.

HAST has a parent volunteer who is a certified LPN who serves as the school nurse. This parent volunteer is available three days a week. The nurse is available to monitor student physical well-being, maintain student health records, coordinate training for teachers and staff work with students with specific medical needs, and supervises the administration of medicines. In the absence of the school nurse, there are key individuals on staff (school leader, dean of discipline, and special education teacher) who are available and able to assist with student medical needs.

For five consecutive years, the school has received grant funding for in-school and after-school programs for students in the middle school grades. The focus of these programs is support positive decision-making, as well as students' social, emotional, and physical well-being. While some programs are for all students at a given grade level and take place during the school day, other programs are for small groups of students, who are recommended to these programs by their teachers.

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 our English Language Learner student populations, and our students 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 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) prove the same entitlements, protections, and rights to students with special needs attending charter schools and their families that are mandated in any other public education setting. HAST 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 principle, the belief that learners with disabilities are best served when opportunities are made available to them of everyday experiences that comes 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 under the principle 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 the 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 assessments scores are notified and the identified students immediately receive intervention services aligned with their individual skill deficits during daily Response to Intervention (RTI) time.

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 evaluation, recommendations for services are made. Ongoing identification is achieved through RTI regrouping every quarter based on teachers' assessments of students' mastery of core skills. Additionally, students' district and state test scores are monitored closely to gauge student performance.

HAST staff employs a wide variety of evidence-based instructional programs, practices, and strategies to provide a continuum of services, ensure students access to the general education curriculum, and ensure academic success for students with special needs. All HAST students receive iPads which have accessibility options to meet the needs of students with exceptionalities. Some examples of these options are speech to text, text to speech, amplification of

speech, Google translator, text enlargement, screen brightness adjustments, and video capacities.

HAST staff regularly monitors the progress of the school's special education population, which remains less than 10% of the overall school population. This monitoring process includes weekly assessments, state standardized testing, NWEA, and RTI data collection. Progress is also monitored through the use of quarterly progress monitoring forms that teachers complete electronically 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 with 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 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 requirement for graduation, including the Core 40 academic requirements and passing scores on the ISTEP 10, 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 two special education paraprofessionals. Additional support is provided by two full-time guidance counselors, the part-time social worker, online speech therapy, and a psychologist whom the school contracts as needed, for student evaluations and re-evaluations.

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
- Pre-referral services
- Consultation and collaboration among general education teachers, the special education teacher, paraprofessionals, therapists, and social worker
- Special education teacher as a resource room administrator and least restrictive environment facilitator
- Differentiated instruction in the classroom
- 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 distinct and separate 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. The school has received Title III grant funds to support the purchase of materials and software to support the ELL student population. This grant also supports parent and community events to bring the families of ELL students into the school setting to become more familiar with the school's expectations, program offerings, offered in the home language, to bridge the divide created by language. HAST employs a number of bilingual staff who are able to assist parents and students who comprise our ELL population.

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 reporters regularly include HAST in news articles about schools in the region. The City of Hammond includes a link to the school's website and lottery information on their own website, www.gohammond.com. Hammond's mayor regularly mentions HAST in his weekly Friday morning show on the local radio station, WJOB.

Access to Hammond Academy is fairly and equally provided to any family 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 the 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 Hammond Gavit and Hammond Clark, both public schools belonging to the School City of Hammond. Each of these schools is significantly larger than HAST by almost three times. Both of these schools have a C letter grade for the 2016-17 school year, while HAST received a B letter grade for this same period.

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, such as Morton, East Chicago Central), much smaller (private, such as 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, small class size, the connection between students and teachers, the engagement level of students in the classrooms, and the technology and innovation 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 draw families to HAST and keep them here for years. Demand for our educational program continues each year.

Parents and Community

Parent 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.

HAST operates under an open door policy for our parents. At any time, a parent of a HAST student (and even parents of potential HAST students) is welcome to ask to come and spend time in the classrooms and hallways with their student. Parents are visible and present as much as we invite them to be. HAST offers a new students orientation for new students entering any grade prior to the start of the academic year. This event is always very well attended by students and their parents. Open House is held the third week that classes are in session. Student-led conferences take place quarterly. Parent participation at all of these events is impressive, with a minimum of 50% of all our parents participating.

