

Table of Contents

Application Narrative..... 2

 Absolute Priority 1—Title IA Schoolwide Program Eligibility..... 2

 Absolute Priority 4— Multi-Local Educational Agency Grants..... 5

 Competitive Preference Priority 1—Meeting Student Social, Emotional, and Academic Needs9

 Competitive Preference Priority 2—Strengthening Cross-Agency Coordination and
 Community Engagement to Advance Systemic Change 11

Subpart B: Absolute Priority 4— Multi-Local Educational Agency Grants. 16

 1. Need for project..... 16

 2. Quality of the Project Design 31

 3. Quality of the Project Services..... 71

 4. Adequacy of Resources..... 73

 5. Quality of the Management Plan..... 74

 6. Quality of the Project Evaluation 97

Application Narrative

Absolute Priority 1—Title IA Schoolwide Program Eligibility

Marian University, the applicant, together with the Gary Community School Corporation (GCSC) and the 21st Century Charter Schools (21CCS) in Gary, Indiana, have collaborated to prepare this proposal, “**City Connects Midwest: Reimagining Student Success in the Magic City**” and will implement the proposed Full-Service Community Schools (FSCS) Program at nine schools, both Title I eligible districts. In accordance with section 4622(1)(B) of the ESEA, the project will engage a consortium that includes (a) one or more LEAs and (b) one or more community-based organizations, non-profit organizations, or other public or private entities. Through this consortium, the project meets the criteria of Absolute Priority 1.

About Marian University: Marian University (Marian) is a private non-profit organization, thereby meeting the criteria as an eligible applicant for an FSCS grant. Marian University’s Fred S. Klipsch Educators College (Educators College) is home to the Center for Vibrant Schools. The Center serves as the Midwest Technical Assistance Center for City Connects (City Connects Midwest). Launched in 2021, the Center for Vibrant Schools offers subject-matter expertise, school-improvement programs, and process-enhancement techniques to strengthen student learning outcomes. Center staff collaborates with local educators and schools to implement the City Connects model—an evidence-based approach to student support that addresses strengths and needs by connecting every child in a school to a personalized set of school- and community-based services and enrichments. As the City Connects Midwest Technical Assistance provider, Marian has the capacity and experience to provide capacity-building expertise and leadership support to school and community partners and effectively coordinate pipeline services for GCSC and 21CCS. The Center offers a robust platform where Marian will collaborate with the district FSCSs and

community-based organizations to learn and implement systematic, evidence-based, integrated student support.

About Gary Community School Corporation: (GCSC): GCSC is an LEA receiving Title I funding administered by the Indiana Department of Education and meets the qualifications for FSCS program eligibility as defined in ESEA Section 1114(b). The LEA serves over 4,700 students who attend 11 different schools. GCSC’s mission is “Doing what is best for students...today, tomorrow, every day. “8 Of the 280 full-time teachers working in the district, 99% have three or more years of teaching experience. GCSC received a state rating of “D,” indicating low levels of student proficiency, growth, graduation, and college and career readiness. GCSC is located in Lake County, Indiana, where about 10% of the population is without a high school diploma, and only 23% of the population has earned a bachelor’s degree or higher. The poverty rate among children is 25% (U.S. Census Bureau).

The public school district in Gary, Indiana, Gary Community School Corporation, has been in significant financial decline for decades. It was once dubbed “The Magic City” for its booming industry. This decline is evident in that twenty-one (21) GCSC schools have closed over the past two decades. Of the 4,770 students in the GCSC district, 73.5% are eligible for the free/ reduced lunch program. Students in GCSC perform on average lower than the state average in reading, ELA, math, science, and social studies in all tested grade levels, with none of its schools ranking higher than a “D” grade by the state.

Additionally, GCSC graduates are less likely to enter college or earn a career credential than the state average, with only 37% of students leaving the school prepared for college. Student enrollment characteristics are provided below in Table 1. Lastly, GCSC became the first school system in Indiana involved in a state takeover in 2017 when control of the district was transferred

from the elected school board and appointed school superintendent to the State’s Distressed Unit Appeals Board.

