Initial Proposal for Authorization

2015-2016

Overview and Enrollment Projections

Please provide information for the applicant group's **designated representative**. This individual will serve as the contact for all communications, interviews, and notices from Education One, L.L.C. regarding the submitted proposal. Submit completed proposals to Lindsay Omlor, Managing Director of Education One, to: Lindsay@education1.org

IMPORTANT NOTE: *The full application, including this form, will be posted on the Education One, L.L.C. website. Applicants are advised that local community members, including members of the media, may contact the designated representative for questions about the proposed school(s).*

Legal name of group applying for charter(s): Northwest Indiana Science and Mathematics Engineering Academy (NiSe)

Names, roles, and current employment for all persons on applicant team:

Augusta DeNeal, Ph.D. – Ivy Tech Community College - TRIO Director

Elonda Ervin, Ph.D. – Indiana State University – Executive Director, Multicultural Services & Program

Lamont Mitchell – Biology and Science, Chicago State University

Prof. Donna Miller – Math Consultant, Ivy Tech Community College

Prof. Ron McCullough – English/Communication Program Chair, Ivy Tech Community College

Designated applicant representative: Augusta DeNeal

Office and cell phone numbers:
Work: (219) 981-4825 Cell: (219) 381-8287

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Provide the requested information for each school included in this proposal.
(You may add lines to the table if needed.)

Proposed School Name	**Opening Year**	**School Model (e.g., Blended, STEM)**	**Geographic Community ***	**School District(s) in Proposed Location**	**Grade Levels at Full Enrollment**
Northwest Indiana Science and Mathematics Engineering Academy (NiSe)	2018	STEM	Lake County	Gary Community School Corporation	5-12

NOTE: * Please indicate the city/town and, if known, potential address or neighborhood of location. Virtual operators should indicate the relevant geography the operator intends to serve.

Proposed Grade Levels and Student Enrollment

Provide the following information for each charter school included in this proposal. Specify the planned year of opening for each, the grade levels served, and both the planned and maximum number of enrolled students by grade level for each year. (You may duplicate the table as needed.)

Proposed School Name:		
Academic Year	**Grade Levels**	**Student Enrollment (Planned/Maximum)**
Year 1 (specify starting year)	5-12	200
Year 2	5-12	300
Year 3	5-12	400
Year 4	5-12	500
Year 5	5-12	600
At Capacity	5-12	600 Total

Do any of the proposed schools expect to contract or partner with an Education Service Provider
(ESP) or other organization for school management/operation?* Yes **X**No If yes, identify the ESP or other partner organization:

Will an application for the same charter school(s) be submitted to another authorizer in the near future?
Yes **XNo**

If yes, identify the authorizer(s): _____

Planned submission date(s): _____

Please list the number of previous submissions for request to authorize this(ese) charter school(s) over the past five years, as required under IC § 20-24-3-4. Include the following information:

Authorizer(s): Ball State and Indianapolis Charter Authorizers (2013 and 2014)

Submission date(s): Indiana Charter School Board (2015)

Proposal Narrative

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Executive Summary should provide a concise overview of the school design being proposed and the applicant's goals and organizational capacity to execute the plan successfully.

Mission and Vision for Growth in Indiana

The proposed Northwest Indiana Science, Math and Engineering Academy (NiSe) Charter School will be governed and operated by the TRON AGEK' Educational Foundation, Inc. 501(c)(3). It will be a 5-12 grade school at full capacity or at the end of the first five year cycle. As stated in our letter of intent our only mission is to teach Indiana Standards instruction infused with math, science, engineering curricula (Indiana standards based) and hands on STEM practices. The targeted school area will be the city of Gary, Indiana. This district has a high number and percentage of low-income residents which literature reflects will probably apply for admissions (STATS Indiana, 2017). Our proposed enrollment will be 600 students at the end of the first five year cycle.

Educational Need

The state of Indiana gives credit to the increase in high school graduation rates; however, the city of Gary has a low **68.2%** rate in reality compared to the state's 85-90% graduation rate**.** New Tech School enrollment was 242 in 2015-16 and 132 students were suspended in the same year! The school's overall drop-out rate is **33%** (IDOE, 2017), 7 students passed AP examinations and 29 students took 3 credit hours of dual credit and 11 passed with Industry Certificates in 2014-15.

