

**ORLEANS PARISH SCHOOL BOARD**

# CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION RECOMMENDATION REPORT 2017

*National Association of Charter School Authorizers*

**November 10, 2017**

*New Charter School Application for*

**INSPIRENOLA (School Name TBD)**

*Submitted by*

**INSPIRENOLA**

*Evaluation Team*

**TEAM LEAD: HAROLD LEE**

**EVALUATORS: GAIL LAZARD**

**ANTHONY OLIVER**

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## INTRODUCTION

Across New Orleans, more than 90 percent of public school students currently attend charter schools. These schools have led to a dramatic increase in the number of students meeting academic proficiency standards and the performance gap between students in Orleans Parish and Louisiana as a whole has dramatically decreased over the last 12 years.

Despite these gains, additional progress is needed. Students deserve high quality schools where their interests will come first, where they and their families will have choice, and where educators will have the tools and support they need to be successful.

The Fall 2017 charter school application process seeks proposals from highly qualified applicants to open new Type 1 charter schools and transform existing district-run schools into Type 3 charter schools.

### *Focus on Quality*

The 2017 Request for Proposals and the resulting evaluation process are rigorous and demanding. The process is meant to ensure that approved charter school operators possess the capacity to implement a school model that is likely to dramatically increase student outcomes. Successful applicants will demonstrate high levels of expertise and capacity in the areas of curriculum and instruction, school finance, educational and operational leadership, and non-profit governance, as well as high expectations for excellence in student achievement and professional standards. An application that merits a recommendation for approval will present a clear, realistic picture of how the school expects to operate; be detailed in how this school will raise student achievement; and inspire confidence in the applicant's capacity to successfully implement the proposed academic and operational plans.

### *Evaluation Process*

For the 2017 RFP cycle, OPSB partnered with the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) to manage the application process and to provide independent, merit-based recommendations regarding whether to approve or deny each proposal. NACSA assembled an independent evaluation team that included both national and local expertise related to charter school start-up and operation. This report from the evaluation team is a culmination of three stages of review:

#### **PROPOSAL EVALUATION**

The evaluation team conducted individual and group assessment of the merits of the proposal based on the complete written submission. In the case of experienced school operators, OPSB and NACSA supplemented this written evaluation with due diligence to verify claims made in the proposal related to past performance.

#### **CAPACITY INTERVIEW**

After reviewing the application and discussing the findings of their individual reviews, the evaluation team conducted an in-person interview to assess the team's overall capacity to implement the proposal as written in the application.

#### **CONSENSUS JUDGMENT**

Following the capacity interview, the evaluation team came to consensus regarding whether to recommend the proposal for approval or denial. The duty of the evaluation team is to recommend approval or denial of each application based on its merits against OPSB-approved evaluation criteria. The authority and responsibility to decide whether to approve or deny each application rests with the members of OPSB.

### *Report Contents*

This evaluation report includes the following:

#### **PROPOSAL OVERVIEW**

Basic information about the proposed school as presented in the application.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

An overall judgment regarding whether the proposal meets the criteria for approval.

#### **EVALUATION**

Analysis of the proposal based on four primary areas of plan development and the capacity of the applicant team to execute the plan as presented:

School: academic model and schedule, LEA status, special student populations, goals and metrics, enrollment plans, school culture, and family and community engagement.

People: founder's submission, governing board, staff, mission critical partners, and education service providers.

Operations: start-up plan, facility, and financial readiness.

Finance: budget.

## EVALUATION: ADDENDA

For applicants on the existing or experienced operator tracks, applicants that are or will form a corporate partnership, schools whose primary instructional environment is computer-based or virtual, applicants seeking or potentially willing to seek a match to operate an existing Orleans public charter school or school facility, or applicants seeking to start, transform or convert a school serving Grades 9-12, an analysis of:

Experienced Operator Addendum (if applicable): past school performance, growth plan, scale strategy, and risks and associated contingency plans.

Corporate Partnership Addendum (if applicable): corporate partnership formation, corporate partner track record, legal relationships, and organizational structure.