In addition to the large-scale events that our parents attend at the school, we see most of our parents daily as they bring their students in the 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, money, and resources, as coaches, sponsors, mentors, guides, and volunteers at the school. Currently, HAST parents serve as coaches to a number of our athletic teams. Parents also volunteer to assist with our very successful Science Olympiad teams. As these coaching and sponsoring opportunities typically involve both a HAST staff member and a parent, this is yet another way in which HAST actively enhances the school-home connection.

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

- Calumet College of Saint Joseph: after school, dual credit art classes, education department student visits to HAST
- Legacy Foundation/South Shore Arts: in school and after school arts program
- Caring Corner: in school and after school mentor program
- Towle Theater: after school theater program
- Midwest Talent Search: enrichment program at PNW for HAST students
- 21st Century Scholars: enrichment program and college preparatory workshops for HAST students
- Regional Mental Health: therapeutic services as prescribed by school social worker for students and families
- Hammond Parks Department: HAST students annual clean up of downtown Hammond and Harrison Park

- Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore: annual 6th grade multi-door outdoor education program
- Hammond Public Library: library card distribution on-site for HAST students; library tour and instruction in research methods, using information databases and print resources
- South Shore Leadership: SLYCE youth leadership program
- Haven House: healthy relationships and decision making
- North Township Trustees office: sexual abuse training for staff
- Indiana University Northwest: diversity training for students, dual credit courses, violence and bullying awareness field trip for HAST students to IUN campus
- Purdue Northwest: dual credit courses, student teacher placement, guidance counselor intern placement
- Bishop Noll Institute: college fair field trip
- Urban League of Northwest Indiana: college fair field trip, annual awards ceremony for seniors
- Hammond Rotary Club: annual senior awards ceremony, annual symposium on international affairs
- NexTech: computer coding classes, computer hardware donations
- Enselin and Enselin law firm: student employment
- Eichorn and Eichorn law firm: student employment
- Tribologik: student employment
- PacMoor: student employment
- Hammond Area Career Center: student participation in vocational education programs
- Hammond Optimist Club: annual oratory competition, financial donation to HAST athletic program
- Legacy Foundation: scholarships for seniors
- Hammond Police Department: officers speaking to students, students visiting the local police department
- Lake County Jails: student field trip to the jail facilities in Crown Point
- Indiana Court of Appeals: live case hearing at HAST, open to high school students and staff
- HUB of Innovation, downtown Hammond: student entrepreneurs create business plans and market products
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters: parent education programs
- United for Families Network: parent education program
- Legacy Foundation: At the Table community conversations
- Gibson Woods: plant donations for school landscaping
- Hutton and Hutton Engineers, Inc: consultant to student architecture and design projects
- Freddy's Steak House: student employees
- Jewish Federation of Northwest Indiana: guest artists (dancers, musicians), guest speakers (Israeli soldiers, Holocaust survivors), student reading mentors

- St. Joseph Church: food pantry donations from HAST, concert performance venue for HAST choir
- We Care from the Heart: clothing donations from HAST, to benefit the homeless
- United States Representative Peter Visclosky: annual guest speaker at HAST, HAST student chosen annually to present Rep. Visclosky at local town hall meeting, 8th grade tour of the United States Capitol during Washington, D.C. trip
- Hammond Legal Aid Clinic: guest speakers for HAST classrooms
- Franciscan Healthcare: Project Respect education program for middle school
- Planned Parenthood of Indiana and Kentucky: sex education programs for high school students
- Northwest Indian Society of Innovators: guest speakers in Physics class
- Northwest Indiana Symphony: tickets for student admission to performances

Typically, above projects, programs, and partnerships come to HAST with no associated fees. HAST staff strive to provide enrichment opportunities for our students at minimal or no cost to the students.

Demand from the Community and Evidence of Support from Community Partners, See Attachment 16, See also items submitted directly to Calumet College of Saint Joseph

Performance Management

HAST students grades 6-8 and grade 10 take the ISTEP+ as required by the Indiana Department of Education. The school continues to collaborate with the Indiana Department of Education regional administrators to supervise the development, implementation, and monitoring of a student achievement plan and school improvement plan.