Year	# of Graduate and types of degrees	Gary High School Persistence/Graduation Rate	Gary High School Senior Drop Out	Gary High School Senior Drop Out Rate
Core and General	336	**68.2%**	112	**33%**
Passed on AP (Degree)	7			
International Baccalaureate Exam	0			
3 hours of Dual	29			

Credit				
Industry Certificate	11			

Last date this information could be retrieved.

As mentioned seven students took and passed AP classes in the target area in recent years and in (2016-17) there were only a limited number of AP classes (rigorous course of study) classes being offered in the targeted area. Research shows that community charter schools recently are beginning to increase AP classes. Gary's SAT scores are 700 compared to the state's rate of 1,000. The area's high school graduation enrollment by college degree type is very dismal – only **39.9%** (below).

2015 High School Graduation Enrollment in College by College Type

	# of HS Graduates	% of HS Graduates
Indiana Public College	163	**39.9%**
Private (Non-Profit)	11	2.7%
Private (Profit)	1	0.2%
Out of State Public	25	6.1%
Out of State Private (Non-Profit)	2	1.7%
Out of State Private (Profit)	1	0.2%
Non-Degree Grad School	7	1.7%
Did not enroll in College	194	**47.4%**

Source: IDOE (2015) – latest date this information could be retrieved.

A significant number of targeted students remain in the General Diploma curriculum in high school rather than the Core 40 diploma curriculum. The state is considering discounting these diplomas which will have a significant impact on the targeted school population and state's graduation rates (Indy Star, 2017). As literature states graduation rates account for a significant portion of a high schools' rank. Over **47%** of the Gary high school graduates did not register for college the fall after high school graduation in 2015. Only 12.3% of the target area community has obtained a baccalaureate degree.

In the full proposal, we will show how important it is for students to have a good educational foundation; especially in math and science starting in middle school and continuing throughout their secondary school tenure. As we reviewed the data, we noticed that the targeted area had competing standardized scores in the 6th grade of **65%** in science and **45%** in math (below). However, science scores dropped to a low range of **22%** and **20%** and **25%** in math by 10th grade (IDOE, 2017).

<u>IMAST Science and Math Only (Elementary 6 –Grade)</u>

IMAST Science and Math (2013-2014) **(Elementary – 6th Grade)**		
School Corporation	**Science 2013-2014**	**Math 2013-2014**

Merrillville	66%	30%
Lake Central	70%	50%
Lake Ridge	30%	30%
East Chicago	* No Data	* No Data
Lake Station	* No Data	* No Data
Gary	**65%**	**45%**

IDOE-COMPASS (2017) –Latest day info could be retrieved.

ISTEP Science and Math Only (10th Grade)

	Science and Math (2015-2016) (2016-017) **(10th Grade)**			
School Corporation	**Science 2015-2016**	**Science 2016-2017**	**Math 2015-2016**	**Math 2016-2017**
Merrillville	32%	32%	21%	20%
Lake Central	70%	70%	50%	50%
Lake Ridge	32%	32%	10%	10%
East Chicago	20%	20%	10%	10%
Lake Station	45%	45%	39%	39%
Gary	**22%**	**20%**	**25%**	**25%**

IDOE-COMPASS (2017)

Reviewing the overall state 10th grade assessment pass rates for the Gary Community School Corporation, Wirt-Emerson High School had a 13% pass rate and West Side High School had an 18.2% pass rate. This would equal a 0.9% pass rate! Thea Bowman only had a single student out of 109 to pass both English and Math sections in 2016. Gary, Indiana along with the City of East Chicago ranked at the bottom of Indiana school systems in the percentage of students passing the English and Math ISTEP tests (Indianapolis Star, 2016).

The demographics of the proposed charter school will probably be formed by other communities as well, i.e. Merrillville who once was an "A" ranked school now has less than 33% percent pass rate on the district's 10th grade assessment. Over the years, our applicant team has studied and worked with small samples of Northwest Indiana's students and have made a difference among persistence, retention, high school graduation rates, college attendance and completion rates. However; it would take a school system (large population sample) to significantly show an increase in reported overall rates. Gary's poor rates has led to a state intervention. Today, data reflect that children in the Gary School Community system is struggling as demonstrated by the recent state take-over. Gary's A-F Accountability grade has been an "F" for the past several years (Compass, 2017) - see rankings below:

Schools in the	***Grades***	***Type of School***	***Enrollment***	***Ranking (last***

targeted location – city of Gary			*(estimates)*	*date info could be retrieved – 2015-16)*
Aspire	K-8	Charter	701	D
Gary Lighthouse	K-12	Charter	1497	C
Dunes	K-12	Charter	504	D
Thea Bowman	K-12	Charter	1269	C
21st Century	K-12	Charter	758	D
Gary Middle College	9-12	Charter	224	
Marquette	K-6	Public	441	F
Baily	K-6	Public	371	D
Beveridge	K-6	Public	675	F
Watson	K-6	Public	137	F
Glen Park Academy	K-6	Public	790	F
Jefferson	K-6	Public	482	F
Daniel Hale	K_6	Public	768	F
Frankie McCullough	K-7	Public	429	A
Banneker	K-8	Public	494	C
Wirt/Emerson	5-12	Public	595	D
West Side	7-12	Public	885	D
Roosevelt	7-12	Public	571	F
New Tech	9-12	Public	242	F

Target Population

More Indiana schools received high marks on state report cards in 2017. Nearly one third of the state's schools were A-rated. Another third of schools received a B-rating, meaning nearly two-thirds of the state's schools are now "A" or "B" schools. However, Gary is at the bottom of the state's high school ranking percentile. As a community, we can begin to work in the 'preventive mode" with a STEM school that will hold student's interest and motivate them to learn. Additionally, businesses tell us that our young residents are not employable for different reasons; especially for lack of STEM skills. We believe this can be "fixed" by training our children in STEM areas starting in the 5th grade and by adding (1) increasing STEM knowledge as they persist from one grade level to the next and by (2) adding a "high quality" student life counseling/remediation support system. Our school curriculum design will give students the educational foundation that can help them progress and succeed at all levels to overcome learning barriers early on.

According to a community survey regarding the need for a local STEM charter school and as local educators, we believe that math and science training and education should begin the day the students enter a secondary educational institution. This would totally be an educational paradigm

shift for our community. Our children will be taught to pass standardized assessments. We know students in our district are smart (as depicted in their 6th grade science assessments) and we also know they persist and graduate with direct support from strategically designed programs like government funded TRIO programs (serve Gary students). Results from this educational model has persistence, retention and graduate data reports from the city of Gary that reflect successful secondary and post-secondary persistence, retention, graduation and entry to college success rates (COE and DOE, 2017).

Presently, we are witnessing in the community that students can no longer depend on completing a two year community college degree and transfer to a four year college without taking several college remedial courses. Many of our students dream of going to a four year institution. However, a significant number of our community high school graduates start their college life by taking the ACCUPLACER college assessment attempting to enroll in the community college. Students score less than the required score for math and are placed in remedial classes using up their financial aid. We see students become frustrated and never return to school. This is a community problem that has turned into a state and national problem (low college enrollment and graduation rates, high unemployment) which all contribute to the social ills of our community. We believe, a STEM education where students will obtain the math and science skills needed starting in middle school will address this problem and meet our proposed public charter school mission and vision.

NiSe's instructional design will include the ACCUPLACER remediation tool, which is now being implemented by other area charter schools (IDOE, 2017) to assess and remediate before the 9th grade because they also realize this college admission problem. In addition, The ACCUPLACER tool is centered on college readiness standards. It offers diagnostic assessments to support interventions for remediation e.g. RTI. Our middle school will not only consist of this assessment but other diagnostic math frames that assures passing math sections of any secondary and post-secondary assessment: Arithmetic, Elementary Algebra, and College level Math: whole numbers and fractions, decimals, percent, application and problem solving, elementary Algebra, operations with integers and ration numbers and algebraic expressions. These are the subject areas literature tells us that must be mastered early in secondary school to ensure the possibility of passing required math percentile ranges on assessments. By the end of 9th grade, our students will be "math" ready to take the PSAT, ACCUPLACER and ISTEP before enrolling in the 10th grade. All Indiana assessments will be administered at appointed times along with other designed assessments, NWEA, DIBELS, engineering software assessments, etc.

More importantly this targeted population will be supported with both a math and science running curriculum theme, supported by a STEM environment, STEM engineering software and individualized support student life services. Not only will our children be trained using engineering software like Project Lead the Way (correlated with Indiana Standards) but be trained on Medibotics which is a software that uses medical robotic simulations to treat health issues. Again, both science and math will be *infused in every class subject*. The only problem we predict as a community is being oversubscribed or having a long "waiting list" for enrollment.