Virtual School Addendum (if applicable): location, educational program, instructional staff, state and federally mandated services, evaluation and assessment, school operations, and parent and community involvement.

Transformation Addendum (if applicable): transformation overview, operator track record, educational program, school operations, metrics and goals, and community engagement.

High School Addendum (if applicable): state and district graduation standards, supporting success for all students – truancy prevention, remediation and intervention, ensuring college and career readiness, and strong start – 9th grade transition plan.

## RATINGS CHARACTERISTICS

Evaluation teams assess each application against the published evaluation criteria. In general, the following definitions guide evaluator ratings:

### Meets the Standard

The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues. It addresses the topic with specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation; presents a clear, realistic picture of how the school expects to operate; and inspires confidence in the applicant's capacity to carry out the plan effectively.

### Meets the Standard with Reservations

The response meets the criteria in many respects, but lacks detail and/or requires additional information in one or more areas.

### Approaches the Standard

The response meets the criteria in some respects but has substantial gaps in a number of areas.

### Does Not Meet the Standard

The response is wholly undeveloped or significantly incomplete; demonstrates lack of preparation; or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the viability of the plan or the applicant's ability to carry it out.

## PROPOSAL OVERVIEW

*Applicant Name:*

**INSPIRENOLA**

*Proposed School Name:*

**INSPIRENOLA (School Name TBD)**

*Mission:*

The mission of InspireNOLA Charter Schools is to transform and inspire an educational movement.

*Proposed Location:*

Orleans Parish

*Enrollment Projections:*

<i>Academic Year</i>	<i>Planned # Students</i>	<i>Maximum # Students</i>	<i>Grades Served</i>
2018-19	742	769	PK-8
2019-20	742	769	PK-8
2020-21	742	769	PK-8
2021-22	742	769	PK-8
2022-23	742	769	PK-8
At Capacity	742	769	PK-8

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*Recommendation:*

**INSPIRENOLA (School Name TBD)**

**APPROVE**

### *Summary Analysis:*

The evaluation team recommends approval of InspireNOLA's application to transform a Type 1 charter school in Orleans Parish.

InspireNOLA is a non-profit charter management organization (CMO) that has a consistent track record of strong academic outcomes and experience with transformation schools. Two schools in the InspireNOLA network, Edna Karr High School and Alice M. Harte Elementary Charter School, are two of the highest-performing schools in the city. They are also among the highest demand schools in New Orleans with over 2000 applications received in 2016 for 200 available seats at Wilson and Harte combined (Proposal Narrative, pg. 27). In 2015, InspireNOLA took over Andrew Wilson Elementary after the previous operator had its charter revoked for poor academic performance. In 2016, the school's School Performance Score (SPS) grew by nearly 30 points in just one year, moving the school from an "F" rating to a "C" rating. In 2017, Andrew Wilson's SPS continued its upward trajectory, moving up to 70.3 while earning the maximum of 10 progress points.

InspireNOLA's growth plan is strategic and well-planned. The applicant is able to articulate how their mission to provide high-quality open-enrollment charter school options to students in Louisiana aligns with planned growth across the state in the next five years. InspireNOLA's scale strategy is structured and the network has clear processes to embed key practices in new transformation schools to ensure a quality start. There are 33 individuals in the CMO's central office that provide services for each school site including academic strategy and implementation, talent management, support for compliance and reporting, and other operational support.

InspireNOLA has developed strategies to secure a strong leadership pipeline while ensuring that school culture, academic interventions, and quality systems and structures are continuously improving in the new schools. The CMO recognizes that opening a transformation school is drastically different from operating a new start school, and the applicant is preparing to thoughtfully engage the community while raising funds for the CMO's expansion.

InspireNOLA's mission to ensure that all of its students are prepared for success in college and career is clear and compelling. The CMO's educational model is grounded in the four key pillars of "positive culture; rigorous academics; continuous growth; and accountability." InspireNOLA provides a rigorous and engaging academic program to its students.