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 visit by the Indiana DOE, regional university faculty, and our 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 test categories and subcategories. Yet, HAST has gone beyond the test scores to reach the whole student with an academic program that is interesting and engaging. Beyond the test, 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 are equally strong indicators of the high settings that the school wants and, in very many cases, attains.

Our students take the NWEA assessments in the Fall and Spring in Math and English. 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 fewer than 3 points per year or fewer at the high school level. As a collective group, 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. This data is collected in a spreadsheet that moves with the student cohort as they progress through the school. This data is accessible to all staff through Google shared documents. The grade level teams identify performance standards and monthly objectives for all subjects, based on student deficiencies. Using the student data, teachers identify three performance goals per month. These goals are aligned to 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 Global Studies teachers also integrate the goal standards into their content classroom instruction. In addition, all content area instructors at all grades levels are involved in the RTI process, teaching Math and English standards to students of all performance levels. HAST has engaged a part-time employee to be responsible for working with grade level teams to review monthly data collections, goals, and student performance. Rigorous data review sessions occur monthly during the Friday afternoon professional development.

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. HAST has hired an individual to be the primary administrator of the PowerSchool. This individual is assisted by other administrators to handle transcripts, student attendance, fees, and attendance. Teachers receive annual training and review on the use of the system, for optimal results in tracking student academic performance and attendance.

HAST administrators and instructional attend numerous conferences throughout the year on NWEA and ISTEP test content, instructional preparation, and administration. These individuals 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 demanding involvement from the authorizer in the school's operations provides the school with opportunities to identify key zones for improvement. HAST has managed to rise in its performance level from year to year. HAST is proud to stand out among charter and traditional public schools in the surrounding community. HAST strives to attain even higher academic success, equal to that of schools in communities of privilege, where academic success is taken for granted.

For those cases where HAST students have not met the prescribed performance goals, grade level teachers review individual student performance, both in NWEA and ISTEP. They identify those students who have failed to meet target goals. Students are placed in before and after school tutoring and/or remedial Math or English learning labs to address learning deficiencies. Staff of Math and English classes has been and may continue to 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 related staffing changes. The school's Board of Directors has the right and the responsibility to determine if a change in school administration is necessary for the improvement of teacher and student performance.

SECTION III: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Network-wide Staffing

	Year 1 2018-19	Year 2 2019-20	Year 3 2020-21	Year 4 2021-22	Year 5 2022-23
Elementary Schools	0	0	0	0	0
Middle Schools	1	1	1	1	1
High Schools	1	1	1	1	1
Total	2	2	2	2	2
Enrollment	575	600	600	600+	600+
Management Positions					
Leader	1	1	1	1	1
Business	1	1	1	1	1
A.P.	1	1	1	1	1
Dean	1	1	1	1	1
Registrar	1	1	1	1	1
IT	1	1	1	1	1
Special Ed	1	1	1	1	1
Total	7	7	7	7	7
Middle School Staff					
Classroom Teachers	12	12	12	12	12
Specials	2	2	2	2	2
Student					

Support Teacher	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
Aides	1	1	1	1	1
School Operation	2	2	2	2	2
Total	18.5	18.5	18.5	18.5	18.5

High School Staff

Classroom Teachers	14	14	14	14	14
Specials	4	4	4	4	4
Student Support Teacher	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
Aides	1	1	1	1	1
School Operation	2	2	2	2	2
Total	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5

School Leadership and Staff Hiring, Management, and Evaluation

HAST utilizes the AppliTrak/Frontline hiring management system, linked to 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 the faculties of teacher preparation at PNW, Calumet College of St. Joseph, Valparaiso University, Indiana University Northwest, and Saint Xavier University to identify promising graduates from the respective schools.

New teachers to HAST and new teachers to the profession are assigned teacher mentors to assist both in content area and overall classroom and school procedures. These pairs meet regularly throughout the year as part of the Friday afternoon professional development. Mentor teachers observe new teachers in their classroom. New teachers also get the opportunity to observe veteran teachers in their classrooms.