Community Engagement. The NiSe Charter School, in collaboration with students, parents, and the community, endeavors to foster a school environment to create a challenging and supportive organization of lifelong learners. It is our mission to actively engage the students, parents and community in our work to provide an education empowering students with a STEM foundation. The community is excited and has embraced this concept and support letters and community surveys will be included in the full proposal.

Local and Community Support			
	Participant Data	**Space/Personal Participant Referral**	**Scholarship & Information, Student Testing, Results and Recommendations**
Gary School Corporation	X	X	
Boeing Airlines			X
U.S. Steel Company		X	X
Nipsco		X	X
Postsecondary Institutions			
Indiana University (Northwest)		X	X
Purdue University (Calumet) TRIO (McNair, SSS, ETS)		X	
Ivy Tech Community College	**X**		
21st Century Scholars	X	X	X
Workforce Development	X	X	X
Local Community Agencies			
United Way		X	X
NW Hispanic Council		X	X
Urban League of NWI		X	X
NAACP		X	X
Boys and Girls Club		X	X
Family & Children Services		X	
YWCA of Gary		X	X

As a community, we realize and understand that the United States has, since its inception, acted on the belief that all students deserve a basic education. To help with this effort, national common core standards were implemented in almost every state in the U.S. starting in 2014. Indiana State Standards define *basic education* in a new way – that every student in the U.S. will be college and career ready by the time she/he completes high school. As a result, for the first time, the expectations are the same for almost all students, regardless of where they live. These standards represent a great opportunity to advance equity and excellence for all children, especially in Northwest Indiana.

However, we, like any other community do not want any child to continue to be left out as shown on Gary's annual assessment reports; especially with STEM (science and math subjects). Because of its importance, STEM education must **prepare, inspire** and **engage** all students. *It does not matter where they come from, their gender, race or socio-economic background*. The lack of STEM training limits students' opportunities to attain well-paid jobs in high growth professions. The lack of STEM training deprives the nation, our community of the full benefit of students' talents and perspectives (PCAST).

The TRON AGEK Educational Foundation, Inc. and the Northwest Indiana community believe that the NiSe Charter School, will deliver endless possibilities for our children. If students acquire basic STEM learning early in middle school (MMGW, 2011), they will be prepared for not only STEM subjects but will also be equipped to master Advanced Placement courses, a core 40 curricula, state standards and college admissions assessments. Through NiSe's educational program, students in Northwest Indiana will receive college credits through a dual credit program as well as guidance and counseling to help students' map out their secondary and post-secondary plans of study so that they are able to complete a college degree and become productive citizens.

Network Governance and Leadership

Founding Board

Full Name	Current Job Title and Employer	Position with Proposed School
Augusta DeNeal, Ph.D.	Director TRIO Services, Ivy Tech Community College	Organizing Member
Elonda Ervin, Ph.D.	Executive Director, Multicultural Services & Programs, Indiana State University	Organizing Member
Dwayne Tucker	Boeing Airlines	Organizing Member
Geraldine Ware Roby	Public/Charter School Instructor, Adjunct Faculty (Retired)	Organizing Member
Mary Steele Agee, Ph.D.	Former Superintendent of Gary Public School	Organizing Member (Retired)

School Corporation (Retired)	
Amber Booker Organizing	Teacher, Griffith High School Member
Marlene Smith	Teacher, Sojourner Truth Shelter

From observing, researching and working with charter schools in this targeted area we know for a fact that integrity and credentials can make or break a school. High leadership and personnel employment turnover is not good for the credibility of the school. Presently, none of the charter schools in Gary, Indiana have above a C state rating. We, believe, school consistency, credibility, accountability and a good school rating depends on the leadership of the school. We have formed a strong organizing applicant team, a strong board of directors and will have high quality faculty and staff. Also, it will be required that both Principal and Assistant Principal both have a secondary school superintendent's license from accredited post-secondary institutions.

