



5320 Hickory Hollow Parkway,  
Antioch, TN 37013

[Knowledgeacademies.org](http://Knowledgeacademies.org)

Phone: 615-810-8370

# KNOWLEDGE ACADEMY RENEWAL APPLICATION

**Submitted by the Knowledge Academies  
Governing Board**

James Bristol, Chairman

Jeff Bradford, Secretary

Scott Schumpert, Assistant Treasurer

Colin Cannonier

Stephen F. Graw

Glenn Hunter

Evangeline Motley-Johnson

Tanaka Vercher



## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>Assurances.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Section 1 – Academic Success.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Section 2 – Operational Stability .....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Section 3: Financial Health .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Section 4 – Future Plans/Projections.....</b>	<b>44</b>

## **APPENDICES**

- **Cognia Accreditation**
- **Management Plan**
- **COVID 19 Plan**
- **5-Year Budget Document**



## APPLICANT INFORMATION COVER PAGE

Charter School Name Knowledge Academy

Charter School Address 5320 Hickory Hollow Pkwy, TN 37013

Charter School Phone (615) 810-8370

Charter Sponsor Name Knowledge Academy Governing Board

Authorizer Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools

Charter School Primary Contact Eric Lewis, Executive Director

Primary Contact Cell  
Phone and Email elewis@kayouth.org; (772) 971-0280

Date Charter Awarded 2011

First Year of Operation 2012

Date Charter Expires May, 2022

Proposed Grade Levels and Student Enrollment for Next 10-Yr Term		
Year following renewal	Grade Levels	Total Student Enrollment
Year 1 2022-23	5-8	200
Year 2 2023-24	5-8	254
Year 3 2024-25	5-8	272
Year 4 2025-26	5-8	272
Year 5 2026-27	5-8	272
Year 6 2027-28	5-8	272
Year 7 2028-29	5-8	272
Year 8 2029-30	5-8	272
Year 9 2030-31	5-8	272
Year 10 2031-32	5-8	272



## Assurances

As the authorized representative of the sponsor, I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application for a charter renewal of Knowledge Academy is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

And if awarded a charter, the school will:

1. Operate as a public, non-sectarian, non-religious public school, with control of instruction vested in the governing body of the school under the general supervision of its authorizer and in compliance with the charter agreement and the Charter School Act;
2. Follow all federal, state, and local laws and regulations that pertain to the operation of a public school, unless waived according to TCA §49-13-111(p);
3. Provide special education services for students as provided in Tennessee Code Annotated Title 49, Chapter 10, Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Act, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
4. Adhere to all provisions of federal law relating to students who are limited English proficient (LEP), including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Opportunities Act of 1974 that are applicable to it;
5. Follow all federal and state laws and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, national origin, religion, ancestry, or need for special education services;
6. Comply with all provisions of the Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act of 2002, as amended;
7. Employ individuals to teach who hold a license to teach in a public school in Tennessee;
8. Comply with Open Meetings and Open Records laws (TCA §§ 8-44-101 et seq.; 10-7-503, 504);
9. Not charge tuition, except for students transferring from another district to the school pursuant to the local board's out-of-district enrollment policy and TCA §49-6-3003;
10. Follow state financial (budgeting and audit) procedures and reporting requirements according to TCA § 49-13-111, 120, and 127;
11. Require any member of the governing body, employee, officer, or other authorized person who receives funds, has access to funds, or has authority to make expenditures from funds, to give a surety bond in the form prescribed by TCA § 8-19-101;
12. Maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage;
13. Maintain all necessary permits, licenses, and certification related to fire, health, and safety within the school building and on school property;
14. Notify its authorizer immediately of any change in circumstances that may have a significant impact on the school's ability to fulfill its goals as stated in the charter; and
15. Submit a request to amend its charter if the school plan to make a change in its operations.

Signature: James B. Bristol

Title: Chairman

Date: 03/31/2021



## Executive Summary

Charters were intended to differ in fundamental ways from the district sector with four important elements: Innovation from the standard model; accountability based on outcomes as opposed to being process driven; autonomy to avoid innovation-strangling bureaucracy; and choice on the theory that schools should not be assigned based on address, but on where families believe their children have the best chance for success.

Knowledge Academy (KA) is such a place, with innovative instruction, rising academic outcomes, and families who have trusted our school to provide their most precious resource, their children, with the high quality educational experience and academic excellence that they have come to expect.

Knowledge Academy was opened in 2012 in the Antioch area of Nashville with enthusiastic community support and a plan to provide high quality education to a unique population of students who increasingly were majority Hispanic. Family education was included in Saturday school offerings with such classes for parents as GED preparation, finance and banking, job search, and resume building. The original mission of Knowledge Academy was to prepare students to make the best academic and social choices leading to a successful completion of a college degree. Our alumni will graduate college ready, connected to their community, and committed to public service.

### **Original Academic Focus and Plan**

The original academic plan for improving academics was through personalized instruction, social growth, and using existing knowledge to build on real world experiences that would make meaningful connections and apply new information as they prepared for college and career. Knowledge Academy would fulfill a need in the Antioch community for delivering high-quality educational experiences for all students. Goals included: 90% of students would demonstrate at least one year's longitudinal growth based on internal interim and summative assessments; 95% school wide attendance, student analysis of their own academic and behavioral goals on a weekly basis; and embedded teacher professional development.

Knowledge Academy was almost immediately a success, being named a Reward School for progress by the Tennessee Department of Education in 2014. The school enjoyed widespread community support and was seen as a model charter school. However, due to changing circumstances, the school did not make adequate progress with English Language Learners and was named a TSI school for 2019, and that designation carried over to 2020 due to the lack of state accountability testing during the pandemic year. We believe that, had state accountability testing occurred, KA would have been able to exit the TSI status, as will be seen in the academic section of this application.

### **Exciting and Bold Changes for Knowledge Academy in 2019**

In early 2019, the Knowledge Academy Board took the courageous and necessary step of removing the original founding President and hiring a Charter Management Organization (CMO), Noble Education Initiative (NEI), to partner with Knowledge Academies, which had grown to include an additional middle school and a high school. A defining year in KA's history, 2019-2020 proved that Knowledge Academy is focused on meeting the needs of students and



families and that we are deeply committed to serving our community. Knowledge Academy is actively working to repair relationships in our Antioch community and to dispel misinformation. Throughout the 2019-2020 school year, and continuing into the 2020-2021 school year, school team members have worked steadfastly to connect with students, families, and community members to ensure they are aware of the changes in school management and to rebuild a school culture focused on our four Cs – College, Community, Culture and Creativity. Knowledge Academy has also worked very closely with MNPS and earned its way off probationary status on December 18, 2020 and into a stronger partnership with our authorizer that continues to benefit our school, students, and families.

Partnering with Noble Education Initiative, Knowledge Academy has created an exemplary educational environment where students are explicitly taught how to take control of their own success. We intentionally foster a learning environment focused on personalized learning and challenging students, where each student understands their academic starting point, sets goals for growth, and also understands what is necessary to reach them. Due to this intense focus, Knowledge Academy students are invested in their own accomplishments, and meaningfully participate in the development of their learning paths. KA has been consistently closing achievement gaps, and the importance of doing so is a daily conversation with students and teachers. Through the use of the NEI Continuous Improvement Model (CIM), Knowledge Academy students are immersed in data-driven, standards-based instruction, every day all throughout the year, so end-of-year data will just confirm what we already know about student learning: our students are discovering how they learn best and how to help themselves, ensuring each student receives a world-class learning experience. Students at Knowledge Academy are becoming confident, self-directed learners who know that failure is never fatal, but is a part of the learning process, and it is the courage to continue learning that counts in the end. The outcome of this powerful investment into the lives of our students shows not only in our internal academic assessments, but also in the last state accountability assessment. KA's success rate far outpaced surrounding middle schools in all tested academic subjects, as seen in the Academic Section of this application.

We further distinguish investment in our students at Knowledge Academy with implementation of Attitude is Altitude (AiA), a robust social emotional learning (SEL) curriculum that challenges students to explore concepts of personal growth while gaining skills in critical thinking and interpersonal interaction. The curriculum teaches students five key principles in five different units, titled Self-Identify, Self-Image, Responsibility, Attitude, and Perseverance. An overwhelming body of research shows that a strong focus on social-emotional learning improves attitudes about school, increases prosocial behavior, reduces aggression, reduces involvement with the criminal justice system, and decreases mental health problems, and substance abuse. Our emphasis on the whole student with rigorous academics, social-emotional health and well-being, and family involvement has created an environment that allows students maximum success.

Knowledge Academy's CMO, NEI, has a long history of turnaround success and embodies all of the qualities of a high-performing organization. NEI's instructional approach is innovative and as a result of the increased autonomy offered to charter schools has led to tremendous growth and excellent results in the schools it has managed. In 2020, NEI underwent an intensive evaluation by Cognia, the national accrediting organization, and was awarded accreditation as an organization, in addition to the individual accreditation all KA schools hold. NEI continually



demonstrates a genuine commitment toward challenging students with equitable opportunities for all and ensures alignment of long-range planning and resource management of the key priorities of Knowledge Academy. Building on the school's solid foundation of effective operational practices and adherence to strong values, Knowledge Academies will continue to experience support and increasing success for all learners. (See Appendix 1, Cognia Accreditation Report).

### **A New Mission for Knowledge Academy**

The current mission of Knowledge Academy is to prepare students to make the best academic and social choices, leading to a successful life connected to college, community, creativity, and culture. Our alumni will graduate college ready and remain connected to their community. Our families will support the development of highly effective student leadership habits.

In addition, since NEI has partnered with the Knowledge Academy governing board, academic results have been on an upward trajectory, indicative of our continued commitment to serving the students and families of Antioch. While state assessments were suspended for 2019-20 due to COVID19, our internal assessments show reductions in students performing in the lowest tiers and upward movement across subgroups.

It is notable that achieving these results has been due to hard work on the part of our teachers, a solid plan, and a commitment to our families, not the least of which is that Knowledge Academy is the only public school in Nashville that has been open for in-person learning since the Metro Health Department gave permission in October. Knowledge Academy opened for in-person learning on October 12, 2020 and has been open every school day since.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our school in the renewal application. We are looking forward to ten more years of serving our community and our students, increasing equitable educational opportunities for the students and families we are privileged to serve.



## Section 1 – Academic Success

At Knowledge Academy (KA), everything we do is aligned to our strategic priorities: whole child learning, student and staff well-being, and a mindset and culture of continuous improvement.

**Teaching the whole child** is our core focus – that is, meeting the academic and social and emotional needs of all students drives the educational experience. Using a strengths-based approach, we integrate rigorous academic content with deeper learning and SEL (social and emotional learning) skills through a variety of engaging experiences, environments and relationships. Since learning opportunities occur both in the classroom and through mobile design – taking place anytime, anyplace – students learn *how to learn* on their own and with others. And since all students are encouraged to engage in meaningful service learning, they discover the joy of helping others, specifically how it benefits their own mental health and well-being.

**Student and staff well-being** is vital in creating a safe, positive, inclusive, supportive, challenging and hopeful learning environment. To achieve this end, social and emotional learning is not an extra, but rather foundational and deeply connected to how we prepare and support students to take ownership of their learning, their behavior, and ultimately their own success and happiness.

Knowing that teachers have the greatest single impact on student learning, staff well-being is prioritized by promoting a positive work culture that supports and celebrates team and personal growth. Moreover, administrators and teacher leaders at Knowledge Academy are accessible, actively listen, provide on-going feedback, openly share their own feelings and genuinely care for the welfare of their staff, their students and the families they serve.

Lastly, a **mindset and culture of continuous improvement** is how we operate. *Getting better at getting better* is threaded through everything we do. From teaching and learning to operations and finances, we take a disciplined and ongoing approach to improve student and system outcomes.

### Knowledge Academy Fall Survey 2020: TEACHER FEEDBACK

Q: How do your leaders make you feel supported?

- “My leaders make me feel supported by in many ways – by words of encouragement, helping with conflicts and being approachable and available.”
- “Dr. White is the most supportive person; I completely trust her 100%.”
- “My leaders continue to consult with me about my work, opinions and needs.”
- “Dr. White always has an open door to answer my questions.”
- “She (Dr. White) always makes sure we have what we need to make sure kids are successful.”

### Our Continuous Improvement Model (CIM): Closing Gaps, Ensuring Student Success





Knowledge Academy's CIM (NEI's education model) drives our entire academic plan. This model takes a school-wide approach to student learning where every staff member is responsible for the learning of every child. It is an "all hands-on deck" **response** to meet the needs of all students. It is a proven model in providing all students, including special populations, effective Tier I instruction and support for students when they struggle, meet or exceed expectations.

Our CIM is designed around four principles:

1. **Teaching guides** accurately and intentionally define the teaching and learning roadmap, providing the foundation for the responsive teaching cycle (i.e., plan, teach, assess, respond) that occurs *daily* in classrooms and *monthly* school-wide.
2. **Assessment** (particularly formative assessment) drives instruction; it serves as the bridge between teaching and learning in the responsive teaching cycle. Additionally, baseline data is analyzed and used to help all staff understand where individual students, cohorts of students and grade levels are "entering the learning," identifying prior learning gaps and areas of strength.
3. **Responsive teaching** is the result of classroom and school-wide formative assessment.
4. School leadership ensures the **fidelity of implementation** by:
  - a) Creating **conditions for learning**;
  - b) Establishing and supporting **Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)**; and
  - c) Consistently **monitoring** all aspects of the model for quality.

### **(1) Teaching Guides**

Several important teaching guides equip teachers with the resources they need to ensure all curriculum, assessment and instruction are aligned to the intent and rigor of the Tennessee Academic Standards (TAS). They include Instructional Focus Calendars (IFCs), Unit Maps, and Lesson Plans.