The school principal and assistant principal are responsible for the teacher evaluation process. A minimum of two formal and two informal observations take place each year prior to April 30. New teachers have multiple informal observations as well throughout the year. Students complete teacher evaluation surveys each year, to provide feedback on the quality of the classroom experience from a student perspective. 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 meets 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 HAST Board of Directors is responsible for the annual evaluation of school leadership. This evaluation occurs through the distribution of evaluation surveys to school staff and the members of the Board. The survey reviews the performance of the leader in the management of fiscal, education, and physical plant operations, 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 the Board deems that school leadership is unsatisfactory, they may either prepare a remediation plan for the school leader or make recommendation for a change in leadership. The present school leader has received annual reviews since the school opened in 2010. The school leader has met the Board's criteria as an effective leader for seven consecutive years.

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, while at the same time is making significant annual payments to the building's bond issue. There is an informal salary scale in place. Teacher contracts range from \$33,000 per year for new teachers with no prior teaching experience and an undergraduate university diploma to nearly \$50,000 for experienced teachers and those with doctoral degrees. HAST provides health, dental, and vision insurance programs for teachers, with 90/10 contribution share between the school and the staff. HAST also provides each contract employee with \$10,000 life insurance policy. HAST offers contract employees 2 personal days and 10 sick days per year. HAST makes the full contribution of 7% of teacher salary to the 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 training, Inquiry Method in the Classroom, Content planning and standards alignment, Diversity Training, Grant Writing for Teachers, and learning software incorporation for a blended classroom environment using on-line course libraries.

Under the present calendar and master schedule, Friday afternoons, teachers have a three hour professional development period which is typically a blend of

time used for whole staff general meeting, whole staff training, small group 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
- English Language Learner instructional needs
- 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
- Book study of professional literature
- Math intervention coaching
- Literacy intervention coaching
- Smekens methodology
- Student discipline
- SMART Board and Apple TV projection systems
- Goal setting
- Lesson Plan preparation
- 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
- Cyber safety
- Sexual violence awareness
- Mandated reporting of suspected child abuse
- Diversity training
- Charter school authorization process

- ISTEP preparation

The school engages outside trainers from PNW, IUN, the state DOE, St. Margaret's Hospital, the Urban League of Gary, North Township Trustees Office, other school districts, other charter schools, and members of the HAST. The school relies on 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 their colleagues.

The school calendar and week have 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 for all teachers and staff. There are internal and external cameras on every floor, in every stairwell, and in the general usage student locker areas. These cameras provide 24-hour surveillance of the building. Camera footage is reviewed regularly by HAST administration and maintenance personnel at any of the monitor stations in the building. HAST works in collaboration with the Hammond Police Department to provide regular 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 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 Door A. The camera/speaker equipment allows 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 zone 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 admission 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 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 provides equipment to serve our students and staff in both educational and administrative capacities.

1. **Hardware**—MacBook Pros, MacBooks, iPads, PCs, and 3D Printers are provided for staff and students. IT staff maintains 5 Mac Xserve servers and 2 MacPro servers. The 2 MacPro servers are used to provide DHCP, DNS, Open Directory for network logins, and host our Mobile Device Manager (JAMF Pro). Two of the Xserve servers are used for caching service, two are used for filesharing, and one is used as a backup and test server for our Mobile Device Managements server. IT staff maintain the servers using Apple Server and all iPads and MacBooks are managed, configured, and inventoried through our JAMF Pro server. Our network is filtered by Lightspeed Rocket. This keeps students from accessing inappropriate content at school. It also documents and tracks student usage at home. Our firewall is PF Sense and our wireless network is managed through AerohiveHivemanager (cloud based).
2. **Software**—Our students and staff receive iLife and iWorks suite on provided laptops and iPads. iPad apps are distributed through our JAMF Pro server based upon grade and level requested apps.
3. **Connectivity**—Our bandwidth is provided by ENA and provides 500 Mbps throughout the building both through Ethernet ports and wireless access points. We have 42 wireless access points managed by cloud based AerhiveHivemanager.
4. **Property controls**—All laptops and iPads are physically asset tagged, inventoried through JAMF Pro as well as our iPad inventory Google sheet. All asset tag numbers are entered JAMF Pro. Through written procedures, teachers know how to handle lost devices and these devices may be searched by IP address and asset tag number. Additionally, we are able to put a device in lost mode through JAMF Pro to emit a beeping sound and a screen display of LOST until the device can be located.

5. **Expenditure**—We have an iPad insurance policy that students must pay before taking the device home, \$70 per students, with a \$50 deductible for each break.