About 21st Century Charter Schools: 21st Century Charter Schools is an LEA receiving Title I funding administered by the Indiana Department of Education and meets the FSCS program eligibility requirements as defined in ESEA Section 1114(b). The school serves grades K-12 and is operated by GEO Academies, a non-profit network of eight charter schools in Gary and Indianapolis, Indiana, and Baton Rouge, Louisiana, serving 3,800 predominantly African American and low-income students. The 21st Century Charter School is GEO Academy’s only school in Gary. The school received a State Grade of “D” during the most recent assessment period. While the school does not meet federal expectations in the areas of academic achievement and student growth in most areas, the school exceeds expectations for four-year graduation and student attendance for high school.¹ Student enrollment characteristics are provided below in Table 1.

Table 1. GCSC and 21CCS LEA Characteristics Compared to Indiana, 2022–2023			
	Indiana	GCSC	21CCS
Enrollment	1.11M	4,770	1,264
Asian	2.8%	0%	0%
African American/Black	12.5%	91.5%	93.7%
Hispanic	13.2%	4.0%	4.0%
Multiracial	5.2%	3.3%	2.1%
Native American	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%
White	66.1%	1.1%	0.2%
Students receiving free or reduced lunches	47.0%	73.5%	85.2%

¹ Indiana Department of Education. 21st Century Charter Sch of Gary (4164) | Indiana

Students with disabilities	15.5%	15.1%	13.2%
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Absolute Priority 4— Multi-Local Educational Agency Grants.

Marian University, an eligible entity, seeks U.S. Department of Education FSCS funding under Absolute Priority 4— Multi-Local Educational Agency Grants. Information to support Marian’s ability to meet all application requirements and criteria is provided in this application package. Specific sections of the proposal narrative and attachments that address each criterion are cross-referenced below in Table 2.

Table 2. Absolute Priority 4 Requirement Cross Reference	
Requirement	Section/ Page
(1) A description of the eligible entities	p. 2, 3, 4
(2) A preliminary MOU among all partner entities of the eligible entity	See attached MOU
(3) Description of the capacity of the eligible entity to coordinate and provide pipeline services at two or more full-service community schools	Section 5, p. 74
(4) Comprehensive plan to provide FSCS capacity-building services	Section 2. p. 31 Section 3., 71
(A) The student, family, and school community to be served, including demographic information	Table 1, p. 4 Table 3, p. 19
(B) A plan for conducting the needs assessment that identifies the academic, physical, non-academic, health, mental health, and other needs of students, families, and community residents	Whole Needs School Assessment, Objective 1.1, p. 54; Whole Class

	Review, Objective 2.1, p. 58
(C) A plan for developing annual measurable performance objectives and outcomes, including an increase in the number and percentage of families and students targeted for services each year of the program, to ensure that children are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Prepared for kindergarten (ii) Achieving academically (iii) Safe, healthy, and supported by engaged parents 	Objectives 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, and 2.4, p. 58 - p. 66
(D) A plan for identifying and developing pipeline services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Why such services have been selected; (ii) How such services will improve student academic achievement; and (iii) How will such services address the annual measurable performance objectives and outcomes established under paragraph 	Objective 2.2, p. 58
(E) A description of the pillars of full-service community schools in place or how they will establish these pillars, or how they will implement these pillars with partners, including community-based organizations and collaborating with school leadership and staff	Table 7, p. 39, and Table 10, p. 67
(F) Plans to ensure that each full-service community school site has a full-time coordinator of pipeline services at such school, including a description of the applicable funding sources, plans for professional	Objectives 2.1 and 2.2, p. 58

development for the personnel managing, coordinating, or delivering pipeline services, and plans for joint utilization and management of school facilities	
(G) Plans for an annual evaluation based upon attainment of the performance objectives and outcomes described in paragraph (4)(C) of this requirement	Section 6, p. 96
(H) Plans for sustaining the programs and services are described in section 4625(a) of the ESEA after the grant period	Section 5, p. 74
(5) An assurance that the eligible entity and its partner entities will focus services on schools eligible for a schoolwide program under section 1114(b) of the ESEA	Appendix C
(A) Completing surveys of grantee organizations (which may include service provider partners), grantee schools (which may consist of multiple individuals within each school, such as the principal and the service coordinator), and potentially a sample of teachers within grantee schools;	Appendix C
(B) Participating in interviews of grantee organizations, grantee schools, and a sample of teachers within grantee schools;	Appendix C
(C) Providing administrative data, such as student absenteeism rates and high school graduation rates;	Appendix C
(D) Cooperating with data collection at several points during the grant period, such as shortly after the grant award (baseline round of data collection), during the middle of the grant period	Appendix C