**Instructional Focus Calendars** map out access and pacing of all TAS over the course of the school year. Using a deconstructed set of standards as a base, we ensure students are learning, *and practicing with*, the right content, at the right levels, at the right time. The calendars begin at the start of the year and guarantee all standards assessed on required state testing are taught and mastered prior to the test. The calendar also establishes dates for the monthly IFC Assessment (i.e., *medium-cycle* formative assessment) to ensure adequate time is allocated to essential standards and enough time is provided for instruction in between assessment periods. Additionally, in the two months prior to testing, priority standards are revisited to ensure *mastery retention*.

This does not mean learning stops when state testing *would typically* begin. In fact, the opposite is true. Following state testing, students close out the year engaged in learning at their highest level of performance on the standards in ELA and math, and in other subjects, too.

**Unit Maps** contain big ideas and further information about the standards, including real-world applications and common misconceptions students have as they learn particular standards. The SEL competencies are intentionally embedded in the maps to ensure that students are learning and practicing SEL standards along with TAS (Tennessee Academic Standards). Teachers teach and assess 10 units of instruction with each unit containing clusters of standards that are



logically sequenced. Paired with the IFC Calendars, it is clear for teachers how they are progressing through the standards from novice performance to mastery.

From the Unit Maps, teachers create **Lesson Plans**, clarifying exactly which learning target(s), and at what level of performance, students are learning each day. Lesson plans provide the *daily* instructional focus. In most lessons, teaching is scaffolded to reach the full intent and rigor of the standards unless the scaffolding unfolds over a longer period of time. Students apply SEL skills as a seamless part of instruction. Also included within each lesson plan is the intentional use of classroom formative assessment where teachers assess FOR learning and plan, in advance, how they will respond to the data in real time.

## **(2) Assessment**

**Baseline data** serves as a starting point for instruction. It identifies the need for shifts in instruction that help every student behavioral intervention plans and allow for shifts in instruction that helps every student achieve progress and also aids in identification of any needs for additional intervention for at-risk or special populations students. It also aids in proper selection of skill acquisition activities and allows educators to determine appropriate interventions with a degree of accuracy that increases likelihood of student success.

All available **baseline data** of current students (i.e., high-stakes assessment data, results from the universal screener (i-Ready Diagnostic), other diagnostic data, attendance data, etc.) is used to guide and inform instruction and create student groupings from the outset of the school year. Each unit of instruction also begins with a pretest of the standards taught within the unit. The purpose of the pre-assessment is to measure where each student is “entering” the learning.

**Instructional Focus Calendar Assessments** measure the *taught curriculum* of the grade-level standards and show where each student is “exiting” the learning for the unit. These common assessments measure grade-level standards at progressive levels of performance, but do not exceed grade-level standards nor dip into standards from previous grade levels. They are administered in core subject areas 10 times a year.

With a continual stream of evidence provided by classroom formative assessment throughout the unit, the IFC Assessments *should* confirm what we already know. *When they don't, that is a red flag for us to review our IFC Calendars, Unit Maps, classroom observation data and more.* Immediately following the IFC Assessment, teachers conduct data chats in their PLC to plan for a school-wide response to the data.

The effective use of **classroom formative assessment** (i.e. *short-cycle* formative assessment) is critical. Built within daily lessons, teachers intentionally assess to see if students are on track. So, within each lesson plan, teachers share the learning target with students. The teacher might share the learning target to start the lesson, or the teacher might engage students in content first, having students “discover” the target. Then, at some point in the lesson, the teachers assess *all* students. In order for the teacher to take immediate formative action, teachers already have a plan for how to respond to the data collected. It is this use of assessment information that helps close the *daily* achievement gap.



### **(3) Responsive Teaching**

At Knowledge Academy, the responsive teaching cycle occurs at both the school and classroom level.

School-Wide Responsive Teaching. At the school-level, immediately following IFC Assessments, Knowledge Academy teachers meet in their PLCs with a school administrator and/or instructional coach for a Data Chat. Based on student mastery of the standards, teachers use the assessment data to organize students into either intervention or enrichment for a school-wide Success Block that occurs daily for 30 minutes.

**Data Chats** are critical in the school improvement process. They occur as one of the PLC team meetings immediately following the IFC Assessment. Teachers analyze the data to determine the support that each child needs based on the results. Teachers identify how to best cluster students for either intervention or enrichment. Our Data Chats are conducted in teams because we take a “school-wide” response to the data with every staff member vested in the achievement and growth of every student.

**Success Block** is a schoolwide effort that includes the use of IFC Assessments, grade-level data chats, and flexible grouping. Teachers and school administrators participate in training sessions related to Success Block and are guided through grade-level data chats to support full implementation of a daily 30-minute data-driven instructional focus period.

Success Block involves all instructional staff members and provides dedicated time and space needed for targeted remediation and enrichment. Students are strategically grouped with the teachers most successful in teaching the unit standards, working with students who require targeted remediation in order to reach mastery. For students who have mastered unit standards, enrichment activities are provided to stimulate continued learning and engagement. Success Block is instrumental in providing struggling students with the extra time and focus necessary to make gains in learning and nurtures professional collaboration among staff members. With the added combination of RTI<sup>2</sup>, tutoring, and push-in and pull-out supports, students are provided with the necessary support to ensure they are successful in meeting and at times, exceeding grade-level standards.

Classroom Responsive Teaching. At the classroom-level, immediately following the *all-response* formative check for understanding that occurs at a hinge-point in the lesson, teachers respond to the data in real time. Planned for in the lesson plan, teachers respond with either individual re-teaching for a few students at a convenient time during the period/block, whole group re-teaching if most students are off- track, small group re-teaching if students demonstrate a need for differentiated support, or the teacher “moves on” if most of the class is on track.

### **(4) Leadership—Ensuring Fidelity of Implementation**

To ensure the fidelity of implementation of Knowledge Academy’s CIM, school leadership establishes and supports conditions for learning and PLCs. They also monitor every aspect of the continuous improvement model for quality.

**Conditions for Learning.** At Knowledge Academy, leaders create, with staff, a school community that is safe, positive, inclusive, supportive, challenging and hopeful. Students are

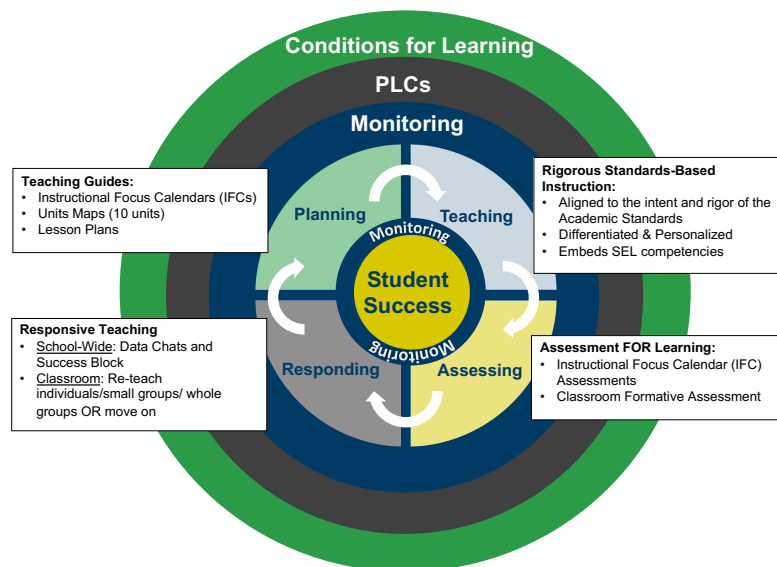


physically and emotionally safe, helping them remain academically engaged and willing to take risks, knowing they have multiple chances to learn something new. This is vital because our students need safe and supportive learning environments to succeed in school. These needs are particularly great for our students who are vulnerable, such as those who face the adversities of poverty or the challenges of disability. Students are also challenged with high expectations and rigorous instruction while receiving differentiated support to ensure growth and achievement, are taught how to set long- and short-term goals, and create action plans to meet their goals. The emphasis on goal setting allows our students to be *hopeful* – where they believe their future will be better than their present, and they have the power to make it so. Moreover, Knowledge Academy takes the nested approach of Tennessee’s Academic Standards delivered within a consistent and strong frame of social and emotional support where *students’ social and emotional development is as important as achieving academic standards.*

**Professional Learning Communities.** To support our mission to strengthen students academically, teachers participate in weekly **PLCs**. During PLCs, teachers are grouped together by grade level for collaborative planning. Teachers share ideas for the same grade-level standards, leaving meetings with multiple ways to effectively teach the upcoming standards. In this way, teachers are better prepared for upcoming lessons while gaining a deeper understanding of the standards themselves. Once a month, the PLC meeting time is used to conduct a data chat following the IFC Assessment.

**Monitoring.** Relates to the instructional processes and practices monitored to ensure curriculum and instruction is focused, data-driven and effective. This is evidenced by classroom walkthroughs, data chats, and the setting of expectations and accountability for rigorous standards-based instruction by school leadership.

The graphic below illustrates Knowledge Academy’s Continuous Improvement Model (CIM). The responsive teaching cycle—plan, teach, assess, respond— occurs at both the classroom and school-wide level. Notice how the cycle is supported by PLCs, conditions for learning, and consistent monitoring by leadership in order to close gaps and ensure **Student Success**.





## Our Results & Response Over Time: Academic Achievement and Growth

In April 2019, a review of academic achievement and growth by Noble Education Initiative and reported to the Knowledge Academy board demonstrated that KA continued to outperform the local middle schools in the Antioch cluster. The potential for academic achievement and growth at Knowledge Academy was not being met and opportunities to build achievement and growth was the focus of the management plan presented to the board. It was at this time that Noble Education Initiative (NEI) became the new charter management partner.

A management plan was formulated in May of 2019. This plan was compiled with extensive stakeholder involvement and constant visibility with Knowledge Academy parents, students, faculty and staff. Further communication and input was garnered from the Knowledge Academy board as steps for implementation of the plan were implemented. Finally, transparent and open communication with the MNPS Office of Charter Schools was maintained with biweekly updates as well as the submission of the full management plan, which was shared and discussed in real time (see Appendix 2 – Management Plan)

### Academic Results

2018 – 2019 TCAP Results Knowledge Academy (Source: TNDOE)		
<p><b>Success Rate:</b> 17.5%</p> <p><u>Success Rate by Student Group:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economically Disadvantaged: 11.3%</li> <li>• English Language Learner: 10.5%</li> <li>• Students with Disabilities: Not enough students</li> <li>• Black/Hispanic/Native American: 16.2%</li> <li>• Combined: 16.1%</li> </ul> <p><i>The one year success rate represents the percentage of students who scored on track or demonstrated mastery on annual state tests.</i></p>	<p><b>Achievement</b></p> <p>ELA: 15.9%</p> <p>Math: 19.7%</p> <p>Social Studies: 24.1%</p>	<p><b>Growth</b></p> <p>Overall: Level 4</p> <p><u>Growth Levels by Student Group:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economically Disadvantaged: 3</li> <li>• English Language Learner: 2</li> <li>• Students with Disabilities: 4</li> <li>• Black/Hispanic/Native American: 3</li> <li>• Combined: 3</li> </ul> <p><u>Growth Levels by Subject:</u></p> <p>ELA: 3</p> <p>Math: 4</p> <p>Social Studies: 3</p> <p>Science: N/A</p>

Overall growth on 2018-2019 TCAP was good (Level 4) with opportunity for growth in the EL subgroup remaining. Growth, always important, is particularly vital as achievement continues to increase. Achievement, although outpacing neighboring middle schools in the Antioch and Cane Ridge clusters, remains a focus for continued advancement.



As a result of the on-going pandemic, Tennessee chose to cancel state accountability assessments for the 2019-20 school year. However, the prior three years are listed in the chart below:

**English Language Arts**

Year	% Mastered / On Track	% Below Basic
2019	16%	34.4%
2018	16.1% <sup>flat</sup> (trend)	27.5% <sup>vv</sup> (trend)
2017	16.4%	31.4%

**Social Studies**

Year	% Mastered / On Track	% Below Basic
2019	24.3%	42%

**Mathematics**

Year	% Mastered / On Track	% Below Basic
2019	19.8% <sup>^^^</sup> (trend)	38.6%
2018	8.8% <sup>vv</sup> (trend)	51.1% <sup>^^^</sup>
2017	11.6%	45.0%

TVAAS	Level
Composite	4
Literacy	3
Math	4
Science	
Soc. St.	3

**Science**

Year	% Mastered / On Track	% Below Basic
2018	34.0% <sup>vv</sup> (trend)	37.1% <sup>^^^</sup>
2017	54.5%	21.4%

KA's success rate on state accountability testing for 2018-19 far outpaced the schools from which we draw most of our students, as seen in the tables below. The numbers represent the percentage of students who scored "on-track" or "mastered" on state accountability tests. As stated above, Tennessee chose to suspend testing for the 2019-20 school year due to the pandemic.

<b>Comparison of 2018-19 State Accountability Data for Knowledge Academy and Schools in the Surrounding Area</b>				
<b>School</b>	<b>Overall Success Rate (Percent of students scoring on track or mastered )</b>	<b>ELA</b>	<b>Math</b>	<b>Social Studies</b>
<b>Knowledge Academy</b>	<b>17.5%</b>	<b>15.9%</b>	<b>19.7%</b>	<b>24.1%</b>
Antioch Middle	11.4%	12.2%	9.6%	11.8%
John F. Kennedy Middle	13.2%	11.2%	15.9%	12.2%
Apollo Middle	10.1%	11.6%	8.9%	11.4%
McMurray Middle	14.2%	12.8%	16.3%	13.3%
Wright Middle	7.3%	9.4%	7.2%	14%



The following chart show the success rate percentage of the various subgroups for the 2018-19 school year. Once again, Knowledge Academy is outpacing the surrounding school.