Scope of Technology Support

Technology support consists of a support ticket system for both staff and students at HAST. Students and staff fill out support tickets for issues that they are having with their technology. A member of the IT staff is generally in contact with them within the hour to assist. All support tickets go into a google sheet where IT staff can update and mark tickets as resolved. In the event of emergency, staff may contact IT by email or phone.

When devices are broken or determined to be broken by IT staff and not able to be fixed in house, insurance procedures are followed and devices are sent to Apple (if covered by Apple Care) or a repair shop for repairs.

Data Retention, Security, and Confidentiality Procedures

HAST data is mostly stored in cloud based services. Teachers are encouraged to use iCloud and Google Drive to back up their files. PowerSchool information is all stored on PowerSchool servers. NWEA test results are stored on NWEA servers. Additionally, our email accounts are run through Gmail, stored in Google, and archived through archive accounts that HAST manages through Google Apps for Education services.

Students are responsible for managing and protecting their iPad data by taking advantage of free iCloud storage and free Google Drive storage.

Passwords for accounts, email, etc. can be changed when the possibility of compromise is present. Google notifies IT staff when such incidents occur. Students also email IT staff in the event they suspect their account security has been compromised.

Staff and students are encouraged to check email addresses they are sending to before hitting the send button. Teachers are trained to use initials in subject lines instead of full names when sending emails regarding students.

There are email filters in place to collect suspicious emails based upon key words or attachments.

There are only limited ports open on our firewall in order to protect our network from intrusion.

Procedures Related to Equipment, Software, and Connectivity

Our main wireless network is closed to public use. Students are prohibited from using personal devices in the place of their school issued iPad. Cell phones are allowed on the guest network, which is significantly more restricted and does not allow communication between devices.

While there are rarely any outages during the school year, other than planned outages, teaching staff are asked to prepare backup lessons in the event this should occur. Many iPad apps still work when service is not available.

HAST pays for internet service through ENA as part of a 5 year agreement utilizing e-rate discounts. Families cover the cost of internet service at home.

Data Protection and Recovery Procedures

When a device crashes, we utilize cloud based storage on iCloud and Google Drive to restore data to devices. Backups of our JAMF Pro server are made daily and saved to an external drive. Additionally, Open Directory information is backed up regularly to an external drive as well. Data such as email, IXL, PowerSchool, GoogleDrive, and Plato, are all cloud based and therefore backed up and maintained by the service providers.

Facility Plan

The school presently occupies a building that is 6-years old. 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 the city and state officials to assure full compliance with all building codes for a public education facility. The school continues to maintain compliance with all codes for public health and public safety. The school is located at 33 Muenich Court, Hammond, Indiana 46320. The school occupies the site of the former Masonic Temple.

Due to the waiting list of nearly 1000 students, the HAST Board of Directors is looking at a long-term plan of expansion of our school to include a second facility in close proximity to the present school building. There are numerous possible facilities within a 2-block range, including former banks, office buildings, and a private university that is now defunct. Many of these buildings could be reconfigured into a school-appropriate facility with minimal cosmetic and internal repairs. Others would require extensive renovations.

If a second building were acquired for the expansion and growth of our present school, the building at 33 Muenich Court would become the middle school, while the second building would be home to our high school and additional administrative offices.

Proof of Insurance Coverage and Building Floor Plans, See Attachment 18

Budget and Finance

The Hammond Academy of Science and Technology employs one full-time Business Manager internally. For additional internal controls, HAST hires the services of Bookkeeping Plus Inc., a firm that keeps record of all expenses, purchasing, payroll, and grants in accordance with each fund.

Accounting: All funds received have to be confirmed via a numbered deposit ticket and numbered receipts are given to the payer. These numbers are also maintained in excel spreadsheets.

HAST 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, and lunch fees, among others. For each payment, the Business Manager gives the payer a general receipt, or a special TBR receipt if they are paying 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 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, 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 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 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 processes described above take about eight to ten business days to process. For quicker purchasing, the school credit card is used. There are only three authorized users: School Leader, Business Manager, and Building 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 of directors at monthly meetings for review. A voucher register is also provided to the school board to review every check made out to vendors from the school.