InspireNOLA's network leadership and governing board have the experience and capacity to operate highly successful charter schools. InspireNOLA has developed key tenets of the transformation model that have proven to be highly effective in New Orleans. InspireNOLA has a clear and structured process to ensure the quality implementation of transformation strategies and has mitigated its biggest risks. Based on a thorough evaluation of the application and capacity interview, the evaluation team recommends approval for InspireNOLA's transformation application.

### *Summary of Section Ratings:*

Opening and maintaining a successful, high-performing charter school depends on having a complete, coherent plan and identifying highly capable individuals to execute that plan. It is not an endeavor for which strengths in some areas can compensate for material weaknesses in others. *Therefore, in order to receive a recommendation for approval, the application must Meet the Standard in all areas.*

#### **SCHOOL**

Meets the Standard

#### **PEOPLE**

Meets the Standard

#### **OPERATIONS**

Meets the Standard

#### **FINANCE**

Meets the Standard

#### **EXPERIENCED OPERATOR ADDENDUM**

Meets the Standard

#### **TRANSFORMATION ADDENDUM**

Meets the Standard

## SCHOOL

## RATING:

**INSPIRENOLA (School Name TBD)**

**Meets the Standard**

### *Plan Summary:*

InspireNOLA is a CMO that currently operates five charter schools in New Orleans. InspireNOLA seeks to transform a Grades PK-8 open enrollment charter school with a targeted enrollment of 742 students.

The CMO's educational model is grounded in the four key pillars of "positive culture; rigorous academics; continuous growth; and accountability." InspireNOLA schools are divided into two to three smaller academies based on grade levels within the school. InspireNOLA's instructional framework is built on the gradual release model and includes Do Nows; I Do, We Do, You Do; and Exit Tickets. InspireNOLA schools currently utilize more than 17 different curriculums. The CMO has created curriculum guides to aid teachers and assist in unit design and lesson planning.

InspireNOLA utilizes a variety of assessments to inform classroom instruction including DIBELS, MAP, LEAP 360, and internally created benchmark assessments in English language arts (ELA), math, science, and social studies.

The professional development plan for teachers includes weekly grade level or content-specific meetings and weekly after school training and support. Data analysis meetings are scheduled after each interim assessment.

### *Analysis:*

The School section meets the standard. InspireNOLA's mission to ensure that all of its students are prepared for success in college and career is clear and compelling. The CMO's four core pillars are clearly articulated throughout the narrative.

InspireNOLA provides a rigorous academic program to its students. The CMO utilizes a consistent and structured instructional framework to ensure that curriculum, instruction, and assessment are tightly aligned. All lessons follow a common structure and pacing guides ensure that teachers and students are able to cover and master state standards throughout the year. The network emphasizes the use of measurable objectives for every lesson and data is used—from exit tickets, interim assessments, and summative assessments—to guide instruction and support both students and teachers.

InspireNOLA sets ambitious goals and holds all stakeholders accountable for results. A culture of high expectations is evident throughout the narrative. Goals are set for schools, grade levels, and individual students across the network. Quarterly, goals are reviewed to measure progress and allow for course corrections. InspireNOLA presents academic performance goals that are both ambitious and realistic for its transformation school. The goals are based on the current performance of schools that are in danger of not being renewed, and they ensure that in five years, the new school will have made substantial gains while earning a "B" rating.

InspireNOLA's professional development program is well-researched and is evaluated regularly. Through the teacher training program and continued development throughout the school year, teachers will learn how to implement the academic framework and instructional strategies to ensure consistent, high-quality instruction.