(interim round of data collection), and toward the end of the grant period (final round of data collection); and	
(E) Assisting in facilitating connections between each grantee’s local evaluator and the national evaluation to ensure efficiency and coordination between the evaluation efforts.	Appendix C
(6) An assurance that the eligible entity and its partner entities will focus services on schools eligible for a schoolwide program under section 1114(b).	Appendix C

Plans to collect performance measurement data: The Marian FSCS consortium will collect performance measurement data to monitor all project activities throughout the funding period. Performance measurement data that will be used to track all project indicators, objectives, and outcomes will include the following:

Data collected by the school site coordinator: The school site coordinator will enter student and school assessment data into the City Connects MyConnects database, providing access to data regarding integrated student support services, community partnership referrals and services, and other implementation information.

Data collected by each school: Each school will share various student data, including attendance, grades, test scores, disciplinary data, and other disaggregated individual-level quantitative data.

Data collected by Boston College Center for Thriving Children (CTC): Through the national City Connects program, CTC conducts a satisfaction survey with every City Connects school, including community partners, teachers, and administrators. Data from CTC will be summarized and shared with the Marian FSCS consortium throughout the project as it is available.

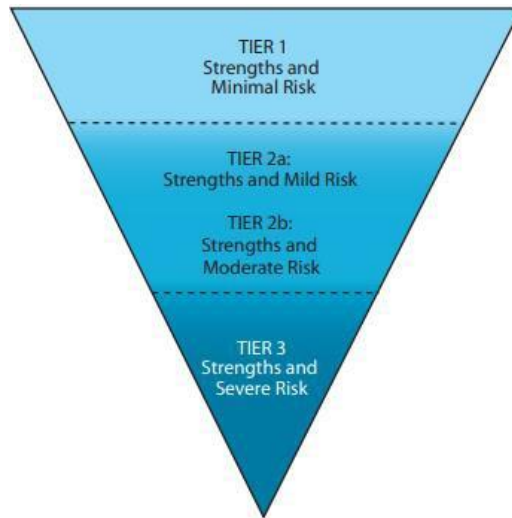
Data collected for the FSCS project evaluation: Besides data from all sources described above, Marian has engaged Indiana University Bloomington Center for Evaluation and Education Policy (CEEP) to provide the external evaluation. Evaluation plans (detailed in Section 6) include tracking all performance measures using available data from the school, City Connects, and the project. In addition, the evaluators will conduct interviews and focus groups with teachers, parents, students, and principals; collect and review professional learning community results from data; and establish additional evaluation methods to ensure that all performance measures are carefully monitored and that data is used to support the consortium to strengthen implementation and achieve all objectives.

Competitive Preference Priority 1—Meeting Student Social, Emotional, and Academic Needs

To address Competitive Preference Priority 1, under Activity Focus 2 (providing multi-tiered systems of support), Marian University will implement City Connects, an evidence-based, integrated student support model, with nine FSCS schools. Developed at Boston College and launched in 2000, City Connects is a strengths-based model that addresses students' needs in four domains (social-emotional/behavioral, academic, family, and health) and provides tiered, customized enrichment and intervention opportunities. Every year, every student will be assessed in these domains, and this information will be used to develop an individualized intervention plan that locates strengths and needs within a three-tiered intervention model (Figure 1). Tiers are aligned with other evidence-based multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) approaches that focus on prevention and enrichment (Tier 1), early intervention (Tier 2), and intensive support and crisis intervention (Tier 3) that have been applied in special education settings and used to support interventions for homeless students and other underserved and high-risk student populations (Sugai & Horner, 2009). Each school will develop a customized network of enrichment and

support interventions and activities within these tiers, leveraging partnerships with community organizations and agencies to support students and families. While there is no predetermined set of services, the consortium will ensure that all City Connects domains (social-emotional/behavioral, academic, family, and health) are assessed and addressed through the project for every student every year.

Figure 1. Tiers of Intervention in the City Connects Model



The school site coordinators at GCSC and 21CCS will work with school and community partners to implement various strategies across the three tiers and connect students to the appropriate level of enrichment or support to address their needs. Notably, in the City Connects model depicted in Figure 1, “strengths” are the first element of every tier, recognizing that deficit-based approaches where only areas of need are considered in academic interventions do not provide the holistic, integrated support students and families urgently need. Each year of the five-year FSCS funding period, all 4,548 students enrolled in the GCSC and 21CCS districts will receive an assessment.