Payroll: Full time employees are employed based on an annual contract that outlines their pay for the contract period. This annual pay is paid throughout the year in 26 installments for the employee. For any additional work performed and for hourly staff, employees must submit a time sheet each Friday/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. Payroll services are contracted to Paychex Inc., currently the school has no 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 month's board meeting. This is the broadest level of financial control. Budget categories whose expenditures go beyond allotments come under scrutiny from the Board. During the monthly board meetings, board members also receive a voucher list of all checks printed in the last month and all credit card purchases. The Business Manager is responsible for explaining any suspicious or unknown items.

Since all checks are printed at Bookkeeping Plus Inc., they require an invoice to accompany all vouchers with invoice numbers and dates. This measure not only helps identify the vendor but also prevents double payment for the same invoice, as some vendors may send multiples invoices 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 of the three board members listed on the bank account as signers. 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 the Business Manager responsible for all purchases.

The process of receiving money is safeguarded using numbered receipts. No money is received without giving the payer a receipt which has a copy with the same number. Sequentially arranging receipts ensures no money received is misplaced. The Business Manager is responsible for collecting, depositing, and recording the money received in these transactions.

The Business Manager has 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

Hammond Academy offers an instructional program that is fundamentally different from that of the traditional public schools in our region. One of the most basic elements of this program is that teachers at HAST have daily and weekly time to meet by grade, content, or any other combination, as needed to create and prepare classroom lessons that include project units, real life applications, and often bring multiple subjects together under a larger theme. Students use their school electronic devices to access content. They use this same device to create presentations and reports that demonstrate student mastery of the content.

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

Fibonnaci sequence scarf

Students crochet a scarf using two alternating colors that follow the Fibonnaci sequence as a pattern.

Utopia

8th grade students create a utopian society, including the development of a Constitution, mirroring the actions of American colonists in the 1700s. Student teams choose a government system as the overarching philosophical and economic framework of their country. They determine the laws, energy sources, motto, and flag of their country. Students build a scale model of their utopian society using recyclable materials.

Tasty Treats

Students pick a recipe of a food item that they can make at school for \$25 or less. Students take a field trip to the local grocery store to purchase ingredients. Student teams conduct Research and Development and Marketing and Promotion of their product. Additional team members serve as Nutritionist, Chef, and Accountant. Students set price points for their product and invite other classes to purchase items. The ultimate goal is to sell all product *and* make a profit.

21st Century Skills: Invention Convention

This is an interdisciplinary project with an emphasis on Science. Students learn about the skills needed to be a successful 21st century learner. Groups of students invent and promote an innovation that responds to a daily basic need, i.e. wristband toilet paper dispenser for use in emergencies. Students create a

needs assessment, a prototype, advertising material, and a display video. The entire school attends the convention, where staff and peers rate the product prototypes on creativity, viability, and originality.

Dungeons and Dragons

This project incorporates all four core content areas. Students engage in creating historically accurate, mathematically sound, physical worlds, all under the guise of creative writing. Students apply statistics to the outcome of real world endeavors and show how slight adjustments to statistical properties have a butterfly effect on the world they have created.

Genius Hour

This is a project with varying themes which all focus on student development and intrinsic motivation. Students identify issues facing society as a whole, the region of Northwest Indiana, and finally, themselves. For each of these issues, students develop solutions. They conduct both as teams and individually. They then act on the solution to offer a concrete representation of same. One example: a team of students used recycled plastic grocery bags to crochet large mats for homeless people to sleep on.

My Country is Worse than Yours

This is a research and tennis debate project the winner is determined by the ability to research and persuade an audience that a country is one of the worst in the world and requires support and assistance. Students research such things as their chosen country's social and economic statistics, climate, catastrophic events, health care, women's and children's rights, and endangered species. This interdisciplinary projects covers standards in Science, Math, English, and Global Studies.

The above projects, and so many more, are not purchased online. HAST teachers have spent literally years creating and perfecting these projects as part of the student-centered, project-based nature of our curriculum. Students and parents regularly comment on the exciting nature of these practical and interesting projects.

Teacher and student partnerships throughout the building and the curriculum are core to the innovations at HAST. As mentioned earlier, each and every day at HAST, teachers are working together, rather than in isolation. Students also work together, rather than in isolation. Teachers across grade levels bring classes together to research common themes. Older students work with younger students.

