



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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IPS Selects Francis Scott Key #103 as First-Ever ‘Innovation Network School’

Indianapolis, INDIANA – The Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS) announced today that Francis Scott Key Elementary School (IPS #103) would be its first-ever Innovation Network School, a transformative, new approach to public education that gives IPS schools new freedom and flexibility to innovate at the school level.

The Phalen Leadership Academies (PLA), a nonprofit educational organization incubated by The Mind Trust, was chosen last month by the IPS board to operate the new partnership, **PLA@103**. The new school is scheduled to open for the 2015-2016 school year.

“We are humbled to be able to provide this opportunity for children at IPS school 103,” said Earl Martin Phalen, Founder and CEO of PLA. “We firmly believe that high-quality education is one of the best ways to expand future opportunities for all children, and we are excited to work with IPS and The Mind Trust to ensure that all children have the opportunity to realize their tremendous innate potential.”

Some of PLA’s key features include two exceptional educators in every classroom; a longer school day and school year; evidence-based curriculum; engaging afternoon enrichment classes including art, music and physical education; and a “blended learning” model which engages children in personalized small-group and digital instruction.

Innovation Network Schools were made possible by a 2014 state law giving IPS the unprecedented authority to replace chronically under-performing or underused schools with high-quality, autonomous public schools within the school district. In the 2013-2014 school year, only 15.3% of students at School 103 passed both the English Language Arts and Math components of the ISTEP+ – the Indiana state standardized exam – according to the Indiana Department of Education.

Mr. Marlon Llewellyn will serve as the Principal of the new school. “We are honored for the opportunity to partner with the Indianapolis Public Schools in launching its first ever Innovation Network School,” Mr. Llewellyn said Tuesday. “The Phalen Leadership Academies are looking forward to serving the scholars and families of Francis Scott Key #103 with a spirit of excellence.”

PLA will hold an “open house” event for all School 103 families to learn what they love about the school and what improvements they would like to see. The event will take place at 6:30 p.m. on March 10th, at School 103 located at 3920 Baker Drive.

Teachers who want to serve with this innovative partnership should first visit the “careers” section of PLA’s website. For more information about PLA, visit www.phalenacademies.org or call Founder and CEO Earl Martin Phalen at 617-818-1959.



About PLA:

PLA founder Earl Martin Phalen was first recruited to Indianapolis in 2008 as a part of The Mind Trust's Education Entrepreneur Fellowship and soon after launched Summer Advantage USA, which provides educational opportunities for underserved children during the summer months. Phalen then launched the first Phalen Leadership Academy, a charter school that incorporates traditional and computer-based instruction, in 2013.

PLA also took advantage of The Mind Trust's Innovation School Fellowship, a partnership to help IPS create high-quality Innovation Network Schools. Applicants may be current principals and educators, leaders of charter school networks, and other professionals who have the ability to run a successful organization.

The Mind Trust has awarded two fellowships, including one to PLA, and has received more than 70 applications from around the country for a second round of fellows for 2015. In partnership with IPS, The Mind Trust will help launch eight more Innovation Network Schools over the next three years.

Other key facts about Innovation Network Schools:

Scope. IPS is authorized to enter into a contract with a leader or school management team to replace a school that received a D or F in each of the last three years with an Innovation Network School; or establish a new Innovation Network school in a vacant, underutilized, or under-enrolled school building, provided that school did not receive an A or B in the most recent school year.

Funding. Enrollment counts towards IPS' enrollment, and local, state and federal funding will be included in the funding distributions that IPS receives. The actual per-pupil funding an Innovation Network School receives will be determined by its contract with IPS.

Accountability. Innovation Network Schools are subject to the same state accountability framework that applies to other IPS schools, and the annual A-F grades of these schools will be factored into IPS' overall letter grade. IPS may set additional performance goals and metrics in its contract with the management team. Failure to meet these goals and metrics constitute grounds for the district terminating its contract with the management team.

Services. School management teams receive use of an IPS school building, the accompanying real property, and the building's contents as provided in the agreement with IPS. IPS may provide transportation, maintenance, security, janitorial, and other services to the new schools.

Regulations. Innovation Network Schools are exempt from the same statutes and regulations as charter schools, with the exception of a specific set of state regulations regarding curriculum, school performance and improvement, graduation requirements and other rules.