Competitive Preference Priority 2—Strengthening Cross-Agency Coordination and Community Engagement to Advance Systemic Change

Gary, the “Magic City,” was a thriving steel town with futuristic advances and prosperity during the industrialization of America in the 1960s. Over the past several decades, Gary has become a ghostly shell struggling to stay alive, with its population decreasing by nearly 55% since the 1970s. A preliminary review of local and county-level data shows unsafe environments, high student disciplinary actions, and high levels of community violence. GCSC and 21CCS leaders report concerns about the impact of traumatic experiences on students and their families. According to the Bailly Middle School school counselor report, 112 of the school’s 513 students (22%) have a known trauma history. De-identified counseling records identify a wide range of academic, social, and behavioral challenges for students resulting from these histories, ranging from difficulty making peer connections and difficulty concentrating in class to disruptive classroom behavior. A 2016 Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) among children ages 0 to 17 found that Indiana children have higher rates of ACEs than the U.S. average, and a higher percentage of Indiana children reported experiencing two or more ACEs (Balio & Greene, 2018). In Indiana, 47.3% of children reported any ACEs, compared to 46.3% nationwide; 24.2% reported two or more ACEs, compared to 21.7% nationwide. Trauma has been shown to undermine students’ academic success and to be linked to individual risks for experiencing or perpetrating violence (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019). Among family members who responded to a City Connects parent survey in Indiana, bullying was the most significant issue that affected their child’s schoolwork.

With these considerations in mind, Marian proposes strengthening agency and community collaboration to advance change. For example, the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Northwest

Indiana, at the John Will Anderson Gary Club location, is dedicated to school programs focusing on three priority outcomes: academic success, healthy lifestyles, and good character. While the Boys & Girls Club provides after-school programming at 21CCS, this partnership will expand to the GSCS elementary schools in the 2023-2024 academic year. The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Northwest Indiana offers after-school programming, including Academic Interventions, Healthy Lifestyle, and Character & Citizenship programming. In a study by the U.S. Department of Justice, these core components of their afterschool program have provided a haven from negative influences, guidance, and discipline around positive values, an environment for constructive youth development, comprehensive support for students in high-risk environments, and academic support. Each of these components positively impacts the outcomes of students and reduces their likelihood of engaging in juvenile crime & drug use.

Marian will also partner with Project Lead The Way (PLTW), a nonprofit organization providing transformative learning experiences for millions of PreK-12 students and thousands of teachers across the U.S. PLTW's hands-on, interdisciplinary STEM-based curriculum with pathways in computer science, engineering, and biomedical science empower students to develop in-demand skills they need to pursue rewarding STEM careers, solve important challenges, and contribute to global progress. PLTW also contributes to a strong, positive impact on mathematics and science achievement and positively influences students' career interests and the likelihood of continuing their education after high school. PLTW also contributes to a strong, positive impact on mathematics and science achievement and positively influences students' career interests and the likelihood of continuing their education after high school. In addition to developing STEM skills and interest in STEM careers, PLTW students – regardless of race, gender, status, or background – develop valuable, life-long problem-solving and communication skills to help them

succeed in school and on any career path. This training will occur for teachers in 21CCS grades 7-10. Since this grade band spans middle and high school grades, PLTW provides a customized curriculum to meet this age group's differing developmental and academic needs. PLTW Gateway will meet the needs of students in grades 7 & 8. The curriculum includes topics on Robotics, Design & Modeling, App Creation, Computer Science, Energy & Environment, Flight & Space, Science Technology, Magic of Electrons, Green Architecture, and Medical Detectives. Each module builds students' knowledge and skills in the different topic areas and is based on project-based learning practices. For grades 9 & 10, students will receive a high school-level curriculum focused on career readiness in Computer Science, Engineering, and Biomedical Science. Each curriculum area emphasizes group-based learning and transferable skills such as critical thinking, creativity, and effective communication with a team. The goal is that high school students will be strong collaborators who can solve complex problems using real-world examples.