Facility Plan

The Gary School district had 22 schools that closed over the past several years as the district faced declining enrollment and a budget deficit. An approved charter school may lease or buy these structures according to IC-20-26-7-1 https://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/unusedbuildings/ic-20-26-7-1.pdf The foundation and board members recently met with the owners of the now closed Garnett School facility regarding leasing of space for five years. It is presently being used for community service activities. Agreements and plans of the chosen facility will be included in the full proposal. An extensive facility study will be forwarded to Education One, if this initial charter proposal is approved.

Education Plan/School Design

Our *ideology* is to allow the students to dream, design, create, improvise and improve creating real-world applications. We want students to find their passion, envision their life's work and be prepared to make it happen.

Our *vision* is to build, renovate or restore a structure that will have high-tech career simulated labs as classrooms. One classroom may be a simulation of a hospital emergency room with robotic equipment or an engineering process line or a biology lab, etc. On any given day, we envision our students observing and working on experiments with energy and excitement. We want our students to be able to use a wide range of instruments, software (robotic) ranging from various types of sensors to solar cells to microscopes, etc. Regardless of what experiment they end up conducting, students will be given all the tools they need to succeed. They will wear lab jackets; with a sense of pride and be proud to be part of the school's STEM culture. Students will learn how to research, conduct conferences with their peers about what they are studying or experimenting. Students will be guided through the process of choosing questions to explore and design experiments to test their chosen hypothesis. At the end of each experiment; especially in the 8th grade, they will know how to conduct experiments which will contribute to the

development of problem-solving, decision making and inquiry skills by formulating usable questions and planning experiments based on their own interests and community problems and concerns. Each classroom will have a math or science running theme i.e. how all math began with the Pythagorean Theorem (just basic math that leads to higher level math). STEM visuals will be displayed outside the structure. One of our organizing member works for Boeing Aircraft. To support our STEM environment, his company has made a commitment to have placed at the front of the school a simulation of an aircraft structure on the front of the school and provide, internships and scholarships for high achievers. This structure will also be used to teach engineering practices.

class size and structure

We will have small and dynamic class rooms. The school class size will be no more than (20-25 students per class 5-12 grades) assisted by a teacher's aide which probably will be a retired school teacher or a teacher in training. This will ensure that the students get the instructional/remediation time and cultural/social counseling they need to be successful. As mentioned, we realize that we will be working with students mostly from low-income, first generation backgrounds. So as part of faculty and staff professional development, Student Development theories and practices will be part of professional development training. Being poor in one's life does not erase the effects of early conditioning (Hamilton, 2000). These issues can be missed, if it is assumed that all students and their counselors have had similar and consistent socialization experiences. A close connectivity between students, teachers and staff will be maintained so if there are cultural and social barriers that affect student learning, all can readily address those issues. We will identify and meet the learning needs of students with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities in the least restrictive environment possible i.e., IEP plans. We will provide qualified ELL staff and student services.

an overview of the curriculum

A sample of NiSe's pedagogical strategy to be used will be Indiana standard based that includes,

Core Curriculum (High School)
Indiana Core 40, Advanced Placement Curriculum Foundations

Mathematics: Geometry, Algebra II/Trigonometry, Pre-Calculus, AP Calculus AB, AP Calculus BC, Multivariable Calculus, AP Statistics

Science: Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Environmental Science, AP Biology, AP Physics C, AP Chemistry

Humanities: English 1, English 11 English 111, English IV, World History, United States History 1, United States History 11, Current Global Issues

World Languages: French 1, French 11, French 111, French IV

Engineering/Technology – Project Lead the Way and Medibotics (engineering software curriculum learning modules) will be included in the full proposal.

Required Research and STEM Safety: Introduction to Research, Data Analysis, Research Practicum will be a freshman year course that will provide students with a solid understanding of statistics behind formal experimentation.

By the 9th grade, students will have learned the basics of how to use Excel to conduct major statistical tests. They will be taught how to use t-tests, chi-square tests, ANOVA and others to prove their theories. By the 10th grade, students will be given time to meet with Lead teachers/mentors, conduct experiments, and statistically analyze science ideas and prepare for 10th grade science fair projects. Students will be expected to write conclusive research papers, integrating their work from both freshman and sophomore years. After which, these students will go on to compete and represent the charter school in various STEM competitions in the 11th and 12 grades; receiving college scholarships and stipends. Through this process students will develop skills in time management, organization, decision making, team work, ethical competition skills, and financial literacy and safety practices.