Comparison of 2018-19 State Accountability Subgroup Data for Knowledge Academy and Schools in the Surrounding Area					
School	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities	Combined	Black/Hispanic/Native American
<b>Knowledge Academy</b>	<b>11.3%</b>	<b>10.5%</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>16.1%</b>	<b>16.2%</b>
Antioch Middle	10.2%	8.8%	10.1%	10.8%	9.9%
John F. Kennedy	9.7%	9.7%	10.3%	12.4%	12.6%
Apollo Middle	8.3%	6.8%	10.8%	9.1%	8.6%
McMurray Middle	12.8%	9.9%	7.5%	13.5%	14.7%
Wright Middle	6.9%	N/A	7.2%	7.1%	6.4%

As a follow-up to the charts above, science was excluded from state accountability testing in 2018-19 due to the science standards being new.

It is worthy of noting that Knowledge Academy students achieved these gains immediately after the Knowledge Academy board brought in Noble Education Initiative as its CMO.

Knowledge Academy now uses the i-Ready Diagnostic to set targets for two types of growth: typical growth and stretch growth.

- **Typical Growth** marks the annual growth (from fall to spring) for an average student taking the i-Ready Diagnostic. It is based on the observed growth and performance of the millions of students nationwide who have taken the i-Ready Diagnostic. Typical Growth is therefore a descriptive measure of growth; it is not intended to serve as a recommendation for sufficient growth, but it does offer a useful reference point to identify students who are lagging or surpassing median growth.
- **Stretch Growth** sets an ambitious but attainable goal for student growth. The targets for Stretch Growth were set based on observations of the growth of a national sample of students who started at each placement level and achieved grade-level proficiency over time. For students placing below grade level, achieving Stretch Growth is a path to an “On Grade Level, Mid” placement. For students who are already on grade level at the beginning of the year, Stretch Growth provides a target for attaining or maintaining an “On Grade Level, Late” or “Above Grade Level” placement.



**Correlation between i-Ready Diagnostic and TNReady**

Curriculum and Associates, in partnership with the Educational Research Institute of America (ERIA), conducted a large-scale study on the relationship between i-Ready Diagnostic and the 2017 TN Ready. The research found a high correlation between i-Ready Diagnostic and TN Ready. **i-Ready was also shown to accurately predict end-of-year proficiency rates.**

At Knowledge Academy, we administer the i-Ready Diagnostic three times a year. This allows us to track reading and math achievement and growth over time. Found below are our results to date for the two school years that NEI served as Knowledge Academy’s operator as well as our response to areas of deficiency, professional development to support teacher effectiveness and innovative practices to support learning in these unprecedented times:

**2019-2020 School Year**

**2019-2020 i-Ready Mid-Year Data: Reading and Math**

Following Diagnostic 2, we conducted an analysis of the first two administrations of the *i-Ready Diagnostic* administered in reading and mathematics. Found below is key information gleaned from our results: two tables and six bar graphs with analysis, including:

- (1) Participation Rates - Reading and Math
- (2) Overall Placement of i-Ready Tier – Reading and Math
- (3) Percentage of Students Increasing in Diagnostic Tier or Remaining Tier 1 - Reading and Math
- (4) Percentage of Students Making i-Ready Grade-Level Gains from Diagnostic 1 to Diagnostic 2 by Grade Level - Reading and Math

**(1) Participation Rates - Reading and Math**

Reading		
	Diagnostic 1	Diagnostic 2
# of Students Tested	122	129
# of Students Enrolled	148	148
Participation Rate	82%	87%

Math		
	Diagnostic 1	Diagnostic 2
# of Students Tested	130	138
# of Students Enrolled	148	148
Participation Rate	88%	93%

As can be readily seen, we had an increase in the participation rate for both subjects tested. In reading, although seven additional students participated in Diagnostic 2, the students who were no longer enrolled at Knowledge Academy for Diagnostic 2 were removed from the Diagnostic 1 data to ensure an accurate comparison. The same process was used in determining an accurate participation rate for mathematics.

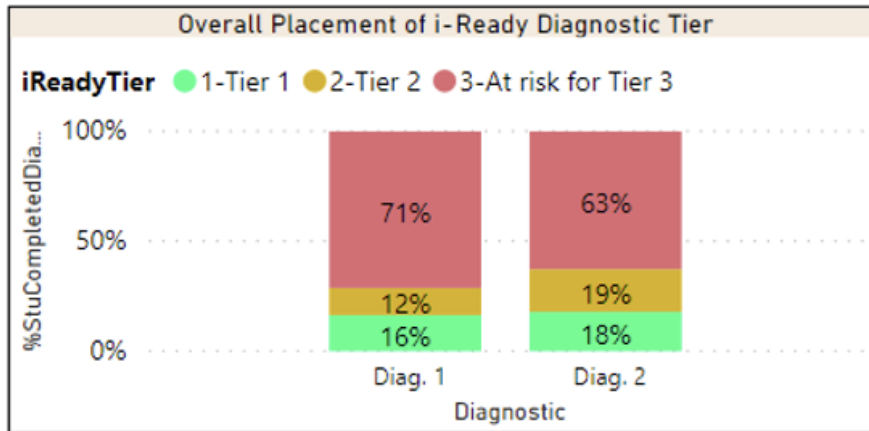


## (2) Overall Placement of i-Ready Tier of All Students – Reading and Math

These bar graphs compare the percentage of tested students placed in each i-Ready Tier from Diagnostic 1 to Diagnostic 2.

- Tier 1 students are performing on or above grade level.
- Tier 2 students are performing one level below grade level.
- Tier 3 students are performing more than one level below grade level

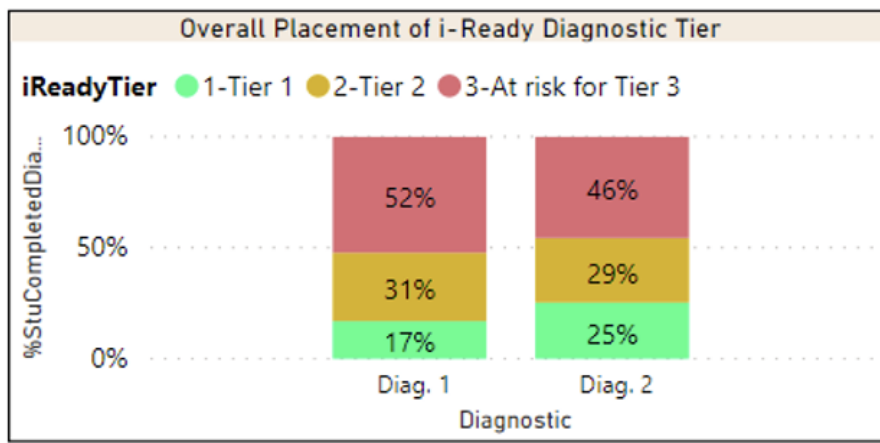
### READING



What do these Reading data show?

- The percentage of students in Tier 3 decreased from Diagnostic 1 to Diagnostic 2 by 8%.
- The percentage of students in Tier 1 increased from Diagnostic 1 to Diagnostic 2 by 2%.

### MATH



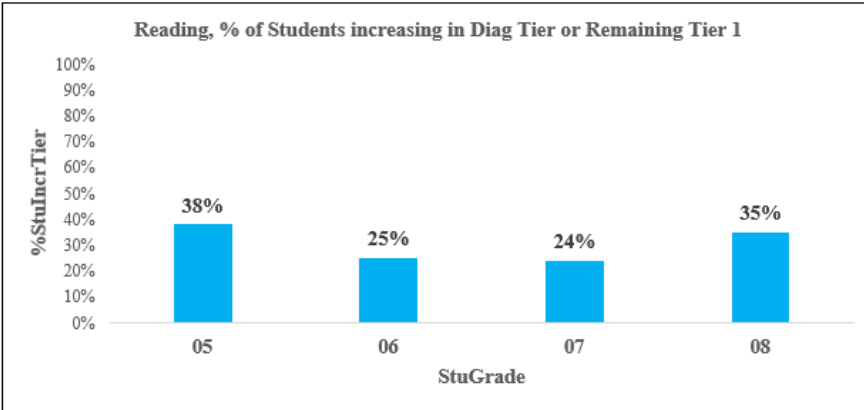
What do these Math data show?

- The percentage of students in Tier 3 decreased from Diagnostic 1 to Diagnostic 2 by 6%
- The percentage of students in Tier 1 increased from Diagnostic 1 to Diagnostic 2 by 8%.

**(3) Percentage of Students Increasing in Diagnostic Tier or Remaining Tier 1 - Reading and Math**

These bar graphs show the percentage of students who either increased one Tier or remained in Tier 1 from Diagnostic 1 to Diagnostic 2.

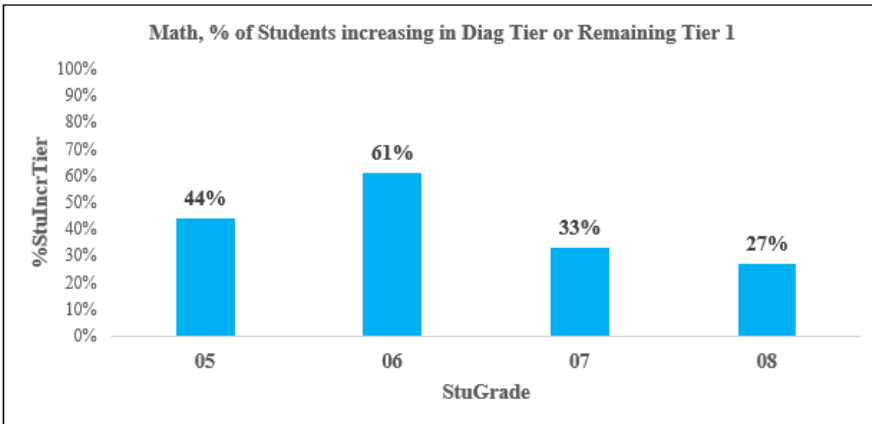
**READING**



What do these Reading data show?

- Grade 5: 38% of 5th graders increased one Tier or remained in Tier 1.
- Grade 6: 25% of 6th graders increased one Tier or remained in Tier 1.
- Grade 7: 24% of 7th graders increased one Tier or remained in Tier 1.
- Grade 8: 35% of 8th graders increased one Tier or remained in Tier 1.

**MATH**



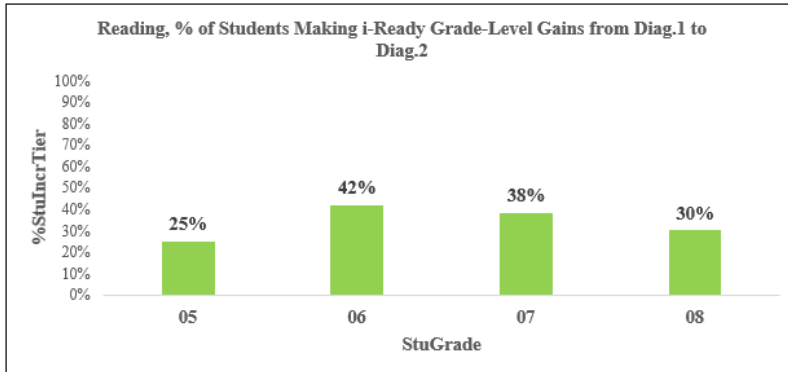
What do these Math data show?

- Grade 5: 44% of 5th graders increased one Tier or remained in Tier 1.
- Grade 6: 61% of 6th graders increased one Tier or remained in Tier 1.
- Grade 7: 33% of 7th graders increased one Tier or remained in Tier 1.
- Grade 8: 27% of 8th graders increased one Tier or remained in Tier 1.

**(4) Percentage of Students Making i-Ready Grade-Level Gains from Diagnostic 1 to Diagnostic 2 by Grade Level - Reading and Math**

These bar graphs show the percentage of students who made *i-Ready Grade-Level Gains* from Diagnostic 1 to Diagnostic 2. An i-Ready Grade-Level Gain is achieved when a student moves a grade-level regardless of their current Tier placement. For example, a grade 5 student who moves from grade-level three to grade-level four has made an i-Ready Grade-Level Gain.

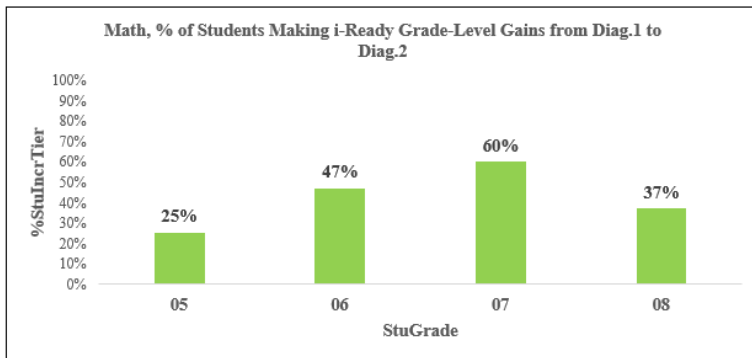
**READING**



What do these Reading data show?

- Grade 5: 25% of Tier 2 and 3 students made i-Ready Grade-Level Gains.
- Grade 6: 42% of Tier 2 and 3 students made i-Ready Grade-Level Gains.
- Grade 7: 38% of Tier 2 and 3 students made i-Ready Grade-Level Gains.
- Grade 8: 30% of Tier 2 and 3 students made i-Ready Grade-Level Gains.