Be Strong Families (BSF) is a nonprofit organization that partners to create transformative change by developing and sustaining conversations that nurture family spirit, promote well-being, and prevent violence. BSF does this through the empowered engagement of parents/caregivers, youth, children, and extended family members. The organization comprises dedicated and diverse team members working with systems, service providers, and families to offer training offerings to reinforce and strengthen parent and caregiver engagement strategies. From 2013–2014, Be Strong Families led Community Violence Prevention Program's Parent Program in Chicago, IL 2013-2014, which provided funding for approximately 1000 parents each year to receive training and act as Parent Leaders for various community projects that promote Protective Factors for child maltreatment. The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority Research and Analysis Unit conducted an independent evaluation, including a training evaluation survey, a pre-and post-

survey, and two exit surveys. Key findings included statistically significant increases in mean scores on combined Protective Factors to reduce child maltreatment and family functioning and resiliency from the beginning to the end of the program. The Marian FSCS will train site coordinators and parents/caregivers through the Parent Café Training Program. The program will build on Gary's strengths in developing and nurturing positive, healing relationships in the community. Workshops may include *Parent Engagement through the Lens of Equity, Relationship-Based Practice & Making Effective Referrals, Vicarious Trauma / Vicarious Resilience, Recognizing and Responding to Family Stress, and Communicating with Families*. Parent Cafés will be launched in Banneker Elementary of GCSC & 21CCS's K-2 building. Be Strong Families is an emerging research-informed practice. Parent Cafés have experiential evidence in the US. Parent Cafes have proven short-term and long-term outcomes, for example, increased family well-being. Independent evaluations of Parent Café efforts conducted by partners have found statically significant increases in:

- Mean scores on combined Protective Factors to reduce child maltreatment and on family functioning and resiliency
- Cross-ethnic group social interactions
- Ability to listen carefully to children, family members, or friends
- Quality of interactions and relationships with their children
- Ability to handle stressful situations with their children or other family members
- Motivation to become involved in their community or their child's school
- The overall summary score for the Connor-Davidson Resiliency Scale

IN*Source provides high-quality information, training, and support to families of children and young adults with disabilities and the individuals and organizations who serve them. Racial

disparity in special education is growing and more complex than previously thought. Recent research findings revealed that black students are put into special education more often in white schools. However, they are much less likely to be identified as needing special education in schools that are mostly minority, where students of the same race surround them (Journal of Labor). IN*Source provides the training necessary to ensure effective educational programs and appropriate services for individuals with disabilities. IN*Source will work alongside the Marian FSCS consortium to create customized annual workshops for City Connects site coordinators in Gary, IN. Since site coordinators are formally trained in social work or counseling, they often lack the knowledge to support families and school faculty/staff on the IEP process. Still, they can offer valuable insights in establishing a strong student support plan. The Marian FSCS consortium would like to bridge this knowledge gap and properly equip site coordinators to support families and their colleagues in the school. The IN*Source training will cover topics such as The Special Education Process for Ages 3 to 22 - Understanding Article 7, Communicating with Schools: Collaborative Strategies for Positive Outcomes, Preparing for Your Child's Special Education Case Conference, School Discipline, and The Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Community MTSS Meetings- Due to the high amount of student transience between schools, districts, and school entities, GSCS will launch a pilot Community MTSS Committee. GSCS established an MTSS Executive Committee & school-level committees last year; however, due to the student and family transience, they also identified the need for a Community MTSS Committee. The Community MTSS Committee will invite public, charter, and private school leaders and student support staff in Gary, Indiana, to a monthly meeting hosted by GSCS. These meetings will include professional development training, community partners, community leaders, and other student support experts. The sessions will also allow time to share information about

students between school professionals to ensure that students do not fall through the cracks, even though they may be changing schools. While one part of the City Connects Site Coordinator's role is to share student support plans with the new school when a student moves, this will also aid in the collaboration between schools that do not have City Connects.

The Marian FSCS consortium recognizes additional opportunities to extend professional development and student engagement to promote mental health and prevent violence, including by working with the Boys and Girls Club, Be Strong Families, Project Lead the Way, IN*Source Professional Training, and the partners in place from the School-Based Mental Health program (YMCA, Girls on the Run, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and the Indiana Department of Education as well as local public library literacy programs, and school-based enrichment programs.)

Subpart B: Absolute Priority 4— Multi-Local Educational Agency Grants.

