Lilly Endowment Inc. makes grants of more than $7 million to The Mind Trust

Grants will support the growth of Innovation Network Schools in Indianapolis and efforts to recruit talented educators for Indianapolis public schools

INDIANAPOLIS—(February 28, 2017) The Mind Trust announced today that it has received two grants totaling $7.17 million from Lilly Endowment Inc. to support both the growth of Innovation Network Schools in Indianapolis and efforts to recruit talented educators to teach and lead public school students in Indianapolis. Through these grants, the Endowment lends its support to The Mind Trust’s Grow Great Schools Campaign, an effort to raise $32 million by 2019 to support the organization’s work to double the number of students attending a high-quality school within Indianapolis Public School (IPS) boundaries over the next seven years.

The Endowment has made a grant of $3.75 million to support the nationally-recognized Innovation School Fellowship (ISF) program—a partnership of The Mind Trust, IPS and the Indianapolis Mayor’s Office. The program supports talented education leaders in starting Innovation Network Schools, which are public schools that are part of IPS but operate with full autonomy and are governed by independent 501(c)(3) boards. The IPS School Board, however, approves ISF fellows and Innovation School designations.

At Innovation Network Schools, which are authorized under recent legislation adopted by the Indiana General Assembly, school-level leaders are empowered to make operational and instructional decisions to best meet the needs of their students, including hiring staff, designing their own curricula, and extending the school day and year. At the same time, Innovation Network Schools have access to district buildings and, if they choose, district services.

In IPS, Innovation Network Schools are being created by restarting low-performing schools, launching new schools, and converting highly-successful existing schools. To date, The Mind Trust has supported the launch of three Innovation Network Schools and the conversion of two existing IPS schools into Innovation Network Schools. There are plans for more schools to be launched this fall. The Endowment’s most recent grant will support the Mind Trust’s efforts to both grow the number of and provide ongoing support to existing Innovation Network Schools serving IPS students.

"Providing educators the flexibility to utilize their talents in the ways they know will best meet their students’ academic needs is paramount. Innovation Network Schools are an integral tool in helping us transform IPS into a high-performing school district," said Dr. Lewis D. Ferebee, Superintendent of Indianapolis Public Schools. “We’re pleased to partner with the Indianapolis Mayor's Office and The Mind Trust to maximize the power of these schools and leverage this unique opportunity to make our district among the best in the nation. Our partnership would not be possible without the generous support of Lilly Endowment."
Additionally, the Endowment has made a grant of $3.42 million that will enable The Mind Trust to continue its work with the Indianapolis offices of Teach For America (TFA) and TNTP (formerly The New Teacher Project), to recruit teachers and school leaders to Indianapolis public schools and provide them with ongoing support. Recruited to Indianapolis by The Mind Trust in 2007 and 2008, respectively, TFA and TNTP are nationally-recognized for building a pipeline of excellent teachers and school leaders. Together, they have supplied public schools in Indianapolis with more than 900 teachers and leaders over the past decade.

“TFA and TNTP teachers are critical members of the Kindezi Academy team when it comes to inspiring our students and preparing them to solve the problems of an ever-changing global community,” said Shanae Staples, founding principal of Kindezi Academy, TFA alumna, and graduate of the TFA Indianapolis Principal Fellowship program. “The TFA and TNTP culture has strong alignment with Kindezi's school culture, which is built on the core values of lead with love, embrace uniqueness, cultivate character and ignite imagination.”

“Research shows that two of the most important factors to a successful school are a talented team of educators, who are then provided the autonomy to run their classroom or school in the best manner possible,” said David Harris, Founder and CEO of The Mind Trust. “We are so grateful for Lilly Endowment's continued support of the nationally unique Innovation Network Schools which empower talented school leaders to run highly successful, autonomous schools within the district, as well as for their ongoing support of TFA and TNTP, two nationally-acclaimed programs that provide high-quality teachers to work in our schools.”

More about the grants. Since 2007, Lilly Endowment has awarded more than $23 million to help support The Mind Trust’s work. The grants announced today are part of the Endowment’s longstanding commitment to K-12 education and will fund local education innovation in the following ways:

- **$3.75 million** will support the growth and success of Innovation Network Schools in Indianapolis over the next two years, beginning in 2017. The Mind Trust will select up to 10 Innovation School Fellows to launch new Innovation Network Schools and will offer support to new and existing Innovation Network schools that includes parent engagement support, implementation funding, strategic consulting, and school reviews.

- **$2 million** will help TFA recruit up to 200 top college graduates in 2017 and 2018 to teach in Indianapolis high-need public schools.

- **$400,000** will support TFA’s rigorous Indianapolis Principal Fellowship program—by recruiting and training up to twenty educators to serve as public school leaders for four years. TFA will lead this effort in partnership with Columbia University in New York.

- **$1.02 million** will support TNTP, an organization that recruits successful mid-career professionals to become teachers in high-need subject areas and schools, to recruit and support up to 60 new classroom teachers for two years beginning with the 2017 academic year.

About Lilly Endowment Inc.
Lilly Endowment Inc. is an Indianapolis-based private philanthropic foundation created in 1937 by three members of the Lilly family – J.K. Lilly Sr. and sons J.K. Jr. and Eli – through gifts of stock in their pharmaceutical business. In keeping with
the founders’ wishes, the Endowment supports the causes of community development, education and religion and maintains a special commitment to its hometown, Indianapolis, and home state, Indiana.

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.