For Immediate Release

MEDIA CONTACT:
Kateri Whitley
kwhitley@themindtrust.org
C: 317-801-9682

The Mind Trust selects 30 Indianapolis school leaders for national principal fellowship

Indianapolis — (May 14, 2020) — The Mind Trust, an Indianapolis-based education nonprofit, today announced the fourth cohort of Indianapolis school leaders that the organization will sponsor to attend Relay Graduate School of Education’s school leadership programs. Relay is a nationally-recognized graduate school of education that provides next-level training and leadership development to school leaders across the country.

With support from the Richard M. Fairbanks Foundation, The Mind Trust is sponsoring 22 school leaders who will attend Relay’s National Principals Academy Fellowship, two school leaders for Relay’s National Principal Supervisors Academy, and six school leaders for Relay’s Instructional Leaders Professional Development. These 30 leaders join the 71 Indianapolis school leaders who have previously participated in Relay school leader fellowships with support from The Mind Trust and the Fairbanks Foundation.

Relay Graduate School of Education’s leadership programs have become valued and sought after by Indianapolis educators. The newest cohort was selected through a highly competitive application process. Past participants have noted transformational improvements in their schools’ teacher observation and feedback cycles, curriculum quality, and student data analysis.

“Relay’s National Principals Academy Fellowship sharpens the skills of Indianapolis school leaders, creating an immediate, positive impact on the students and teachers they serve,” said Joe White, Senior Vice President of School Support at The Mind Trust. “We are proud to sponsor another wave of excellent educators and know the continued growth of Relay trained leaders strengthens the level of education talent in our city.”

“Investing in high-quality training for school leaders is a critical step to ensure schools can provide an excellent education to all students,” said Claire Fiddian-Green, President and CEO of the Richard M. Fairbanks Foundation. “Past Relay cohorts have shared how their experience helped them drive student achievement, retain and develop great teachers, and improve school culture. We are proud to continue supporting this impactful development opportunity for Indianapolis school leaders.”
Relay’s National Principals Academy Fellowship and National Principal Supervisors Academy are intensive, one-year programs focused on transformational school and systems leadership that focus on Relay’s key instructional pillars: observation and feedback, data-driven instruction, positive student culture of high expectations, adult professional development, instructional planning, an aligned staff culture, and strategic leadership. The six fellows attending Relay’s Instructional Leaders Professional Development receive a condensed, one-week version of the Fellowship focused on instructional leadership skills for teacher leaders, assistant principals, and instructional coaches.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Relay has made adjustments to programming that will help ensure the safety of participants and presenters.

"As Indianapolis continues to make progress on our mission to provide every student a seat in a high-quality classroom, Relay’s National Principals Academy Fellowship is an amazing opportunity for leaders in our building to learn from top school leaders from across the country,” said Gabriel Surface, Director of Academics at Invent Learning Hub. “The National Principals Academy Fellowship puts us in a cohort of like-minded educators, allowing us to practice important skills, receive targeted feedback, and take those skills back to our building to raise the level of instruction our students receive every day."

The fellows in this year’s cohort represent 17 public schools in Indianapolis, including charter schools, Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS), and IPS Innovation Network Schools, and for the first time, a Marion County township district. Forty percent of the incoming cohort are leaders of color.

The 30 leaders are:

2020 National Principals Academy Fellows

Jodi Hale, Instructional Coach, Avondale Meadows Academy
Candace Jones, K-2 Instructional Coach, Avondale Meadows Academy
Kandis Pearson, Assistant Principal, Avondale Meadows Academy
Paul Wirth, Principal, Christian Park School 82
Ashli Adams, Instructional Coach, Cold Spring School
Allyson Peterkin, Principal, Daniel Webster School 46
Karon Wallace, Interim Co-Principal, Eastwood Middle School
Sheena Roach, 7th/8th Grade ELA Teacher, Edison School for the Arts
Sarah Zack, Principal, Eleanor Skillen School 34
Shy-Quon Ely, Head of School, Ignite Achievement Academy @ Elder W. Diggs School 42
Jessica English, Principal, Ignite Achievement Academy @ Elder W. Diggs School 42
Penny Inskeep, Director of Special Programs, Invent Learning Hub
Gabriel Surface, Director of Academics, Invent Learning Hub
Erin Benak, Dean of Instruction, Kindezi Academy
Stacy Coleman, Principal, Henry W. Longfellow Medical/STEM Middle School 28
About The Mind Trust
The Mind Trust is an Indianapolis-based education nonprofit organization that works to build a system of schools that gives every student in Indianapolis, no exceptions, access to a high-quality education. The Mind Trust does this by building a supportive environment for schools through policy and community engagement, empowering talented educators to launch new schools, and providing existing schools with the support they need to hire world-class talent and achieve excellence. Since 2006, The Mind Trust has supported the launch of 29 schools and helped place more than 1,500 teachers and school leaders in Indianapolis classrooms. More information can be found at themindtrust.org.

About Relay Graduate School of Education
The Relay Graduate School of Education is a national, accredited, nonprofit institution of higher education whose mission is to teach teachers and school leaders to develop in all students the academic skills and strength of character needed to succeed in college and life. Now serving over 3,500 teachers in 18 cities and more than 1,200 leaders nationwide, Relay is eager to bring about transformational change in educator preparation. Relay is committed to using practice and feedback to become the place where a new generation of continuously improving, results-focused
individuals can fulfill their destiny in the world’s greatest profession. For more information, please visit relay.edu or follow Relay on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter (@RelayGSE).

About the Richard M. Fairbanks Foundation
The Richard M. Fairbanks Foundation strives to advance the vitality of Indianapolis and the wellbeing of its people by addressing the city’s most significant challenges and opportunities. The Foundation is focused on three issue-areas: education, tobacco and opioid addiction, and the life-sciences. To advance its work, the Foundation implements a three-pronged approach: strategic grantmaking, evidence-based advocacy, and cross-sector collaborations and convenings. Learn more at RMFF.org.