The application provides evidence that InspireNOLA adheres to the applicable federal, state, and local laws pertaining to serving students of special populations, including English language learner (ELL) and gifted students. By using ChildFind to screen for students with disabilities, InspireNOLA ensures that there is a process that, if implemented correctly, will ensure that students do not slip through the cracks. InspireNOLA offers a variety of settings for students with disabilities in its current operating schools including inclusion in general education classrooms, pull-out resource classrooms, and self-contained classrooms. However, two of InspireNOLA's schools, Alice Harte and Edna Karr, serve a smaller percentage of students with disabilities and ELLs than city and state averages. This calls into question the effectiveness of the CMO's recruitment plan for these students. Additionally, the percentage of students with disabilities was misreported in the Experienced Operator Addendum for the 2014-15 school year. At the interview, the applicant clarified that the data provided included gifted students, which explains the discrepancy.

InspireNOLA presents a set of values and staff behaviors and interactions that align with the mission and are supported by systems and processes for teachers to learn and implement the desired values and behaviors. The positive behavior and academic systems described in the application align with the high expectations of the school, and the student induction processes ensure that students are able to meet these expectations.

## PEOPLE

## RATING:

**INSPIRENOLA (School Name TBD)**

**Meets the Standard**

### *Plan Summary:*

InspireNOLA is led by CEO Jamar McKneely. Mr. McKneely worked for seven years at Edna Karr High School as both a teacher and assistant principal. He later became the principal of Alice Harte Charter School before co-founding InspireNOLA in 2013. Wayne Crochet is an attorney and the governing board president of InspireNOLA.

A single governing board at InspireNOLA oversees all schools within the network and will oversee the transformation school, if approved. There are nine members on the governing board with three standing committees (i.e., finance, legal, and strategy). Governing board members have expertise in teaching, administration, finance, law, fundraising, and community relations.

InspireNOLA plans to employ 76.5 full-time staff including a principal, three assistant principals, two deans, three instructional coaches, 30 core subject teachers, three behavior interventionists, and two parent/community liaisons at the new school.

InspireNOLA's partners include a variety of funders including the Charter School Growth Fund and New Schools for New Orleans. The CMO has also developed partnerships with community organizations such as 100 Black Men, Community Works, and Xavier University.

### *Analysis:*

The People section meets the standard. Mr. McKneely is a seasoned educator and was a former school principal at two schools that are now a part of the InspireNOLA network. The CMO has a demonstrated track record of success, with both of its flagship schools (Edna Karr and Alice Harte) significantly outperforming both district and state averages on the LEAP.

InspireNOLA has an effective governance structure and the governing board is aware of its responsibilities to oversee the CMO's academic, financial, and strategic success. Governing board members are committed to being an integral part of the community while continuously developing external relationships that will benefit the CMO. Governing board members have the expertise and community involvement necessary to successfully supervise the school transformation. However, there was limited discussion in the application regarding governing board recruitment and training. During the interview, the governing board did not clearly articulate a thoughtful strategy for recruiting new governing board members to fill any skill gaps to ensure effective governance. Mr. Crochet stated during the interview that InspireNOLA was looking to add a governing board member with financial expertise. Despite these concerns, the overall capacity of the governing board to oversee a high-performing charter school network was evident.

InspireNOLA clearly articulates the plan to recruit, train, and retain teachers and school leaders within the network. The applicant has developed a strong bench of future principals to lead the next transformation school. Through its Principal Incubation program, future school leaders are developed in-house. Mr. McKneely stated that there are four internal candidates that have the skill and will to lead the new school. InspireNOLA searches for talent both locally and nationally and has established partnerships with Xavier University, Tulane University, TeachNOLA, and Teach for America. InspireNOLA employs a director of human capital who leads the recruitment and onboarding of staff. Within the network, 85 percent of teachers are certified with an average of seven years of teaching experience.

InspireNOLA has cultivated numerous philanthropic partners to support expansion of the school model. The network has received millions of dollars in support from organizations such as the Charter School Growth Fund, New Schools for New Orleans, and New Schools for Baton Rouge. Partnerships with community groups also provide mentorship services, mental health initiatives, and enrichment programs to InspireNOLA's schools.