**Math**



What do these Math data show?

- Grade 5: 28% of Tier 2 and 3 students made i-Ready Grade-Level Gains.
- Grade 6: 47% of Tier 2 and 3 students made i-Ready Grade-Level Gains.
- Grade 7: 60% of Tier 2 and 3 students made i-Ready Grade-Level Gains.
- Grade 8: 37% of Tier 2 and 3 students made i-Ready Grade-Level Gains.



## **Knowledge Academy's Mid-Year Response for the 2019-2020 School Year**

At mid-year, our students had made strong gains in math, with nearly 60% of students now performing in either Tier 1 or Tier 2. In reading, on the other hand, the gains were less with 60% of students still performing in Tier 3.

Although we celebrated pockets of success in various grade levels, our school response included:

- Increasing students' i-Ready minutes so they are learning, *and practicing*, the right standards at the right levels in order to close learning gaps in reading and math.
- Closely monitoring reading achievement in grades 5 – 8, and math achievement in grades 7 and 8, weekly. This included monitoring data gleaned from instructional software such as i-Ready, Lexia and Mathia. However, it also included data from day-to-day classroom assignments and assessments.
- Dedicating Success Block to *reading* instruction only. Using IFC Assessment results of *taught* standards, students received targeted intervention on priority standards daily. During Success Block students received further instruction from the teachers most successful in teaching particular standards during the unit.
- Honing in on our focus during PLCs to track individual student data on our data wall. Weekly, teachers discussed the progress their students were making during Success Block as well as the strategies they were implementing to target their specific needs.

## **Spring 2020**

Like the rest of the country, our staff and students suddenly found themselves in the middle of a global pandemic, teaching and learning at home. Our leadership quickly made adjustments so that students remained connected to their Knowledge Academy family. Teachers connected with students through their virtual classes and also with calls home. School staff also made home visits, called families, assisted with needs, and partnered with community organizations such as Infinity Dental and the National Black Police Officers organization to provide meals to our students and families. Additionally, Meharry Medical College and their partner organizations hosted drive through flu shots and pediatric immunizations for our students on KA's site.

To keep learning moving forward, we quickly shifted to a mobile classroom model where learning takes place anytime, anyplace. Providing both technology and print materials as needed, students continued to receive instruction. We faced challenges, such as students not having appropriate internet access, but we immediately sought solutions for children to gain access by providing hot spots and additional support for struggling families. At KA, we continue to come up with innovative strategies to ensure our students are receiving the highest quality educational opportunities. As such, we have just purchased a brand new Chromebook for every student, with all programs and apps needed already loaded and ready to use. They have been distributed to students and we have also refurbished the older computers so we have a ready supply in the event a computer must come in for repair. Our students continue to be able to take full advantage of our mobile learning opportunities – every school day in every way.

Our emphasis on the whole student has continued, with rigorous academics, social-emotional health and well-being, and family involvement, creating an environment that maximizes student success while allowing teachers and staff to ensure wrap-around services are offered where needed and continue with our strong social emotional focus. We also continued with our "Bless

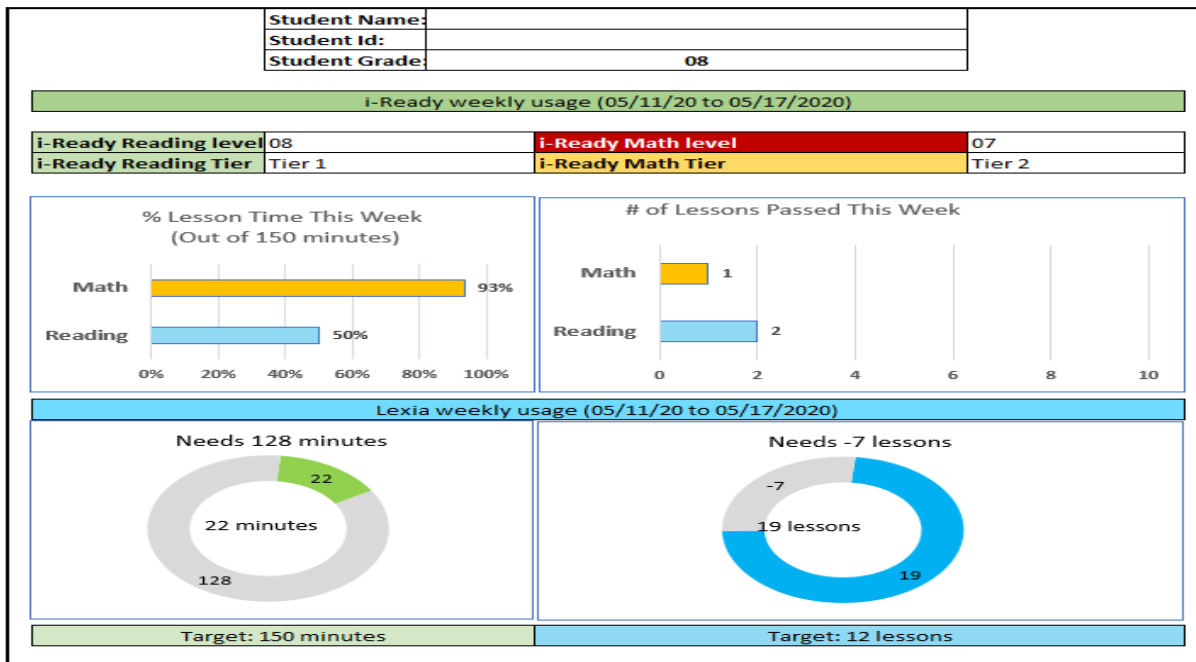


the Mic” speaker and assembly schedule through Zoom by hosting multiple schoolwide broadcasts with internationally known speakers.

Because we wanted to better prepare our staff for administering assessments when administered remotely and in the absence of teacher monitoring, students did not take the i-Ready Diagnostic 3. However, we still prioritized communicating with parents and students about their academic and social-emotional progress. Along with ongoing communication about attendance, online participation, assignment completion and assignment quality, parents and students also received a weekly update about their instructional software usage (number of minutes) and passing of online lessons. This provided parents with an easy to read update of their child’s time on task and achievement that they could easily help monitor as they too were adjusting to a new normal.

The weekly updates provided the following information:

- Student name, student ID and student grade
- I-Ready Tier placement for both math and reading (AP 2)
- I-Ready % lesson time that week (Out of 150 minutes)
- I-Ready # of lessons passed for that particular week
- Lexia number of minutes spent by the student with a target set at 150 minutes of usage per week
- Lexia number of lessons passed by the student with a target set at 12 lessons per week





As we quickly had to pivot our approach to learning in March 2020, our students were not the only ones who required support during this time, but our teachers as well. Beginning one week after our Spring Break, we were prepared to support teachers through this transition by providing opportunities for professional development. For ten weeks, our teachers were offered a variety of training, from guided reading to data analysis and use, to fit their needs in order to provide world-class instruction to our students while in the virtual setting.

During the last two weeks of professional development provided, teachers shifted their focus to how they would apply what they had learned over the course of eight weeks into the upcoming 20-21 school year, anticipating they would at least some of the time be in a mobile learning environment.

NOBLE EDUCATION INITIATIVE		APRIL 27 <sup>TH</sup> – MAY 1 <sup>ST</sup> PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	
Monday, Apr. 27	10:00 – 11:00am 6:30pm	Guided Reading K-8 NEI's Book Reading on Facebook Live @nobleeducationinitiative	
Tuesday, Apr. 28	9:00 – 10:00am 10:00 – 11:00am 12:00 – 1:00pm 1:00 – 2:00pm 3:00 – 4:00pm	Angry Teachers 2: Interactive Lessons and Engaging Tools Guided Reading K-8 Conflict Resolution: Parents, Team Members, and Students Guided Reading K-8 Part 2 Angry Teachers 2: Interactive Lessons and Engaging Tools	
Wednesday, Apr. 29	9:00 – 10:00am 10:00 – 11:00am 12:00 – 1:00pm 1:30 – 2:30pm 4:00 – 5:00pm	The Gateway to Smithsonian Educational Resources Guided Reading K-8 Part 2 Conflict Resolution: Parents, Team Members, and Students Virtual Math Instruction in 2 <sup>nd</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> Grades Angry Teachers 2: Interactive Lessons and Engaging Tools	
Thursday, Apr. 30	9:00 – 10:00am 9:30 – 10:30am 12:00 – 1:00pm 1:30 – 2:30pm 3:00 – 4:00pm 4:00 – 5:00pm	Angry Teachers 2: Interactive Lessons and Engaging Tools Creating Hyperdocs Guided Reading K-8 Part 2 Conflict Resolution: Parents, Team Members, and Students Virtual Math Instruction in 2 <sup>nd</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> Grades Creating Hyperdocs The Gateway to Smithsonian Educational Resources	
Friday, May 1	9:00 – 10:00am 11:30am – 12:30pm 1:00 – 2:00pm	Angry Teachers 3: Do Angry Birds Have a Choice to be Angry? Guided Reading K-8 Part 2 Virtual Math Instruction in 2 <sup>nd</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> Grades	

## Summer 2020

Knowledge Academy leadership attended professional development to learn best practices, network with other thought leaders, and reflect on how to improve current organizational effectiveness. Through collaboration and discussion, the leadership of Knowledge Academy created their master schedule of how to effectively implement the mobile classroom beginning the first day of school. While in-person instruction did not occur in August 2020, our team was prepared when this opportunity opened itself.

Professional development for our teachers was provided over the summer, in-person, three weeks prior to school opening through NEI's Teacher Academy. During these three weeks, our teachers prepared for our new school model and had the opportunity to practice using our Meeting Owl cameras. In the midst of continuing to work through the pandemic, teachers were separated into three small groups and were trained both synchronously and asynchronously in order to understand how to structure their lessons, as well as experience what their students would be experiencing once the opportunity arose for both in-person and virtual participation. Knowledge Academy staff members were successfully able to navigate in-person professional development with no COVID infections or community spread from July 14, 2020 forward.

## 2020-2021 School Year

With strong summer preparation, leaders, teachers, and students alike hit the ground running to start the 2020-2021 school year. For the first time, we implemented Personalized *Mobile* Learning Plans.

**Personalized Mobile Learning Plans**, PMLPs, help students achieve *personalized* short- and long-term academic, personal and future goals. PMLPs are *mobile* because they provide a roadmap for students to access and expand their curriculum any time, any place. At Knowledge

Academy, students developed their PMLPs with their teachers and parents to ensure that all stakeholders are invested in their success.

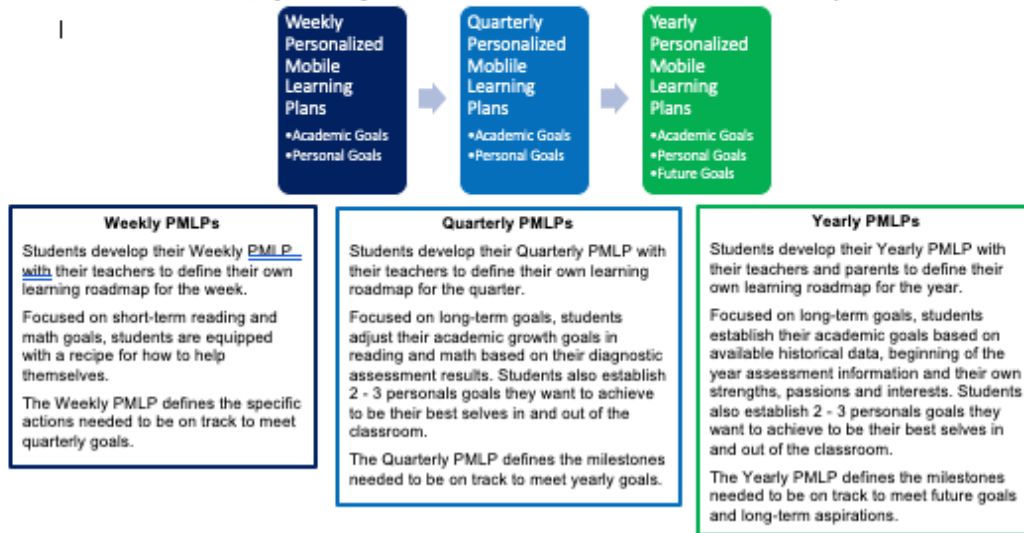


### Overview of Personalized Mobile Learning Plans

**Personalized Mobile Learning Plans, PMLPs**, help students achieve personalized short- and long-term academic and personal goals. PMLPs are mobile because they provide a roadmap for students to access and expand curriculum any time, any place. Students develop their PMLPs with their teachers and parents to ensure that all stakeholders are invested in their success.

**PMLPs:**

- State specific academic and personal goals to meet the academic, social, behavioral and emotional needs of each student
- Clarify how each goal will be measured using success criteria – what the goal looks and sounds like when achieved
- Include well-defined actions plans with action steps, resources and time frames
- State the evidence, *aligned to the goal and success criteria*, that students will use to “show what they know and can do”



**PMLPs:**

- State specific academic and personal goals to meet the academic, social, behavioral and emotional needs of each student
- Clarify how each goal will be measured using success criteria – what the goal looks and sounds like when achieved
- Include well-defined actions plans with action steps, resources and time frames
- State the evidence, *aligned to the goal and success criteria*, that students will use to “show what they know and can do”

Spending the time to ensure that every student had a personal learning roadmap in hand has been vital to success in our mobile school model. As an important part of the baseline data to inform long- and short-term goal setting, we administered the *I-Ready Diagnostic* to assess where each student, and cohorts of students, was entering the learning. Even with the pandemic, and students learning on mobile platforms for 2020-21, 85% of KA students have achieved typical growth in reading by mid-year, and 50% of KA students achieved typical growth in math.