Physical Education/Health/Nutrition: Health 1 (Gardening), Health 11 (Gardening), Health III (Gardening), Physical Education 1, Physical Education 11, Physical 111, Physical Education IV, School Garden

Student Life Component:

Local, State and National Science and Math Competitions: Google Science Fair, Intel Talent Search, Intel International Science and Engineering Fair, Indiana Robotic Fair(s), Girls in STEM, etc. There is no robotics club in the city of Gary, Indiana.

Community Service: Local shelters and senior citizens facilities

Internships: Juniors and Seniors

Dual Credit: 9-12th grade (minimum six credit hours). Charter schools in the area are producing high school graduates with a one year college certificates and 2 year college degrees. We will duplicate this practice.

5-8th Grade

The 5-8th grade instructional design will duplicate the high school curriculum in a pre-subject mode i.e. pre-geometry (basics), pre-biology (pre-science, science), engineering software starts at the 7th grade with a summer internship at Purdue University Northwest, building of a robot, working in school garden and starting Project Lead the Way and Medibotics in the summer of the 8th grade.

use of technology in delivering instruction (if applicable), - see Engineering/Technology above.

plans for ensuring the school is staffed with highly qualified teachers, and

evidence-based support.

Our curriculum and instruction will be guided not only by the Principal but also by Lead teachers: *Math, Science, Humanities, Engineering/Technology, Physical Education/Health/Nutrition and a Student Life Component*. Leadership, faculty and staff professional development will begin immediately after the school is approved, prior to school opening and continuously throughout the academic year. Our full professional development plan and timelines will be included in the full proposal.

What we have witnessed through the roll-out of the charter school movement in the targeted area is a high turn-over of teachers that work in the area for their teacher training, scholarships, stipends and after which leave the city. Students, if possible, need to see the same teacher/mentor daily in order to build trusting and meaningful relationships. Our hiring approach will start in the target area. Teachers will go through a vetting process, background checks, credential checks, interviews with subject area demonstrations during the interview process. We also have interests from the school district's retired teachers who are willing to not only work part-time, but substitute teach and volunteer. This group also will go through the interview process. We will use Pearson teaching tools to assess teacher's ability in subject areas as well. We will offer attractive salaries and offer extensive professional development for all teaching staff and will reward teachers with stipends for mastery of different areas. We will conduct semi and annual evaluations to rate teachers according to Indiana law. Our planned school scheduling will allow the school's faculty and staff to work together to continuously teach, remediate and assess where students are academically and provide individual instruction for student remediation for student weaknesses at all times. As a result, Indiana assessments scores, we predict, will be above 70%.

1. **Specify instructional strategies that your school will implement**:

Differentiated instruction and assessment is a framework for effective teaching that involves providing different students with different avenues to learning in terms of acquiring learning progression regardless of ability. First, we believe this starts with modern day student development practices for leadership, faculty and staff with professional help from licensed professionals. Research shows us already the characteristics of the students we will be serving. It also shows us that the past and present public school approaches are not meeting the academic demands of the students. Therefore, we will use Student Development model(s) e.g. Hamilton's multiculturalism counseling which is not a new phenomenon. The first counseling approach emerged as Freudian, second Behaviorism and third Humanistic. Multiculturalism emerged as the fourth and is being utilized more today in school system that mirrors our demographics than ever before. This approach fits our mission and vision. The Lead teachers will work very closely with our therapist and psychologist to make sure that all students within a classroom learn effectively. The degree of these services will depend on the needs of the students. This service will be contracted out to credentialed and experienced contractors and assessments will be continuously reviewed and updated.

Second, what really stands out about this STEM teaching approach is that students will be taught inside and outside the classrooms. The city of Gary has a wealth of Duneland landscapes and STEM facilities that students will explore and examine while enrolled in the school. Facilities like Nipsco and US Steel both have made a commitment to our school and letters of support will

be included in our full proposal. Students need to see the opportunities available to them. They need to understand that a good grade point average and good standardized test scores in high school equal college scholarships, not student loans and will result in a good paying job. There are many jobs offered to graduated students that require skills that can only be learned through hands-on experiences that is embedded in our proposed science curriculum.