## OPERATIONS

## RATING:

**INSPIRENOLA (School Name TBD)**

**Meets the Standard**

### *Plan Summary:*

InspireNOLA's start-up plan assumes that it will have access to the new transformation school site by February 2018. The CMO's director of human capital, director of operations, and senior manager of community will implement the start-up plan prior to the hiring of the school leader and academy principals, which will occur by April 2018. A teacher recruitment plan will be implemented starting in January 2018 with the majority of teachers being hired between February and June 2018. Student and family recruitment activities include developing marketing materials, conducting community presentations, meeting with community-based organizations, reaching out to feeder schools, and hosting open houses. Other major components in the start-up plan include plans for facilities and maintenance, transportation, food service, security, technology, and professional development.

InspireNOLA's facility requirements include space to house three academies with a minimum of 29 classrooms, 15 specialty rooms, and eight breakout rooms. InspireNOLA's facility team includes four central office staff members.

Charlie Mackles is the CFO for all InspireNOLA schools. Mr. Mackles reports to Mr. McKneely and provides regular updates to Shawn Rogers, the governing board's treasurer.

### *Analysis:*

The Operations section meets the standard. InspireNOLA has the experience and collective qualifications necessary to effectively implement the start-up plan and operate successful charter schools. The start-up plan includes a detailed listing of the tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals for the opening of the school. It also includes plans for insurance, technology, security, and equipment that are supported by policies to ensure a well-resourced academic program.

The network provides a strong plan for identifying and upgrading an existing school facility. As a Type 1 transformation school, InspireNOLA will be sited in the facility of the closed school. InspireNOLA's facility team has experience maintaining a variety of facility types and the application provides assurances that the building will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Mr. Mackles has the expertise and experience necessary to ensure that InspireNOLA and the new transformation school are financially viable. The financial plan has appropriate segregation of financial duties with adequate systems in place to ensure school-level financial stability. There is a clear understanding of the role of the governing board, finance committee, and CFO. The finance committee is responsible for fiduciary oversight and reports to the governing board. The application highlighted a five-phase process for budget review. The CMO has over \$8M in reserves for contingencies and provided a contingency plan if revenues fall short of expectations which included utilizing reserve funds, delaying capital projects, consolidating positions, and other targeted reductions.

## FINANCE

## RATING:

**Meets the Standard**

**INSPIRENOLA (School Name TBD)**

### *Plan Summary:*

The application details the five year financial projections as follows:

Year 1: \$8,099,850 in revenues and \$7,291,015 in expenses, with an ending fund balance of \$79,012.

Year 5: \$8,190,888 in revenues and \$7,418,446 in expenses, with an ending fund balance of \$222,653.

The applicant expects to enroll 742 students in Grades PK-8 in the first year of operation and receive \$10,916 in per pupil revenue based on all funding sources. Twelve percent of students are assumed to be special education students and five percent are assumed to be ELL students. InspireNOLA's CMO fee is 11 percent of total revenue. InspireNOLA has received a Charter School Program Replication Grant and has allocated \$127,221 for the start-up year.

In order to build the budget, InspireNOLA utilized its recent experience of transforming another PK-8 school, Andrew Wilson Elementary. The applicant will have a leadership team that includes a head of school and three academy principals in the first year.

### *Analysis:*

The Finance section meets the standard. InspireNOLA has the capacity to ensure that the school is financially viable. The application provided key principles to guide budget management including "being conservative, costs analysis, and teamwork." InspireNOLA utilizes a measured process to ensure key programs continue to operate successfully in the midst of budget cuts. There is a process to implement an emergency budget and the application included multiple strategies to ensure fiscal viability. The CMO's recent experience with Andrew Wilson allowed the applicant to create a more in-depth spending plan for future transformations. InspireNOLA has a strong track record of fundraising and has raised over \$5.5M in its brief three-year history.

The financial plan and budget presented in the application are conservative and represent revenues that only come from public funds. This approach guarantees that the applicant will not experience financial challenges that are unique to the school. Any challenges faced would be seen across schools in the New Orleans area. While the school will receive support from InspireNOLA's fundraising efforts, these funds are not mission-critical. The CMO's most recent financial audit was performed by an independent firm and returned no findings or instances of noncompliance.