Although meeting the academic, social and emotional needs of our students was always a priority at Knowledge Academy, this year our students and staff needed social-emotional support more than ever before. We intentionally adopted *Nick Vujicic's Attitude is Altitude (AIA) Social and Emotional Learning Curriculum*, AIA for short. We chose AIA because of its positive



message of hope: where students learn that their future can be better than their present, and they have the power to make it happen. As the authors of their own lives, AIA permeates our school culture as our students are explicitly taught how to take ownership of their own behavior, their own success and ultimately their own happiness. With a strong focus on practices such as goal setting, AIA was a great fit for the kind of culture we foster at Knowledge Academy.

### The AIA Advantage for Students

- Students engage in repeated practice of key SEL skills that are vital to their success in school and in life.
- Students develop self-efficacy and collective efficacy.
- Students apply their SEL skills through meaningful, project-based learning aligned to rigorous academic standards.
- Students are taught skills that foster hope which leads to greater happiness and health.
- Inspired by Nick Vujicic, students discover that their greatest challenges can become strengths that help them live their best lives!

To support the implementation of AIA, our teachers received a full day of on-site professional learning, feedback from the AIA Trainer as they implemented key SEL skills in their classrooms, follow up webinars to share best practices and virtual coaching as needed.

### 2020-2021 I-Ready Comparison Report I: Reading and Math

Now at mid-year, following Diagnostic 2, we conducted an analysis of the first two administrations of the *i-Ready Diagnostic* administered in reading and mathematics. Found below is key information gleaned from our results: two tables and six bar graphs with analysis, including:

- (1) Participation Rates - Reading and Math
- (2) Overall Placement of i-Ready Tier – Reading and Math
- (3) Percentage of Students Increasing in Diagnostic Tier or Remaining Tier 1 - Reading and Math
- (4) Percentage of Students Making i-Ready Grade-Level Gains from Diagnostic 1 to Diagnostic 2 by Grade Level - Reading and Math

#### (1) Participation Rates - Reading and Math

Reading		
	Diagnostic 1	Diagnostic 2
# of Students Tested	90	117
# of Students Enrolled	121	121
Participation Rate	74%	97%

Math		
	Diagnostic 1	Diagnostic 2
# of Students Tested	96	120
# of Students Enrolled	121	121
Participation Rate	79%	99%

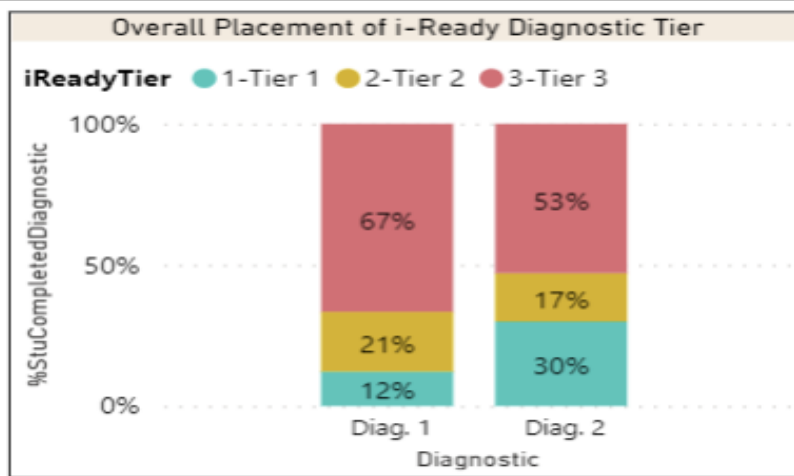


As you can see, we had an increase in the participation rate for both subjects tested. In reading, although 27 additional students participated in Diagnostic 2, the students who were no longer enrolled at Knowledge Academy for Diagnostic 2 were removed from the Diagnostic 1 data to ensure an accurate comparison. The same process was used in determining an accurate participation rate for mathematics.

## (2) Overall Placement of i-Ready Tier of All Students – Reading and Math

These bar graphs compare the percentage of tested students placed in each i-Ready Tier from Diagnostic 1 to Diagnostic 2.

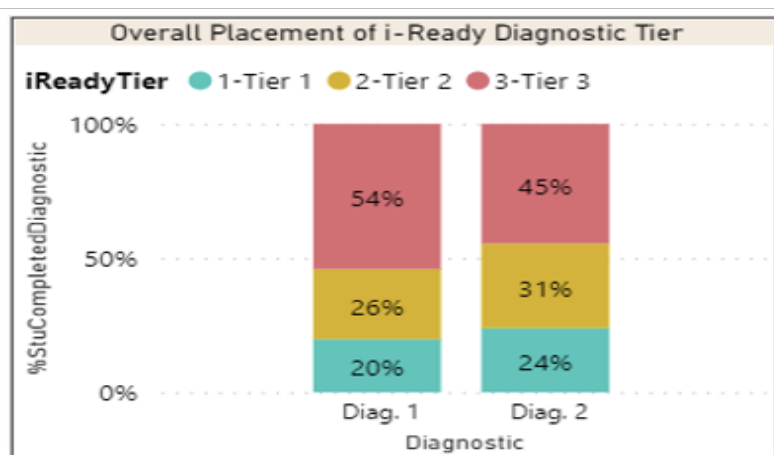
### READING



What do these Reading data show?

- The percentage of students in Tier 3 decreased from Diagnostic 1 to Diagnostic 2 by 14%.
- The percentage of students in Tier 1 increased from Diagnostic 1 to Diagnostic 2 by 18%.

### Math



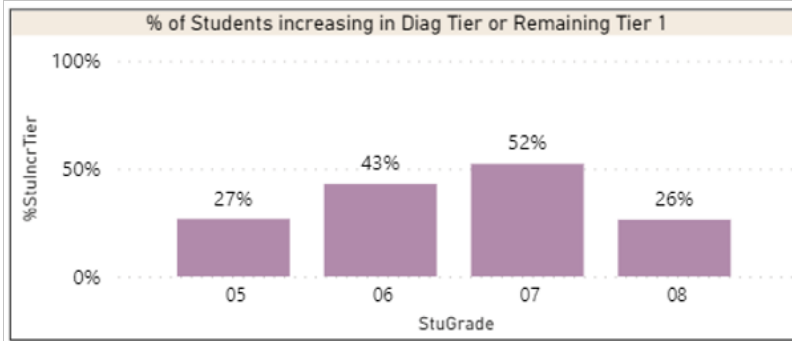
What do these Math data show?

- The percentage of students in Tier 3 decreased from Diagnostic 1 to Diagnostic 2 by 9%.
- The percentage of students in Tier 1 increased from Diagnostic 1 to Diagnostic 2 by 4%.

### (3) Percentage of Students Increasing in Diagnostic Tier or Remaining Tier 1 - Reading and Math

These bar graphs show the percentage of students who either increased one Tier or remained in Tier 1 from Diagnostic 1 to Diagnostic 2.

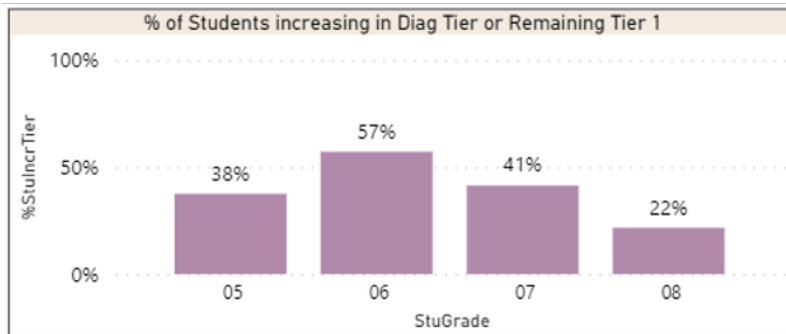
#### READING



What do these Reading data show?

- Grade 5: 27% increased one Tier or remained in Tier 1.
- Grade 6: 43% increased one Tier or remained in Tier 1.
- Grade 7: 52% increased one Tier or remained in Tier 1.
- Grade 8: 26% increased one Tier or remained in Tier 1.

#### MATH



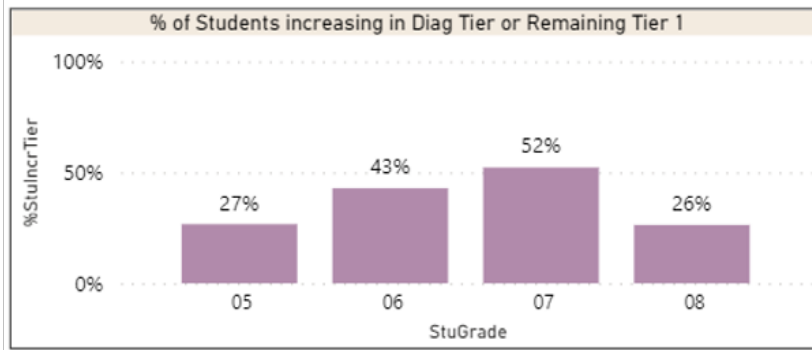
What do these Math data show?

- Grade 5: 38% increased one Tier or remained in Tier 1.
- Grade 6: 57% increased one Tier or remained in Tier 1.
- Grade 7: 41% increased one Tier or remained in Tier 1.
- Grade 8: 22% increased one Tier or remained in Tier 1.

### (4) Percentage of Students Making i-Ready Grade-Level Gains from Diagnostic 1 to Diagnostic 2 by Grade Level - Reading and Math

These bar graphs show the percentage of students who made i-Ready Grade-Level Gains from Diagnostic 1 to Diagnostic 2. An i-Ready Grade-Level Gain is achieved when a student moves a grade-level regardless of their current Tier placement. For example, a grade 5 student who moves from grade-level three to grade-level four has made an i-Ready Grade-Level Gain.

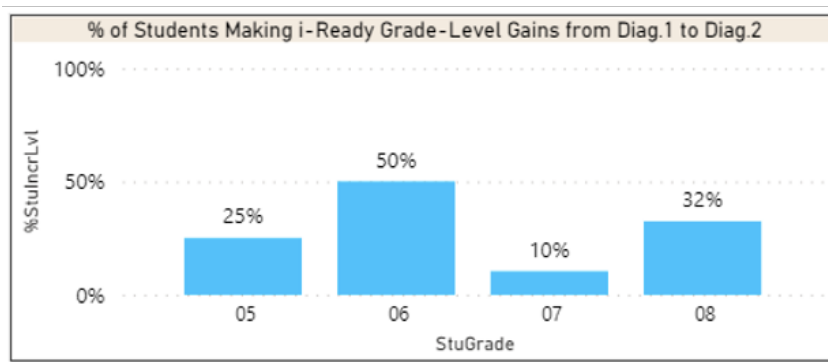
## READING



What do these Reading data show?

- Grade 5: 27% increased one Tier or remained in Tier 1.
- Grade 6: 43% increased one Tier or remained in Tier 1.
- Grade 7: 52% increased one Tier or remained in Tier 1.
- Grade 8: 26% increased one Tier or remained in Tier 1.

## MATH



What do these Math data show?

- Grade 5: 25% of Tier 2 and 3 students made i-Ready Grade-Level Gains.
- Grade 6: 50% of Tier 2 and 3 students made i-Ready Grade-Level Gains.
- Grade 7: 10% of Tier 2 and 3 students made i-Ready Grade-Level Gains.
- Grade 8: 32% of Tier 2 and 3 students made i-Ready Grade-Level Gains.

### Knowledge Academy's Mid-Year Response for the 2020-2021 School Year

At mid-year, our students have made gains in reading and significant gains in math. In both subjects the percentage of students in Tier 1 increased and the percentage of students in Tier 3 decreased from Diagnostic 1 to Diagnostic 2. Moreover, gains were made by students who are learning at school (in-person learners) and our students who are learning from home (mobile students).

Although we celebrated our success in various grade levels and learning domains, we are continually reviewing our school and responding to student needs, including:



- Hiring a highly experience, effective, and licensed school leader who began in January, 2021 to bolster and extend our efforts to provide rigorous, high-quality instruction to every student every day.
- Creating a new Director of Curriculum and Instruction position and hiring an experienced, highly qualified educator to oversee academic excellence and coach teachers on a real-time basis.
- The changes at the school leader (principal) level and the new Director of Curriculum reflect not only KA's commitment to our students, but also to our staff – to allow them opportunities to grow and progress in their professional development and career paths.
- Renewing our commitment to our students with disabilities and EL learners by hiring a Dean of Student Supports to oversee our programming and ensuring all students are receiving the instruction and programming needed for them to be successful.
- Utilizing personalized phone calls, emails, Schoology announcements, and call-outs to encourage students to return to in-person participation.
- Setting aggressive goals to increase the percentage of students moving into Tier 1 and out of Tier 3 on I-Ready Diagnostic 3
- Adjusting mid-year PMLP academic and personal goals for all students.



## Section 2 – Operational Stability

**a. Address progress toward meeting operational goals outlined in the charter agreement.**

In terms of all school operations, we have met our broad goal of improving all operational aspects of the school by expanding the availability of student transportation services, creating more visibility and transparency regarding school finances by developing and providing numerous financial reports, seeking and receiving school-wide accreditation through Cognia, providing enhanced professional and career development opportunities through our newly approved NEPP program which partners with the ASD, increasing communication with parents via fall and spring surveys, and swiftly responding to operational changes and limitations resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic in order to remain open and provide students and families with a viable, blended model of both in-person and remote learning options.