Our students learn to take theory and make practical applications to real-life and real-world experiences. Students seek larger understandings of content themes, rather than rote memorization of facts and figures. While these facts and figures are important, it is more important for students to understand why and how things

operate as they do. Once they master the larger concepts, they are able to drill down in discrete information.

HAST students 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.

Students are engaged, happy learners at HAST. This is visible all over the building, every hour of every day. Students enjoy the learning process. They want to learn what they do not know. They inform teachers and administrators if they feel that they are not receiving sufficient information to be successful. HAST students seek knowledge and share it with each other. This cooperative model of education is a model for local schools and local industry. Visitors come to HAST regularly to observe and learn from our staff and students.

SECTION V: PORTFOLIO REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE RECORD

Portfolio Summary, See Attachment 21

Audited Financial Statements, See Attachment 22

Enrollment 2016-17

	HAST	Gavit	Clark	Scott	Hd High	Bishop Noll	ECUA
6 th	88	231	189	264			48
7 th	89	242	200	291			48
8 th	85	237	212	289			49
9 th	86	240	195		205	129	
10 th	77	251	213		229	159	
11 th	59	233	178		185	115	
12 th	65	180	174		191	125	
Total	549	1623	1361	844	810	528	431
A-F	B	C	C	D	C	A	D

In the three years that Calumet College of St. Joseph has served as the charter authorizer for Hammond Academy of Science and Technology, the school has made and achieved numerous improvement efforts. The school used multiple avenues to identify areas for improvement, including observations by regional representatives from the Indiana Board of Education, teacher surveys, student surveys, parent surveys, and finally, recommendations from charter authorizer.

These improvements range from simple fixes to year-long program implementation to long-term cultural and organizational change.

Starting with administration, the charter authorizer wanted to see HAST school administrators more visible and involved in regional and state conferences. The School Leader, Assistant Principal, Dean, Guidance Counselors, and Business

Manager have all attended numerous conferences, starting with sessions coordinated by the Northwest Indiana Education Service Center, to state level sessions for charter leaders, to national conferences for guidance counselors.

From the school's inception, there was a loosely organized teacher mentor program for new teachers, including teachers new to HAST. While the teachers did not specifically ask administration for a more formalized process, they did voice this opinion in multiple school-wide surveys during the School Improvement Plan development. In response, we have put into place formal partnering between veteran HAST teachers and our first and second year teachers. These individuals meet at scheduled times during our professional development time on Friday afternoons. We also provide substitute teacher coverage so that the mentor can observe the mentee in the classroom, and vice versa. In addition to scheduled meetings between mentor and mentee, school administrators meet with the entire group of new teachers, sometimes inviting their mentors, regularly during the first years to discuss concerns, successes, and opportunities.

School administrators have conducted regularly observations of instructional staff. After these observations, administrator and teacher met to discuss the results of these observations. Teachers requested more frequent observations with more immediate feedback. In response, both the Assistant Principal and the School Leader conduct multiple observations each semester and each year. In addition to face to face conversations with the School Leader, teachers receive immediate response in the form of a PDF document that summarizes the observation results. This document is generated through a google forms application. This form allows administrators to quantify all observable data.

Regional liaisons from the Indiana DOE were frequent visitors to HAST for three years. During their visits, they declared that they wanted to see greater evidence of differentiation and academic rigor in the classrooms. These same individuals were hired by the school to provide ongoing professional development and training on both of these topics. The lesson plan template was altered such that it requires the teacher to identify where and how rigor and differentiation are present in instruction. All teachers received a depth of knowledge classroom tool that allows them to identify readily the level of rigor that they are engaging in their classroom. Teachers review each other's lesson plans and written assessments to offer peer to peer feedback regarding the level of rigor of these instructional tools. Finally, the School Leader reviews high school final exams each semester to check for the level of rigor of these key assessment pieces.