## EXPERIENCED OPERATOR ADDENDUM

**INSPIRENOLA (School Name TBD)**

**RATING:**

**Meets the Standard**

### *Plan Summary:*

InspireNOLA currently operates five charter schools in New Orleans. Of these five schools, the CMO has operated three for at least one year. According to Louisiana's latest state report card data, Edna Karr High School and Alice M. Harte Elementary Charter School are rated as "A" schools. Andrew Wilson was taken over by InspireNOLA in 2015 and moved from an "F" rating to a "C" rating in the 2015-16 school year.

In 2017-18, InspireNOLA took over the operation of two additional schools, McDonough #42 and Eleanor McMain. The network is seeking a transformation school in the 2018-19 school year and plans to turn its focus to Baton Rouge. The CMO plans to open two schools in Baton Rouge in 2020-21 with a high school opening in 2022-23.

InspireNOLA noted a compliance violation in the 2016-17 school year regarding an enrollment issue for a student placed at Alice Harte. The application also noted one instance of open litigation alleging that a student was discriminated against based on age.

### *Analysis:*

The Experienced Operator Addendum meets the standard. Two schools in the InspireNOLA network, Edna Karr High School and Alice M. Harte Elementary Charter School, are two of the highest-performing charter schools in the city. They are also among the highest demand schools in New Orleans with over 2000 applications received in 2016 for 200 available seats at Wilson and Harte combined (Proposal Narrative, pg. 27). In addition to being rated as "A" schools, InspireNOLA provided compelling 2014-15 data from Stanford's Center for Research on Educational Outcomes (CREDO) that demonstrates that the CMO is moving and growing students faster than its district counterparts. For example, Alice Harte demonstrated an effect size of 0.20 in reading and 0.28 in math. This translates to 144 additional days of learning in reading and 202 additional days of learning in math annually. In 2015, InspireNOLA took over Andrew Wilson Elementary after the previous operator had its charter revoked for poor academic performance. In 2016, the school's SPS grew by nearly 30 points in just one year, moving the school from an "F" rating to a "C" rating. In 2017, Andrew Wilson's SPS continued its upward trajectory, moving up to 70.3 while earning the maximum of 10 progress points.

InspireNOLA's growth plan is strategic and well-planned. The applicant is able to articulate how their mission to provide high-quality open-enrollment charter school options to students in Louisiana aligns with planned growth across the state in the next five years. The CMO plans to open two schools in Baton Rouge in 2020-21 and will not open any new schools in the 2019-20 school year to reflect on the experiences of their new school in New Orleans. By taking a year off, InspireNOLA will have the opportunity to improve all of its current schools before launching in a new region.

InspireNOLA's scale strategy is structured and the CMO has clear processes to embed key practices in new transformation schools to ensure a quality start. There are 33 individuals in the CMO's central office and Mr. McKneely was able to explain the thought process around adding capacity at the network level. The long-term plan is to grow the central office to 40 members based on the six school model. The central office provides a wide range of services for each school site including academic strategy and implementation, talent management, support for compliance and reporting, and other operational support.

InspireNOLA has developed systems/strategies to secure a strong leadership pipeline while ensuring that school culture, academic interventions, and quality systems and structures are continuously improving in the new schools. The CMO recognizes that opening a transformation school is drastically different from operating a new start school, and the applicant is preparing to thoughtfully engage the community while raising funds for the CMO's expansion. The compliance violation and open litigation issues appear to be minor and should have no impact on future school openings.

## TRANSFORMATION ADDENDUM

**INSPIRENOLA (School Name TBD)**

**RATING:**

**Meets the Standard**

### *Plan Summary:*

InspireNOLA is applying for one transformation charter school in the 2018-19 school year and will seek to serve all students if approved. The CMO's strategies to take on additional schools include "leadership pipeline and development; recruiting and developing new teachers and staff; separating schools into grade-level academies; establishing and maintaining school culture; implementing interventions early; setting goals and measuring progress toward them; developing an effective network office; and ensuring consistent, quality systems and structures."