More specifically, Knowledge Academy has established internal operational goals to either meet or exceed standards on all operational components of the State of Tennessee’s Charter School Performance Framework. Please note that the performance framework analysis was last completed for the 2018-2019 school year. In both the 2018 and 2019 school years, Knowledge Academy either exceeded or met the standards for Academic Growth, Chronic Absenteeism, Suspension Rate, Student Attendance Rate, and School Culture. In the 2018 school year, KA also met standards for all organizational metrics, including the overall Education Program, Financial Management, Governance/Reporting, Students/Employees, Environment, and Obligations.

**b. Discuss student enrollment over the course of the current charter term. Is the school operating at maximum capacity? How many students are currently on the wait list and at what grade level?**

Please see below for a breakdown of student enrollment at Knowledge Academy since the 2012-2013 school year:

- 2020-2021: 125
- 2019-2020: 146
- 2018-2019: 262
- 2017-2018: 286
- 2016-2017: 279
- 2015-2016: 302
- 2014-2015: 291
- 2013-2014: 210
- 2012-2013: 144

As shown in the data above, enrollment increased from 2012-2013 until 2015-2016, and started to decline beginning in the 2016-2017 school year with the opening of our sister campus, Knowledge Academy at the Crossing. Currently, the school is not enrolled to capacity and as such, does not have any students on the waitlist. It’s important to note that decreases in student enrollment relative to the 2015-16 to 2016-17 school years can be attributed to the opening of the governing board’s second middle school, Knowledge Academy at the Crossings. Further



attrition has taken place over the past two years when the school has been repeatedly threatened with imminent and immediate closure, and the charter revoked by the authorizer in 2019, only to be overturned by the State Board of Education in the same year.

**c. Have the student demographics changed since the initial charter application, and if so, how have you addressed this in your academic and operational processes?**

The table below shows KA’s student demographic breakdown by year beginning in the 2012-2013 school year.

Year	Economically Disadvantaged	Black	Hispanic	White	Minority	Limited English Proficiency	Students with Disabilities
2020-21	38%	28%	47%	24%	76%	38%	16%
2019-20	30%	30%	53%	16%	84%	52%	17%
2018-19	36%	34%	51%	14%	86%	19%	12%
2017-18	41%	34%	49%	16%	84%	18%	14%
2016-17	42%	41%	42%	16%	84%	23%	13%
2015-16	58%	49%	33%	16%	84%	12%	10%
2014-15	85%	42%	32%	25%	75%	17%	11%
2013-14	89%	43%	34%	23%	77%	17%	12%
2012-13	79%	51%	28%	20%	80%	18%	10%

As seen in the table above, KA’s economically disadvantaged population has decreased since the 2012-13 school year, while the percentage of limited English proficient students and students with disabilities has increased. As such, we have made a concentrated effort to increase the number of staff and support personnel, including personnel that are part of contracted services, specializing in the instruction of both limited-English proficient students and students with disabilities to meet the evolving needs of our student population. Knowledge Academy is also supporting our special populations students by sponsoring full scholarships to Trevecca Nazarene University’s EL endorsement studies. This scholarship is available to all staff who want to expand their professional certifications to include EL endorsements.

**d. Describe any trends noticed in student attrition rates and how leaders have addressed any issues with attrition.**

As shown in the student enrollment figures on page 28, Knowledge Academy experienced its most significant enrollment attrition starting in the 2019-2020 school year. This significant loss in students was most impacted by the constant threat of the Metro Nashville Public Schools Board of Education’s potential decision to revoke the charter for Knowledge Academy. Subsequently, in August, 2019, the Metro Nashville Public Schools Board of Education voted to revoke Knowledge Academy’s charter. Subsequent articles in [The Tennessean](#) announced that all three schools in the KA network would close by December, 2019 ([The Tennessean, Nashville School Board Votes to Close Knowledge Academies, 8/27/2019](#)) ([The Tennessean, What happens next for the 600 Nashville students enrolled at Knowledge Academies charter schools?, 8/29/19](#)). Television news media continued to promote the narrative that the school was closing (Fox News, [Metro parents scramble to find new school after Knowledge Academies is slated to close, 8/29/19](#)) and recruitment attempts were featured as suspicious (News



Channel 5, *Knowledge Academies Still Actively Recruiting Despite Having Charter Revoked*, 9/24/19). Knowledge Academy appealed the closure decision to the Tennessee State Board of Education and ultimately won the right to continue to serve students and families on October 28, 2019; however, both the press the potential closure received, as well as the letter that MNPS sent to each student enrolled, prompted many families to seek other school choices. Prior to the move for closure, attrition rates at each school within the Knowledge Academies network were significantly lower.

**e. Explain how the school provides a safe environment and addresses the physical, social, emotional, and health needs of students.**

We meet state and federal requirements regarding school safety and have a comprehensive safety plan that is distributed and explained to staff prior to the start of the school year. Safety and security of the school is overseen by the principal. Colored emergency codes indicate the level of severity of the emergency and the protocol that must be followed in the event of the emergency. Types of emergencies that are covered in the plans include bomb threats, weather-related emergencies, fires, intruders, active shooters, use of firearms/weapons, and others. Emergency drills are practiced with students throughout the year to ensure they understand the seriousness of these emergencies and the actions they must take if one were to happen. We use all available personnel to aid in safety and security, and every staff member has a duty during fire drills and other emergencies. Teachers stay with the class they are instructing during the time of an emergency, but other staff members will have posts that will involve directing students to appropriate locations and making sure all students exit the building (if appropriate in that particular situation).

Day-to-day operations also involve all staff members having the responsibility to ensure students go to and transition from their classes safely throughout the day. Every staff member has a post at arrival and dismissal, and explicit procedures have been developed to ensure those times of the day run smoothly. During the day, staff members are available to monitor the hallways and other common areas throughout the school. In addition, administrators and instructional coaches consistently conduct walkthroughs each day to continue to monitor safety within the classroom. A camera system has been installed to further monitor security within our school, with devices located at each entryway, in hallways, and in other common areas throughout the school building.

To provide for the safety and security of employees and the facilities, only authorized visitors are allowed inside the school building. Restricting unauthorized visitors helps maintain safety standards; ensures the security of our students, confidential information, and equipment; protects against theft; safeguards employee welfare; and avoids potential distractions and disturbances. The school building is designed with a trap front entry where both sets of front doors remain locked at all times from the outside. There is also a video intercom box outside the front entry for visitors to gain access to the front reception area.

Per the Jessica Lunsford Act, all visitors must have photo identification and are scanned using the Raptor system. All visitors must enter the office through the reception area and check in with the receptionist or front office. Authorized visitors will gain access to school through a second set of secured doors and receive directions or be escorted to their destination.



Employees are responsible for the conduct and safety of their visitors. If an unauthorized individual is observed on school premises, employees immediately direct the individual to the reception area, or if necessary, notify their administrator. Cooperation gives us the ability to provide a safe and orderly learning environment for all students.

All employees, including anyone who offers tutoring and/or after school services, are required to undergo a rigorous background check.

To support the social-emotional learning and development of skills for our students, we integrate the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) aligned Attitude is Altitude (AIA) curriculum into our daily schedule. Instruction is delivered through a blended delivery model that includes individual and team online student tutorials, teacher-facing lessons and student-led learning experiences. AIA:

- Develops a sense of community and respect for others.
- Breaks down barriers, strengthens relationships and builds an environment of trust.
- Promotes positivity and inspires students to be their best selves.
- Empowers students to speak up for themselves and for others.
- Provides conflict resolution and self-control strategies.
- Implementation of the AIA curriculum is monitored via classroom walkthroughs, attendance rates, and data chats.

Knowledge Academy employs a licensed Registered Nurse (RN) as required by T.C.A. §68-1-1202-1206, which requires certain health care procedures, including the administration of medications during the school day or at related events, to be performed by appropriately licensed health care professionals. KA's RN works for Knowledge Academy full time and meets the minimum qualifications and standards established pursuant to T.C.A. § 68-1-1204(a) and performs the duties and responsibilities enumerated within T.C.A. § 68-1-1202. Our RN maintains current certification through a certifying cardiopulmonary resuscitation course consistent with the scientific guidelines of the American Heart Association in collaboration with the International Liaison Committee on Resuscitation.

In addition to required health-care procedures, our RN implements coordinated school health components, including comprehensive health education, nutrition services, physical education, health services, healthy school environment, family/community involvement, counseling/psychological/social services, and general health promotion among students and staff. T.C.A. 49-1-1002 establishes guidelines and standards for Coordinated School Health Programs in Tennessee that are available through the State Departments of Education and Health.

### **COVID-19 Guidelines and Processes**

Knowledge Academy acknowledges and agrees that requirements and best practices for public health and safety and for instructing students during a public health emergency are rapidly changing as officials learn more about COVID-19 and how it is spread. As such, Knowledge Academy agrees to comply with all national, state, and local requirements, guidelines, and best practices concerning public health and safety, and instruction of students during the COVID-19 pandemic, or any other public health emergency, as they currently exist or as they may be





hereafter amended. This includes requiring all individuals within the school to wear masks at all times.

NEI, our CMO, has developed a detailed COVID-19 response plan that will ensure Knowledge Academy maintains the health and welfare of its students while safely continuing school operations. The plan includes guidelines for both preventing and responding to a recurrence of COVID-19 outbreaks within the local community and individual exposure events that may occur within the school. Please note that the guidelines are designed to be flexible based on the ever-evolving nature of local, state, and CDC guidelines, and will be adjusted as necessary to comply with state and local guidelines. Below is a list of COVID-19 response processes that have been put in place:

- General mitigation guidance
- Social-distancing practices
- Health screening procedures for students, staff, parents, and guests upon entry
- Hygiene practices
- Cleaning/disinfecting with Clorox machines that are also used by hospitals
- Managing building airflow
- Processes for conducting the following school operations while mitigating and preventing possible exposure:
  - Student drop off and pick up
  - School transportation
  - Outside play
  - Meals and snack time
  - Halls and hall passing
  - Gym/Physical Education instruction
- Processes for responding to the below exposure events:
  - Individuals who affirm that they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms prior to entering the school building
  - Individuals who affirm that they have come in contact with another individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 prior to entering the school building
  - Individuals who experience COVID-19 symptoms while in the school building
  - A student or staff member who tests positive for COVID-19
  - School closure due to COVID-19 response protocols

**f. Describe any upward trend (if any) in students’ discipline data and describe how the school has addressed significant discipline issues**

Below is a summary of our discipline incidents starting in the 2018-2019 school year. These numbers show that our discipline incidents, specifically out-of-school suspensions, have decreased between the 2019 and 2021 school years. In addition, in those three years, KA has never expelled a student.

School Year	Incidents OSS	Incidents Expelled
18-19	52	0
19-20	10	0
20-21	0	0



We have developed a school-wide behavior plan that includes a social-emotional learning (SEL) focus, a behavior tracking system, and an emphasis on mentoring.

- SEL: Students are guided in increasing their ownership of learning, behavior and emotions. With the use of the SEL curriculum, AIA, beginning in 2019, students and staff alike are encouraged to be risk-takers, knowing that mistakes are a natural part of the learning process. It can be noticed that there has been a reduction in suspensions since the focus of SEL, but it is important to not fully link these two together because SEL is not primarily a behavior-management solution.
- Class Dojo: Through the utilization of Class Dojo, our students, families and educators maintain communication and between educators, students, and families. This has been key to developing positive relationships and promoting and rewarding those desired behaviors. Students are rewarded with positive incentives such as pizza, parties, ice cream socials, staff vs. student games, college-themed prize draws, etc.
- Mentoring: Through our community partnership with Youth Life Learning Center, onsite educational tutoring, social development, and mentoring is provided to our students.

Furthermore, we are in the second year of implementing our schoolwide behavior plan, and suspension rates have decreased each year. This is a testament to our students' increased awareness of school culture expectations and the behavioral standards to which they are held accountable.

**g. Explain how the school has made community connections and developed working relationships with parents and families.**

Active parental participation is essential to the delivery of our educational goals and is key to the success of the overall program. Parental involvement in the student's life and in the support of the school is a committed effort and requires active participation. Furthermore, being actively engaged in the life of the school cultivates the sense of community within the school. Annual surveys are distributed to parent(s)/guardian(s) in order to afford the opportunity to provide valuable input for our further growth, development, and improvement of the life of the school.

We encourage a sense of community outside of the classroom. By implementing our online communication platforms, PowerSchool and Schoology, this allows teachers, students, parent(s)/guardian(s), and the greater school community to share information, ideas, reminders, and opportunities, connections are made that foster community engagement. The student's portfolio can be used to engage students and parent(s)/guardian(s) in the student's early start to career exploration. Parents/guardians are provided training in use of the platform at new student orientation sessions prior to school opening, at open houses, and as needed during curriculum nights.

Progress Reports and Report Cards are provided to parent(s)/guardian(s) and students quarterly via our PowerSchool student information system. Parent-teacher conference days are pre-scheduled in the school calendar and parent(s)/guardian(s) may schedule additional conferences as needed to discuss student performance and progress toward mastery of grade-level standards. In addition to individual parent conferences, we host a monthly family council meeting at the school to engage with families as a group and solicit their input/feedback



regarding our school's initiatives, focuses, and programs. We also provide opportunities for students to share their work with parent(s)/guardian(s) through student portfolios during specially scheduled conferences. We believe that parent involvement in a child's education is vital to the child's success in school, so we make every effort to actively engage parent(s)/guardian(s) and to keep them informed of their child(ren)'s progress.

