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The Mind Trust to seed three new education efforts in Indianapolis

Initiatives in school design, innovation and fellowship opportunities begin 2017

INDIANAPOLIS—(February 3, 2017) The Mind Trust announced today investments to seed three new education efforts that will expand high-quality educational opportunities for Indianapolis students and families:

Charter School Design Challenge: Rooted School. The Mind Trust has selected the Rooted School of New Orleans as the first winner of its Charter School Design Challenge and will award the school \$250,000 to develop and launch its innovative, new school model in Indianapolis in Fall 2019.

Rooted School is a unique 9-12 model launching in New Orleans this year, which will provide high-risk high school students the opportunity to begin achieving financial freedom in high school and graduate with the skills to pursue either college or career across high-growth, high-wage job sectors, thus finding their pathway to financial freedom. Rooted School will recruit a school leader for the Indianapolis campus who will spend the next school year as a school leader-in-residence at the Rooted School in New Orleans.

Jonathan Johnson, the school's founder and CEO, and the school model have garnered national attention from education innovation leaders, including 4.0 Schools, the NewSchools Venture Fund, New Schools for New Orleans, Echoing Green and Teach For America.

"Indianapolis is among the most exciting cities to develop and launch new, high-quality charter schools, and our Charter School Design Challenge provides the country's top innovators the unique opportunity to do so," said David Harris, founder & CEO of The Mind Trust.

Through the Design Challenge, The Mind Trust is seeking to create the next wave of charter schools by identifying the nation's most innovative education innovators and encouraging them to design transformational, new charter school models for Indianapolis that have never before been tried. In addition to the \$250,000 award, The Mind Trust provides critical support, including visits to world-class schools across the country; expert consulting on school design, school startups and management; and



other essential consulting and research support. Applications for this program are accepted on a rolling basis, and more information can be found at www.themindtrust.org/design-challenge.

Educator Empowerment Award: Edison School of the Arts 47. The Mind Trust has awarded Edison School of the Arts 47 of the Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS) its Educator Empowerment Award, providing \$125,000 to the school to develop a plan to convert into an Innovation Network School.

In Innovation Network Schools, building-level educators are given greater management flexibility than traditional schools and are empowered to make key decisions about their schools. Although some Innovation Schools will replace struggling IPS schools, The Mind Trust partnered with IPS to help schools with strong leaders, strong visions and successful track records convert into Innovation Schools.

Converting to this status gives the schools the freedom to innovate and continue the practices that made them successful in the first place. What's more, the schools stay within IPS, allowing the district to hold the schools accountable for their performance.

In addition to funding, The Mind Trust will provide Edison with individualized training, guidance and professional development as the school leaders earn the right to convert the school. School leaders then will present a final conversion plan to the IPS Board of School Commissioners in Spring 2017 for approval.

"Innovation conversion is an exciting opportunity for strong school leadership teams to explore, and our schools are fortunate to have support from The Mind Trust to enable this period of research and planning," said IPS Superintendent Dr. Lewis D. Ferebee. "We look forward to continued conversation with the Edison team, their staff, and most importantly, their students and families as they discuss the future of their school together."

Edison provides an environment that promotes academic success, critical thinking, discipline and creative achievement through the visual and performing arts. Lively, learner-centered activities are at the heart of the curriculum as teachers incorporate the arts – including music, dance, theater and art – into the traditional teaching of reading, writing, math, science and social studies. This successful IPS choice school has seen significant academic success since 2013, and now outperforms the district on ISTEP, and approaches the state average. The conversion will allow Edison to expand arts experiences and exposure to students and deepen community partnerships.

"We are thrilled about this opportunity and our even brighter future," said Nathan Tuttle, principal of Edison. "Edison currently offers an abundance of arts and academics that have proven successful, and we are confident our new opportunity will make Edison an even more sought after educational destination for K-8 families with a true arts integration model."



Education Entrepreneur Fellowship: David Amstutz. The Mind Trust has awarded its Education Entrepreneur Fellowship to David Amstutz of Indianapolis to study and develop strategies for new forward-thinking, autonomous high schools to collaborate more effectively.

Amstutz, who was most recently headmaster at St. Richard's School, becomes only the 10th Education Entrepreneur Fellow selected via a rigorous application process. Amstutz began his career as a teacher at the Culver Academies and later held leadership positions at Park Tudor School and Culver. He also spent several years in leadership positions at Cummins.

"We are excited to work with David Amstutz to develop strategies for increased collaboration among autonomous high schools in Indianapolis. His unique background and skill set are ideal for this work," said David Harris, founder & CEO of The Mind Trust.

The Education Entrepreneur Fellowship was created in 2007 as the first of The Mind Trust's education incubators to recruit talented innovators to launch transformative non-profits and schools in Indianapolis.

About The Mind Trust

The Mind Trust is a nonprofit striving to give every Indianapolis student access to an excellent, high-quality public school; through recruiting and empowering top talent; launching and supporting new, innovative and high-quality public schools in Indianapolis; and engaging community stakeholders in conversations about innovation in public education.

Since 2006, The Mind Trust has impacted more than 132,000 Indianapolis public school students, attracted and placed more than 900 teachers and school leaders and raised more than \$73 million to bring innovative ideas into Indianapolis classrooms. More information can be found at www.themindtrust.org.

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