The staff, recognizing that we needed to see even more community and parent involvement at HAST, formed a committee to develop programs throughout the year to bring these key partners in education into our building. For parents, English-language and Spanish-language parent education classes took place on a monthly basis for two years. This year, the school received Title III funds to

support parent education and involvement. There is a tentative calendar of events for these parents, focusing on how they can support their children academically. To raise community involvement, this same committee scheduled a college and career fair, a dance for students and their adult mentors, and a Philanthropy Club. The Philanthropy Club has done a number of projects serving the community. It is the first of its kind in Northwest Indiana. To further supplement this aspect of our school operations, as this application points out on pages 38-40, HAST has numerous community partners who take active roles in our students' education and preparation for both college and careers.

After reviewing the results on annual student surveys that asked questions about students' personal well-being, our staff has created a Student Advocacy Committee. This group is extremely active, bringing in speakers and programs that speak to issues facing our students on a regular basis: violence, bullying, sexting, cyber crimes, relationships, and making right choices. Students at all grade levels benefit from these programs which are age and grade appropriate. For those students who need food or clothing, we collect non-perishable items throughout the year, and we collect gently used school uniforms. We then offer these items to students and families in need, as identified by staff and students alike.

As part of the student advocacy program, we have also hired a Dean of Discipline to reduce inappropriate school behaviors. The incidence of any type of violent behaviors (fighting) has decreased to almost nothing. Physical violence of any kind is extremely rare at HAST. Most of the Dean's time is spent meeting with individual students who are not feeling good about themselves or others. Our school Social Worker is also always willing and able to extend her hours.

The Guidance Counselors and their intern provide additional social-emotional supports through individual and group counseling, as well as whole class instruction on mental health issues facing adolescents. This year, the school is fortunate to have a school counselor intern working with the guidance department. This individual is bringing a "Kindness Challenge" to HAST. Students will receive tickets for demonstrating kindness. These tickets will be entered into a lottery. Prizes include portable Bluetooth speakers, 32" LED televisions, and high end headphones, with prizes at both the middle school and high school levels.

In addition to the above, the student advocacy committee, in conjunction with school administration, also provides multiple other academic and affective supports for our students. To promote positive behaviors, the school provides a quarterly treat for all students who have strong attendance, who are punctual to school and to classes, and who have no behavior referrals. The school allows students who are on the honor rolls each quarter the chance to dress out of uniform for a week each quarter. HAST offers Title I in-class and after school tutoring for those students identified as part of the Title I program.

In the 2016-17 school year, the school offered an intensive 5-week ISTEP boot camp for students in grades 6,7,8, and 10, to prepare students at risk of failing to take these mandatory standardized tests. This boot camp took place in lieu of Friday afternoon professional development during 5 Fridays in March and April. Students who participated in this program stated that it gave them much greater confidence going into the testing format.

Last, but certainly not least, Hammond Academy of Science and Technology is duly proud of the academic performance and growth of our students. In the school's first three years of operations, the school received letter grades of D, F, and D, respectively. When the Indiana Department of Education released the letter grade for 2014 (a D), the school administration appealed the results. The appeal was heard at the November 2014 Indiana Board of Education monthly meeting. Before the meeting ended, the IBOE ruled that Hammond Academy letter grade was incorrect, due to numerous errors in the reporting and calculation. The letter grade was effectively changed to a B for the 2013-14 academic year.

HAST teachers have spent the last four years walking the fine line between continuing to provide project-based instruction that prepares students for life and test-based instruction that prepares students for the state's standardized tests. HAST teachers attend any and every regional and state workshop to help them understand even better the composition of the state tests, especially as it pertains to Math and English/Language Arts. HAST teachers volunteer to serve on assessment review panels.

In 2015, the school earned a B letter grade. The grade dropped to a C for the 2016 state report. But in 2017, the school again earned a solid B letter grade for the combined middle and high school reports. There are two components of the 2017 school letter grade that most reflect the school's efforts: growth and the multiple measures domain for high school students. In middle school grades 6-8, growth for both the top 75% and the bottom 25% was nearly 100%. At the 10th grade level, more than 100% of students in both the top 75% and the bottom 25% showed growth in both Math and English Language Arts.

The school also earned maximum points for College and Career Readiness Achievement rate with more than three times the required amount of students participating in dual credit classes. The school also received maximum points for 4 year graduation rates.

Hammond Academy of Science and Technology is living proof that students of mixed socio-economic, ethnic, and academic backgrounds can thrive and succeed when given the proper tools. Hammond Academy looks forward to another five years (and more) of providing excellence in education and school climate to our community.