KA has and will continue to seek opportunities to develop community relations in order to establish synergistic partnerships that foster local relationships beneficial to the school and the surrounding community. Our current partnerships include:

- First Priority – Offers a student-led, faith based club for students to attend
- Youth Life Learning Center – Provides tutoring and mentoring onsite
- Pastor Cornelius Hill – Assists with mentoring, marketing of the school, and high school graduation
- Bethel World Outreach Church – Supports and distributes food to our families in need
- Reggie Miller, Nashville Black Police Association - Supports and distributes food to our families in need
- Barefoot Republic – Offers a summer camp to engage students to sign-up as mentors to others and speaks to students during school assemblies annually
- Sharon D. Smith, Tennessee Department of Education – Provides mentoring to students
- Dionne Thomas – Activist parent
- David Lord, Hope for Justice – Provides mentoring to students and motivational speaking to all students

**h. Explain how the school sustains a well-functioning organizational structure and provides for personnel stability and effective teacher retention.**

Experienced teachers confront great challenges each year. These challenges include changes in subject content, new instructional methods, advances in technology, changes in laws and procedures, and student learning needs. Educators need to experience effective professional development to improve their skills, and ultimately student learning (Mizell, H., 2010). To provide personnel stability and effective teacher retention, our staff participates in the following collaborative learning opportunities:

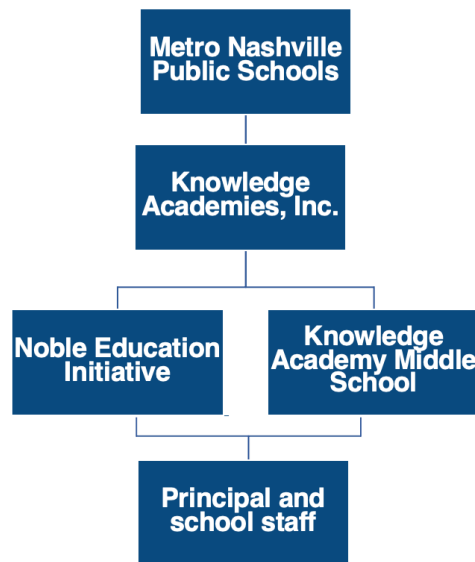
- Monthly Principal Meetings: Attendance is required for the Principal in order to collaborate and grow their leadership capacity with other leaders from Noble Education Initiative.
- Leadership Academy: KA's leadership team attends five days of professional development at the beginning of the summer to learn best practices, network with other thought leaders, and to reflect on how to improve current organizational effectiveness.
- Teacher Academy: Prior to the first day of school, fifteen days of professional development is delivered to all teachers at KA. During the first ten days, we focus on core content and delivery (i.e. NEI's Education Model, culturally relevant pedagogies, lesson planning) and the final five days shift focus to school-specific initiatives, expectations, and procedures.



- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs): PLCs are calendared on a weekly for teachers to share innovative teaching concepts, best practices and often focus on student data results for creating lesson plans, data driven instruction strategies specific to the student population, and create remediation/enrichment groups for our Success block.
- 3D Leadership: This is an employee development and engagement program provided by NEI. All employees with leadership aspirations have the opportunity to be part of a cohort and participate in monthly trainings, both in-person and virtually. The 3D Leadership program has a systematic approach to identifying the right talent, helping individuals discover and develop their strengths, and then distribute their learning throughout the school/organization.
- Ongoing professional development: KA's PD plan is created prior to the school year, is reviewed/revised periodically, and is available for review/monitoring. The PD is tiered to meet teacher and student needs, is regular, ongoing, and aligned to our school's strategic initiatives. A quarterly needs assessment/survey is also given to teachers to identify what their needs and interests are in order to target professional development.

KA is governed by Knowledge Academies, Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization organized exclusively for educational purposes. Knowledge Academies has existed since [DATE].

The organizational chart below outlines KA's organizational/governance structure:



This public charter school governance structure, as seen above, is widely accepted throughout the nation.

### **Knowledge Academies Board**

The Knowledge Academies board (Knowledge Academies, Inc.) acts in the same capacity as a public school board, developing policies and overseeing their implementation to ensure the academic, financial, and operational success of KA. The Knowledge Academy board is governed by the general philosophy that it is an organized group of diverse and exceptional volunteers who,



collectively, are legally and morally accountable to the community for the health, vitality, and effectiveness of its school. As the charter holder, the Knowledge Academies board is responsible for continuing oversight over the operations of KA, just as the Metro Nashville Public Schools Board oversees the schools in the MNPS district, and shall conduct itself in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Annual adoption of the budget;
- Ensuring KA retains the services of a certified public accountant or auditor for the annual financial audit;
- Reviewing the annual audit;
- Reporting progress annually to the authorizer; and,
- Designating at least one administrative individual to be responsible for duties associated with performance evaluations of instructional personnel and administrators.

Please see below for the Knowledge Academies Board’s members and their roles:

- Board Chair – James Bristol, J.D.
- Secretary – Jeff Bradford
- Assistant Treasurer – Scott Schumpert, CPA, CVA, ABV
- Member – Colin Cannonier, Ph. D.
- Member – Stephen F. Graw
- Member – Glenn Hunter, MBA
- Member – Evangeline Motley-Johnson, Ph. D.
- Member – Tanaka Vercher

### **Noble Education Initiative, Charter Management Organization (CMO)**

Knowledge Academies, Inc. has contracted with Noble Education Initiative (NEI) to manage the day-to-day operations of KA and oversees NEI via a performance-based management agreement. As CMO, NEI serves Knowledge Academies, Inc. by employing a local State Director whose role will be akin to that of a district Superintendent, and Central Support staff to serve in a capacity similar to that of a public school district support staff. In addition, NEI has established a Tennessee State team led by a designated state director to more closely serve and support KA and its other managed schools in Tennessee. The state team uses “hands-on” experience to provide state-specific support that is tailored to meet the needs of each community in which NEI’s managed schools are located. These supports include curriculum development/implementation, school culture and cultural improvement initiatives, organizing marketing and student enrollment activities, procurement and grants management, community outreach and family engagement, and compliance reporting.

The Knowledge Academies board oversees and holds NEI accountable via a performance-based services agreement, which clearly outlines the roles of NEI and the board, the standards by which NEI will be held accountable, and the proposed fees for services.

For ease of reference, the table below shows the division of roles between Knowledge Academies, Inc. and NEI regarding all school functions. It should be noted that all staff at KA are employees of the Knowledge Academy governing board.



Function	NEI's Roles and Responsibilities	Knowledge Academies, Inc. Roles and Responsibilities
<b>Selecting Curriculum</b>	Provides a customized curriculum designed to meet national, state, and local standards, including continuous program evaluation, curriculum material selection, student data analysis, student individual education plans, assessments, records, etc.	Implements required academic reporting policies for NEI and revises performance reports from NEI on a periodic basis.
<b>Selecting Professional Development Programs</b>	Provides professional/school development and implements teacher instructional support, coaching, and mentoring. Ensures government compliance and reporting with regard to teacher certifications.	Reviews periodic staff reports and ensures all required staffing certifications are current and in compliance with regulatory standards.
<b>Data Management &amp; Selecting Interim Assessments</b>	Provides accountability standards and sustainable performance measures designed to meet national, state, and local standards.	Implements required academic reporting policies for NEI and reviews performance reports from NEI on a periodic basis. Sets policies to ensure KA'S programs are faithful to the terms of the charter, including compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements.
<b>Determining Promotion Criteria</b>	Provides compensation planning and performance evaluations.	Annually adopts, maintains, and amends (if necessary) the annual operating budget. Reviews school provided reports, which include detailed information regarding staffing.
<b>Setting a School Culture</b>	Implements KA'S mission and vision via the curriculum and disciplinary policies and standards. Provides assistance in coordinating parent(s)/ guardian(s), teacher, and student organizations.	Ensures that KA's mission and vision is being implemented with fidelity. Sets policies to ensure KA'S programs and operations are faithful to the terms of the charter, including compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements.
<b>Student Recruitment</b>	Assesses demographic and market needs and develops the enrollment marketing plan.	Reviews school provided reports, which include detailed information regarding student enrollment.
<b>School Staff Recruitment &amp; Hiring</b>	Provides personnel administration and conducts recruitment efforts to hire the principal, teachers, and other staff, and implements personnel procedures and ongoing staffing assistance.	Will employ all school staff and will annually adopt NEI's employee manual and personnel policies. Sets policies to ensure KA's programs and operations are faithful to the terms of the charter, including compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements. Reviews school, which includes detailed information regarding staffing.
<b>Providing Human Resources (HR) services (payroll, benefits, etc.)</b>	Provides employee benefits, worker's compensation, and 401(k) management services, and directly manages KA'S payroll.	Annually adopts, maintains, and amends (if necessary) the annual operating budget. Implements required financial reporting policies for NEI and reviews performance reports from NEI on a periodic basis.



Function	NEI's Roles and Responsibilities	Knowledge Academies, Inc. Roles and Responsibilities
<b>Managing Community Relations</b>	Provides assistance in coordinating parent(s)/guardian(s), teacher, and student organizations and manages KA'S community partnerships.	Adheres to regularly scheduled board meetings in a manner compliant with open meeting laws. Communicates with parent(s)/guardian(s) and the community to resolve grievances not rectified at the school level.
<b>Selecting and Providing Information Technology</b>	Designs and develops technology labs and student stations. Provides local and wide area network installation, remote access and software integration, email hosting, and technology support. Maintains the student information system and KA'S websites.	Annually adopts, maintains, and amends (if necessary) the annual operating budget. Implements required financial reporting policies for NEI and reviews performance reports from NEI on a periodic basis.
<b>Managing Facilities</b>	Provides strategic financing and construction partnerships. Assists in site acquisition and/or lease negotiations, and liaisons with building and/or renovation team to ensure quality and design standards are met. Provides operational design of classrooms and school space and programmatic input for functionality purposes. Procures furniture, fixtures, equipment, supplies, and secures basic utility services (phone, water, electric, and disposal service).	Annually adopts, maintains, and amends (if necessary) the annual operating budget. Sets operational policies to ensure KA'S operations are faithful to the terms of its charter, including compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements. Reviews school provided reports, which include detailed information regarding KA'S facility issues.
<b>Procuring Vendors</b>	Negotiate contracted services with vendors (food, transportation, security, custodial, etc.).	Annually adopts, maintains, and amends (if necessary) the annual operating budget. Sets operational policies to ensure KA'S operations are faithful to the terms of the charter, including compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements.

**i. Explain the governing board's oversight and how are they involved in making decisions for the school and how they provide oversight?**

Collectively, Knowledge Academies, Inc. takes on a role akin to a traditional public school board, assuming responsibility for developing and outlining the mission, vision, and values of Knowledge Academy; developing the appropriate policies to ensure those fundamentals are maintained; and effectively and properly managing public funds. As the charter holder, Knowledge Academies, Inc. has ultimate authority over, and responsibility for, school operations and shall conduct itself in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations. NEI and Knowledge Academies, Inc. recognize the importance of charter school governance and have put systems in place to ensure the charter school meets rigorous academic, financial, and organizational priorities. This includes a board training and governance process that borrows from national best practices and includes on-the-ground training so that the governing board



can fulfill its duties under state law. Knowledge Academies, Inc. oversees and holds NEI accountable via a performance-based services agreement.

The table below illustrates the internal organizational goals for Knowledge Academies, Inc’s which will ensure that the board is providing proper school oversight and making informed decisions.

Knowledge Academies, Inc. Goals	Measurable Objective
<b>Properly Manage and Govern KA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operational policies</li> <li>• Academic and financial accountability</li> <li>• Reporting KA’s progress annually to MNPS</li> <li>• Policies consistent with KA’s mission</li> <li>• Ensuring KA’S programs and operations are faithful to the terms of the charter, including compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements</li> <li>• CMO Oversight</li> </ul>
<b>Oversee Operational Policies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adhere to regularly scheduled board meetings in a manner compliant with Open Meeting Laws</li> <li>• Ensure KA’s operations align with operational policies and procedures</li> </ul>
<b>Ensure Financial Accountability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annually adopt, maintain, and amend (if necessary) the annual operating budget</li> <li>• Create or adopt policies for internal controls</li> <li>• Review and approve financial statements on a consistent basis</li> <li>• Ensure that KA has contracted with a certified public accountant for the annual financial audit</li> <li>• Review and approve the audit report, including audit findings and recommendations</li> </ul>
<b>Accountability for Performance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain required reporting policies for NEI. Review the following performance reports from NEI on a periodic basis (monthly, quarterly, or annually as appropriate):               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Financial Reports</li> <li>– School Report (enrollment, withdrawals, staffing, facility issues, and ongoing activities)</li> <li>– Satisfaction Surveys</li> <li>– Strategic Plan</li> <li>– Annual Accountability Report</li> </ul> </li> </ul>





## Section 3: Financial Health

### **Progress Toward Meeting Financial Goals**

The primary source of revenue for Knowledge Academy continues to be funds received from MNPS for the basic education program (BEP, also referred to as state and local per pupil funding). Funds from the Title I program, school breakfast program, and national lunch program have also been included in the revenue section (see below in the narrative as well as the budget document). Knowledge Academy will supplement these funds with a small amount of fundraising and philanthropy as described below:

### **Revenue Streams**

#### **State Revenues:**

KA plans for enrollment in the 2021-22 school year to remain consistent with the 2020-21 school year. The per pupil rate for the Basic Education Program (“BEP”) funding is budgeted at \$11,565 per student which is the same funding rate as the 2020-21 school year. KA’s funding rate includes reimbursement for transportation since KA provides this service to its students. In addition to the \$11,565 is the BEP Capital Outlay, which is budgeted at \$221 per student and is consistent with the amount historically received.