1. ***For Blended Learning Operators only:*** **As described in IC § 20-24-7-13, Indiana statute defines a virtual charter school in the following manner: a virtual charter school.** N/A

Financial Plan

1. **What is the school's contingency plan to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than the estimated budget?**

The financial management for NiSe will be managed by an accounting firm which will be outlined in the full proposal with the oversight responsibility of the Principal and the Board. NiSe will follow the Generally Accepted Accounting Practices and State Board of account requirements in all of its bookkeeping for the school. Day to day financial operations will be managed by the HR/Financial Manager. Payroll, audits and any other financial reports will be managed by our accountant. The State Board of Accounts will conduct a bi-annual audit as part of the normal state oversight. In addition, experienced grant writers from the applicant team will apply for local, state and federal grants, e.g. USA Funds, NSF and Legacy foundation just to name a few STEM school funders to help support the STEM initiatives of the school. One organizing member has written and managed federally funded TRIO programs for the past 15 years that gross $500,000 annually. All fund contributions will be part of all financial reports and reflected in reports submitted to Education One. In addition, the TRON/AGEK' Foundation, Inc. has a contingency financial plan of $50,000. Legal documentation of commitment will be included in the full proposal. Our financial plan includes parent and student fundraisers and Indiana Title funding.

2. **Explain how the school will ensure it has sufficient funds to cover all anticipated expenses.**

As publicly funded schools, charter schools receive money for the students they enroll. Student enrollment, Title funds, STEM grants, parent fundraising, loans will be monitored using the principles and practices authorized for charter schools. For charter school financial compliance, we will follow published measures: State Board of Accounts Audit, independent audit, strategic plans revenue practices, regulate cash balances and reports showing school receivables, encumbrances, expenditures, projections will be reviewed and approved by the Foundation, Board and Principal monthly to make sure all costs are covered.

If applicable, please submit the following information regarding school innovation:

Innovation. Education One is particularly interested in applicants that propose school models with strong potential to accelerate student success through dramatically different school designs, instructional strategies, uses of technology, staffing models, governance arrangements, family and community engagement strategies, and other approaches.

Summarize the innovation(s) embodied in the proposed school design. The summary should include, at a minimum, the following:

- An explanation of how the proposed model is fundamentally different from typical school models,

  Innovation you ask?

  NiSe Charter School will offer a well - planned, empirical researched 5-12 grade STEM school whose instructional design will be fun and interesting, one that will hold the students' interests, one that will include the parents and the community, one where STEM work readiness will be taught alongside Indiana standards and the annual data in the first year will reflect above 70% student standardized rates. There is other STEM public school like this in the Northwest Indiana area.

  Research reflect there is no other school that includes hands on engineering and robotics practices like the proposed school. No other school in Gary participates in engineering and robotic competitions. The uniq feature about the curriculum is that it starts at 5th grade and as students persists to the 12th grade will have all probability earned dual credit college hours, will be STEM career ready at the 12th grade, be STEM college ready and able to apply and pass college assessments; particularly for STEM college degrees. Again, research will show there is no other public school/charter model that utilize these methodological approaches.

- Any available evidentiary basis for the efficacy of the model or for the ideas underlying the model,

  As mentioned in this initial proposal, we selected empirical proven data and models in order to help build the charter school science and math teaching approach. It is one that will not only meet the vision and mission of the school; but "push" students in a progression of passing standardized assessments published by the state of Indiana and use the "new Indiana STEM Plan" published in 2014 which is designed by Indiana educators for Indiana students: http://www.doe.in.gov/ccr/indiana. We will continuously be informed by STEM secondary school models with the highest STEM school ranks e.g. Massachusetts and New Jersey.

- An explanation of how the model will still permit Education One to hold the operator to the same high accountability standards to which it holds all authorized schools.
  We expect that Education One will hold the operator accountable by the new Indiana standards: http://www.doe.in.gov/standardsand Public Law 221 letter grade that will be reported by the Indiana Department of Education. School letter grade will be above a C and will be reflected on the IDOE websit http:/www.doe.in.gov/improvement/accountability/f-accountability the first year reported. Also, another metric to use for accountability is the 10th, 11th and 12th graders that will pass the ACCUPLACER assessment which significantly increases their chances of passing AP, SAT, ACT and other assessments.

	The approval of this charter proposal will contribute to the persistence, retention, completing rigorous course of studies and graduating STEM ready students ultimately resulting in productive Indiana citizens that can compete in the STEM job market. Our graduates will be prepared for the real world of science, technology, engineering and math work at the 12th grade level. . **That is innovation**!