InspireNOLA's specific transformation tenets include student culture, parental involvement, and teacher and staff efficacy. The CMO matches these domains with goals to track the transformation school's success.

### *Analysis:*

The Transformation Addendum meets the standard. InspireNOLA's specific transformation strategies are clear and informed by the CMO's previous transformation experiences.

InspireNOLA has a robust plan to engage parents at the transformation school and will invest heavily in resources and opportunities for feedback. Parents and community leaders will have the opportunity to provide feedback to school leaders before the school year begins, as they will be invited to the school at least every other week. InspireNOLA will utilize community partners to recruit students and create an external marketing campaign connecting the transformation to its existing high-performing schools. The focus on retaining students who are currently at the school and providing appropriate cultural and extracurricular activities is likely to be successful given the experience at Andrew Wilson where 78 percent of students remained in the school after InspireNOLA took over.

InspireNOLA also has a strong plan to consistently engage parents throughout the school year to ensure continued enrollment. Parents will have frequent opportunities to visit the school and be an integral part of their child's education. The plan to implement a parent-teacher organization at each school will allow parents to have a continuous voice in all aspects of the school.

InspireNOLA has a clear and structured process to ensure the quality implementation of transformation strategies. The application lays out specific goals that will be measured at regular intervals such as to ensure increased student investment, increased parent involvement, and increased teacher and staff efficacy. These goals include 95 percent student attendance, a suspension rate of less than 10 percent, an 85 percent return rate from the current school, 80 percent attendance at quarterly report card days, and a staff retention rate of over 90 percent throughout the school year. During the interview, Mr. McKneely noted that in the short time that InspireNOLA has been operating McDonough 42, there have been zero arrests and the community is returning back to the school. He also noted that staff attendance rates at McDonough 42 are at 95 percent and student attendance rates are at 93 percent, both very strong indicators of staff and student investment.

## EVALUATOR BIOGRAPHIES

### *Evaluator's Name*

#### **HAROLD LEE**

Harold (Harry) Lee is an independent education consultant specializing in charter school authorization, new school development, school oversight/evaluation, renewal services, and board training/capacity building. Most recently, Harry worked as the Chief Strategy Officer at iLearn Schools, a non-profit charter management organization based in New Jersey. From 2011-16, he worked at the New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Charter Schools serving as the School Performance and Accountability Manager for 3 years and the Director for 2 years. In 2014, Harry completed the NACSA Leaders Program, the nation's only professional development opportunity for current and upcoming leaders in charter school authorizing offices. He holds a B.A. from Yale University and an M.P.A. from Rutgers University-Newark.

### *Evaluator's Name*

#### **GAIL LAZARD**

Gail Lazard is a retired educator with over 30 years of experience in the education of public school students in the state of Louisiana. Gail has worked as a teacher, principal, and central office administrator in New Orleans and at the Louisiana Department of Education. She has also worked as a consultant for the Louisiana Department of Education - Charter School Office and the National Association of Charter School Authorizers. In addition, Gail holds a B.A. and a M.Ed. +30 from the University of New Orleans. Gail is certified by the state of Louisiana as a teacher, principal, supervisor of student teaching, parish/city school supervisor of instruction, and superintendent of schools.

### *Evaluator's Name*

#### **ANTHONY OLIVER**

Anthony Oliver is currently an assistant principal in the Jefferson County School System in Birmingham, Alabama. Most recently, Anthony served as Executive Director at Breakthrough Birmingham, an education non-profit dedicated to providing high-quality academic programming to underserved students and preparing the next generation of teachers. Anthony has also served as a high-school mathematics teacher and coach, and has worked as a principal intern at Newton North High School where he worked to create access to challenging academic curriculum for African American students and students from low socioeconomic classes. Anthony holds a B.A. in mathematics from the Virginia Military Institute, an M.A.E. in secondary education - mathematics curriculum and instruction from the University of Alabama at Birmingham, and an Ed.M in school leadership from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Enter biography.