



For Immediate Release

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## **THE MIND TRUST'S FOUNDER AND CEO STEPPING DOWN FOR LEADERSHIP POSITION WITH NEW NATIONAL EDUCATION ORGANIZATION**

*David Harris served 11 years at nationally recognized education nonprofit; The Mind Trust's Senior Vice President for Education Innovation will become CEO*

INDIANAPOLIS – (March 15, 2018) – The founder and CEO of The Mind Trust, who has helped establish Indianapolis as a model city for education innovation during his 11 years at the locally-based nonprofit, is leaving the organization to become a founding partner in a new national education organization.

David Harris will step down from The Mind Trust in April, when The Mind Trust's Senior Vice President of Education Innovation, Brandon Brown, will take over as the organization's CEO. Harris will remain in Indianapolis for his work with the new national organization, which is being formed to help cities around the country build the right conditions for education change, drawing from The Mind Trust's success in Indianapolis. The new organization will launch later this year.

Through his work with The Mind Trust and as charter schools director under former Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson, Harris has spent the last two decades working to turn his native Indianapolis into a magnet for the nation's top education talent and a hub for high-quality schools. As a result, Indianapolis is among the best-positioned cities in the country to dramatically improve its education system so that every student can attend a great school.

"I've worked with David for more than 20 years, and in that time, I have seen the powerful role he's played to reshape education in Indianapolis. Because of him, our city is upheld nationally as a model of education innovation and a place where the promise of a great education can be fulfilled for all kids," said former mayor Peterson, Founding Chair of The Mind Trust Board of directors. "The Mind Trust's Board selected Brandon to succeed David because his leadership, his expertise, and his passion for serving kids make him the best person to continue Indianapolis' momentum. We're pleased to have a strong succession plan to move the organization forward."

Brown, who leads The Mind Trust's work to launch and grow high-performing schools and education nonprofits, has played an integral part in the organization's success. Since joining The Mind Trust in 2015, he has overseen the development and launch of 11 Innovation Network Schools through the nonprofit's partnership with Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS) and The Mayor's Office, with five additional innovation and charter schools potentially set to open this fall. Previously, he served as Director of Charter Schools for Mayor Greg Ballard's Office of Education Innovation, where he led the opening of 15 innovative charter schools and managed oversight for 38 schools serving nearly 15,000

students. An Indianapolis-area native, Brown began his career as a classroom teacher and served in leadership roles with Teach For America Indianapolis.

Harris began his work in education as Peterson's first charter schools director in 2001. In that role, he helped build the nation's first mayor-run office to authorize public charter schools, creating a high bar for charter school quality and a rigorous accountability system. Those standards helped garner the mayor's charter initiative a 2006 Harvard Innovations in American Government Award and laid the foundation for Indianapolis' sector of high-performing charter schools.

Harris founded The Mind Trust in 2006 to help Indianapolis build upon this momentum and launch best-in-class schools. The organization has created three competitive "incubator" programs to attract top education leaders and innovators to Indianapolis and support them in starting high-quality schools and education nonprofits. The Mind Trust also provides the organizations it incubates with the critical supports they need to thrive, including up to two years of planning time, access to national experts, and support in engaging the community.

Local and national funders have invested more than \$80 million to fuel the nonprofit's work, and The Mind Trust has supported the launch of 17 schools and 10 education nonprofits and the ongoing development of several other schools. The Mind Trust also has recruited top national organizations such as Teach For America, TNTF and Stand for Children to Indianapolis.

Under Harris' leadership, The Mind Trust also has helped drive sweeping changes to how education is delivered in Indianapolis. In 2011, the organization released *Creating Opportunity Schools*, a bold plan for reinventing education in (IPS). The report cast a vision that IPS students would attend schools that enjoy the freedoms and accountability that have made other schools successful. Today, The Mind Trust is working in partnership with IPS and the Indianapolis Mayor's Office to incubate Innovation Network Schools with the freedoms called for in The Mind Trust's *Opportunity Schools* report.

Today, almost half of public students in the IPS boundaries are in charter schools or IPS innovation network schools.

"The Mind Trust has helped drive a seismic shift in education delivery in Indianapolis – towards a system that is driven by school-level leaders, highly accountable to families, and better at achieving results for students," said David Osborne, author of the books *Reinventing Government* (1992) and *Reinventing America's Schools* (2017). "Because of its work, Indianapolis is an outstanding example of a city that is reinventing education."

#### **ABOUT THE MIND TRUST**

The Mind Trust is a nonprofit striving to give every Indianapolis student access to an excellent, high-quality public school. The Mind Trust does this by 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 supported or incubated 17 schools, attracted and placed more than 1000 teachers and school leaders, and raised almost \$80 million to bring innovative ideas into Indianapolis classrooms. More information can be found at [themindtrust.org](http://themindtrust.org).