#### **Federal Revenues:**

The budget includes grant funds for Title I, Title II and IDEA which are allocated to KA each year by Metro Nashville Public Schools based on enrollment. KA has assumed similar allocations in the budget adjusted for increased enrollment. The budget also includes funds allocated to KA from the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund Act through the CARES Act. These funds have been allocated to KA in the 2020-21 school year and can be spent through 2022.

KA participates in the National School Lunch Program. Student breakfast and lunch is reimbursed based on a per student rate for each meal served. Participation in the program for KA is estimated at 50% which is consistent with historical participation. Of course with the pandemic and mobile learning, the current percentage is lower, but is expected to go up once our students return full time to our building.

#### **Fundraising & Philanthropy:**

Included in other revenues, under fundraising and philanthropy is \$39,744 which is derived from the rental of certain space to a third party under a lease agreement.

KA also plans to have various fundraisers throughout the year which is expected to generate \$10,000 in community, parent, student and staff fundraising efforts. Funds generated are directed to schoolwide PBIS (positive behavior intervention systems), teacher appreciation, and teacher priorities (supplies and materials not covered in the general operating budget).



**Expenses**

**Compensation**

KA operates in a facility that is shared with another charter middle school as well as a charter high school. The two other charter schools operate under separate charter agreements. All administrative and non-instructional staff are shared with the two other charter schools that operate in the same facility, resulting in efficiency of service and allowing the saved economies to be used directly for student needs. Substantially all instructional staff are shared with the other middle school that operates in the same facility where practicable.

KA attracts and retains competent staff by paying competitive salaries. The starting salary for instructional staff assumed in the budget is \$46,000 and the number of full time equivalent instructional staff is 12. Employees are offered health insurance benefits as well as participation in retirement programs, including TCRS (Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System) for certificated staff.

As previously stated, KA has added a licensed, experienced principal and a director of Curriculum and Instruction to further our goals of student academic success.

**Contracted Services**

- Food Service through SLA Food Services
- KA uses an outside vendor (Project Play Therapy) for SPED related services as outlined in the individual IEP’s. The budget has been established using contracted rates.
- Transportation is provided to students that attend the school. Costs have been included in the budget based on the historical ridership of 80% and using contracted transportation rates.
- Payroll services are provided by Knowledge Academy through a third party HRIS system (Paycom). These services include payroll processing and reporting which includes required tax filings and preparation of employee W-2’s. The budget has been established using contracted rates listed in the budget document.

**Supplies and Materials**

KA provides books and instructional supplies to students based on their needs. See the graphic below for more detail.

<b>Middle Schools (5-8)</b>		
<b>Instructional Resources – Core Curriculum</b>		
<b>Subject Area</b>	<b>Resource</b>	<b>Item Type</b>
ELA	Ready ELA	Student Consumable
ELA Math	iReady – Teacher Toolbox	Instructional Resource
Math	Ready Math	Student Consumable
Science	Discovery Education	Techbook, Student Consumable
Social Studies	Gallopade International	TE, Online Resources, Textbooks
<b>Instructional Software</b>		
<b>Subject Area</b>	<b>Resource</b>	<b>Item Type</b>
ELA	Lexia Power-Up	Online
ELA Math	iReady	Online



### **Facility Related Expenses**

KA pays utilities including electric, water and sewer, waste and gas. Internet and phone costs support the needs of the students at KA. The budget has been based on historical rates for facilities related expenses.

KA uses an outside custodial service to supplement in house staff. The cost for the budget has been established using historical rates for these services.

The school owns the facility from which it operates, and KA is obligated pay debt service of \$86,400 for the 2021-22 school year. This is reflected in the budget document.

### **Other Expenses**

KA is required to pay Metro Nashville Public Schools an authorizer fee each year of \$35,000. Additionally included in other charges is a management fee which is for services provided by Noble Education Initiative. These services include day to day management of the charter school, implementation of the educational program, evaluation and assessment of the educational program, professional development, personnel administration, marketing, procurement, and accounting and finance related services.



## Section 4 – Future Plans/Projections

At Knowledge Academy our focus and passion continues to be on providing the highest quality educational opportunities for our students. We believe academic excellence is determined by more than reaching or even exceeding state accountability criteria. It also means instilling a culture that enables each student and staff member to stretch, grow, and reach their maximum potential. Our Continuous Improvement Model (CIM), our relentless focus on rigor in academics, and our belief that all students can excel and reach their potential is palpable and visible in every aspect of our school – from leadership, teachers, staff, students, and families.

The pandemic brought valuable lessons, and upon renewal, we will be able to continue to provide rigor and excellence through our blended learning program, expand our career and technical opportunities down to the middle school level, and build up our student enrollment through focused and sustained recruitment and retention strategies. We believe that Knowledge Academy will become, and in fact already is, a place where students and families want to be because we offer safe facilities, family support, academic excellence, and we **always** keep our promises to students.

As such, we are expanding our investment in the students, leadership, staff, and teachers so that the culture of excellence permeates throughout the school. This includes access to the information, resources, and materials needed to support the curriculum, programs, and needs of learners, staff, and the organization. We are accomplishing this by:

- Finding new ways to celebrate our very diverse population through exploring their cultures, increasing diversity in hiring, and continuing our strategic investments in our Antioch families.
- Being fully committed to ensuring equity throughout every aspect of our organization, recognizing that each teacher, staff member, family member and student has different circumstances and dedicating allocation of resources and opportunities to reach an equal and equitable outcome. This approach confirms our promise to deliver high quality educational options, and to ensure each student has everything he/she needs to reach their full potential.
- Employing a new, fully licensed principal who has the experience and expertise to move our students forward.
- Appointing a Director of Curriculum to strengthen and support our teachers as they push our students to excellence each day.
- Dedicating one full time position to community engagement, reaching out to our families and community to build trust, seek strategic partnerships, and utilize our parent network to lend support to our school and assist our students.
- Ensuring that our operations are efficient and effective.
- Maximizing resources to guarantee a laser focus on student needs and our ability to address them.
- Investing in upgrades to both our arts and athletics programs.
- Offering professional development opportunities to our teachers that are relevant, timely, and useful to each teacher as they continually improve their instructional practice.
- Making budget decisions that are fiscally sound, student-focused, and that support the goals and objectives of the school.



With a *mindset and culture of continuous improvement*, we have established ambitious, but attainable, goals for (1) student proficiency and (2) student growth for the next five years in every grade level and tested subject area.

### **(1) Student Proficiency**

In our review of historical TN Ready Scores for KA, we established goals for both *increasing* the percentage of students who score at the “Mastered” performance level as well as *decreasing* the percentage of students who score at the “Below” performance level. For reading, math and science in all grade levels, an average of the three most recent years for state testing (i.e., 2016-2017, 2017-2018 and 2018-2019) was used to determine the baseline for goal setting. For social sciences, however, an average was used in grades 6, 7 and 8 only. In grade 5, the only available data was from the 2017-2018 school year, thus the 2017-2018 data was used as the baseline.

Based on a three-year average of both performance levels for **reading and math**, we will:

- Increase the percentage of students who score at the “Mastered” performance by 10% each year, with an overall increase of 50% by Year 5.
- Decrease the percentage of students who score at the “Below” performance by 10% each year, with an overall decrease of 50% by Year 5.

Based on a two-year average of both performance levels for **science**, we will:

- Increase the percentage of students who score at the “Mastered” performance by 10% each year, with an overall increase of 50% by Year 5.
- Decrease the percentage of students who score at the “Below” performance by 10% each year, with an overall decrease of 50% by Year 5.

Based on the 2017-2018 school year of both performance levels for **social sciences**, we will:

- Increase the percentage of students who score at the “Mastered” performance by 10% each year, with an overall increase of 50% by Year 5.
- Decrease the percentage of students who score at the “Below” performance by 10% each year, with an overall decrease of 50% by Year 5.

These very ambitious yet attainable goals show that we believe in our students’ ability to achieve at the highest levels. The charts below will explain where we expect and anticipate our students to be in each of the next five (5) years by subject area.



English Language Arts		
Year	Percent Mastered / On Track	Percent Below Basic
Goals		
2025-26	27.79	18.66
2024-25	25.66	20.73
2023-24	23.28	22.96
2022-23	21.16	25.51
2021-22	19.24	28.35
2020-21	17.49	31.5
Results		
2019-20	N/A	N/A
2018-19	15.9	35

Mathematics		
Year	Percent Mastered / On Track	Percent Below Basic
Goals		
2025-26	34.89	20.74
2024-25	31.72	23.04
2023-24	28.84	25.6
2022-23	26.22	28.44
2021-22	23.84	31.6
2020-21	21.67	35.1
Results		
2019-20	NA	NA
2018-19	19.7	39

Social Studies		
Year	Percent Mastered / On Track	Percent Below Basic
Goals		
2025-26	42.69	22.32
2024-25	38.81	24.80
2023-24	35.28	27.56
2022-23	32.07	30.62
2021-22	29.16	34.02
2020-21	26.51	37.80
Results		
2019-20	NA	NA
2018-19	24.1	42.0

Science**		
Year	Percent Mastered / On Track	Percent Below Basic
Goals		
2025-26	+10%	-10%
2024-25	+10%	-10%
2023-24	+10%	-10%
2022-23	+10%	-10%
2021-22	+10%	-10%
2020-21	+10%	-10%
Results		
2019-20	NA	NA
2018-19	NA	NA

**\*\*Note:** Tennessee did not administer a science assessment in 2018-19 due to the science standards being new that year. Since there was no state accountability testing at all in 2019-20 due to the pandemic, there is no reliable science data from 2018-19 to build upon. However, as soon as the results from the 2020-21 Science assessments are received and analyzed, the same rigorous, ambitious goals will apply – to increase the percentage of students scoring on-track and mastered by 10% per year, and to decrease the percentage of students scoring on below basic by 10% each year.

## (2) Student Growth

In our review of historical TVAAS Scores for KA, we used a two-year average (i.e., 2017-2018 and 2018-2019) as the baseline, rounding up as needed in an effort to set the expectation to always maximize growth. The exception was science where the 2017-2018 school year served as the baseline.

We established a goal for maintaining **Overall Growth** while also:

- Increasing growth levels over time for any **student group** that is not realizing the same growth as their school peers
- Increasing growth levels over time for any **subject** that is below *overall growth*



The following table shows yearly growth levels for student groups and subjects:

	Overall Growth	Growth Level: Econ Diadv	Growth Level: ELL	Growth Level: SWD	Growth Level: Combined	Growth Level: Black/ Hispanic/ Native American	Growth Level: ELA	Growth Level: Math	Growth Level: SS	Growth Level: SCI
<b>Baseline</b>	5 (4.5)	4 (3.5)	4 (3.5)	4 (3.5)	4 (3.5)	3	4	4	3	3
<b>YR 1</b>	5	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	4	4
<b>YR 2</b>	5	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	4	4
<b>YR 3</b>	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
<b>YR 4</b>	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
<b>YR 5</b>	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5

Our goals for student growth and achievement are rigorous, yet attainable, and our belief in our students’ ability to succeed is unshakeable.

**Projected financial security**

NEI does not anticipate any significant differences in the financial performance of Knowledge Academy over the next renewal term. Overall, we anticipate continuing to increase teacher salaries in line with increases in our annual BEP rate, currently anticipated to be about 2-3% per year. In addition, we are always reviewing ways to reduce expenses on some non-essential resources (for example, renegotiating our transportation rates or reducing discretionary spend on some supplies) while reinvesting those resources back into our people.

**Operational management**

While we do not anticipate any major changes in our future operational management, every year we continue to make incremental improvements to our operations. One adjustment is that we will be putting additional staffing toward our special populations’ students, with particular attention towards our increasing diverse international population. We now have five (5) fully licensed and certified special education teachers on staff to serve our students, and we anticipate to grow that number over the next 10 years of the new contract.

The KA facility currently accommodates our full enrollment, while giving us room to expand. Our students enjoy expansive classroom spaces, access to two gymnasiums, a large multi-purpose space, and a full cafeteria.

**Enrollment Projections over the next 5 years (see table below)**

Assumptions - The following assumptions were used when considering Knowledge Academy’s 5- year enrollment projections. The information listed is a combination of information received from MNPS, and our knowledge of current enrollment trends for the Antioch area:

- We anticipate significant increases in our enrollment over the next five years once renewal is approved.
- The Antioch area is growing, and even though there was a reported kindergarten enrollment decline within the MNPS district for 2020-21 (down 14%) during the pandemic, which could signal potential longer term enrollment challenges, we believe we are well-equipped to attract and support our student population as described in this application.



- Southeast Nashville continues to see housing/family expansion moving further south into the Antioch area, where we continue to see growing opportunities for increasing the student base at KA.
- We have made a concerted effort to decrease student mobility, reduce attrition, continue improvement with our family and community engagement efforts, and eliminate the threat of closure. All of these are contributing factors for our assumptions that our decline in enrollment will in fact turn around in the next year to allow us to reach our potential student enrollment.

Proposed Grade Levels and Student Enrollment for Next 10-Yr Term		
Year following renewal	Grade Levels	Total Student Enrollment
Year 1 2022-23	5-8	200
Year 2 2023-24	5-8	254
Year 3 2024-25	5-8	272
Year 4 2025-26	5-8	272
Year 5 2026-27	5-8	272
Year 6 2027-28	5-8	272
Year 7 2028-29	5-8	272
Year 8 2029-30	5-8	272
Year 9 2030-31	5-8	272
Year 10 2031-32	5-8	272

As can be seen in our projections, we have established rigorous but attainable goals for our students and our school during the next charter period. Already we are seeing positive results from our significant investments in our students, our teachers, and our community. Our students are prepared to make excellent academic and social choices, are connected to their community, and are becoming confident that there are no barriers they cannot overcome on their way to college and successful careers.