1. Need for project

Plans to provide support, resources, and services: In 2021, Marian, in partnership with external evaluator Thomas P. Miller & Associates, conducted the City Connects Student Support assessment—a needs assessment survey of principals, teachers, and parents at 13 Indiana schools—as an initial step in establishing the City Connects Midwest center and replicating the City Connects model in Indiana schools. Survey results contextualize school needs in the state and provide an initial basis for understanding the challenges school site coordinators might encounter in implementing the City Connects model. Responses from 188 teachers (including guidance counselors, nurses, support staff, and specialists), 21 principals, and 51 family members of current students provide information about current needs within Indiana schools, including those in urban, suburban, and rural areas. Respondents identified a variety of conditions across the community, school, family, and individual student domains:

- 94% of teachers and 85% of principals agreed or strongly agreed that at least a quarter of their students face significant social, emotional, physical/health, or psychological barriers to learning.
- Nearly all identified unsafe neighborhoods and neighborhood violence as community issues impacting student learning.
- Teachers and principals identified family mobility, having no regular home routine, and inadequate parental support as family issues affecting student learning.
- Only 21% of principals and 24% of teachers strongly agreed that their school was providing a range of enrichment activities to support academic achievement
- 26% of teachers and no principals strongly agreed that their school provided adequate health services.
- Fewer family strengths were identified, with most respondents stating that “appropriate supervision at home” and “parent/family support of the educational process” were areas of concern.
- The most commonly identified needs for school support were family, group, and individual counseling; social competence/social skills curricula; behavioral management programs; promotion of healthy student behaviors; conflict resolution programs; and preventative mental health programs.

In addition, among family members who responded to the survey, bullying was the most significant issue identified as affecting their child’s schoolwork. Other commonly identified concerns were attention difficulty, anxiety, and mental/ emotional issues. The connections between school bullying, academic challenges, and poor mental health are well known, suggesting that

improving school resources to address students' mental health can positively influence school success (Turner, Exum, Brame, & Holt, 2013; Bond et al., 2007).

Plans that will close gaps in educational opportunity

Current gaps in educational opportunity: Indiana children from birth to age six are less likely than other U.S. children to receive developmental assessments (23% compared to 30%). As a result, kindergarten entry is the first time many young children will receive an evaluation of their social, emotional, and academic needs and readiness for school. Beyond kindergarten readiness, providing periodic assessments benefits students throughout their education. As recent studies of learning loss stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic have shown, using data to understand educational gaps at the individual student level can be a valuable mechanism for providing targeted support and interventions (Storey & Zhang, 2021). The Marian FSCS consortium will develop capacity-building plans by completing Whole School and Individual Student Reviews and will provide current data to create integrated student supports at each school. The Whole Class Reviews & Individual Student Reviews will be supplemented with the Be Strong Families program in Banneker Elementary & 21CCS K-2.

Student educational outcomes: According to data collected by the Indiana Department of Education, GCSC and 21CCS students differ from other grade-level peers across several educational outcomes. Table 3 includes key student population characteristics in the proposed target schools. Enrollment and demographic data are from the 2020-21 school year; student achievement data is from the 2018-2019 school year. Indiana was granted a waiver from annual assessment and accountability requirements for the 2019-20 school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Of particular note, Gary Middle School has a significantly high chronic absenteeism

rate of 59.6%, Bailly Middle School has 17.9%, and 21st Century Charter School of Gary has 36.8%. In comparison, Indiana has an average chronic absenteeism rate of 11.4%. (Table 3).

	Banneker Elementary	Beveridge Elementary	Daniel Hale Williams Elementary	Glen Park Academy	McCullough Elementary	Gary Middle School	Bailly Middle School	21 st Century Charter School of Gary	Indiana
Grades Served	K - 5	K - 5	K - 5	K - 5	PK - 5	6 - 8	6 - 8	K-12	--
Enrollment	396	378	553	518	468	458	513	1,264	--
Model Attendance	34.2%	31.0%	48.0%	37.0%	36.0%	26.3%	71.1%	40.6%	71.5%
Students with disabilities	11.1%	10.3%	15.7%	14.1%	11.3%	17.0%	19.3%	13.2%	--
Chronic absenteeism	40.6%	49.5%	11.7%	11.4%	40.6%	59.6%	17.9%	36.8%	11.4%
4-Year graduation	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	91.1%	87.0%

² <https://inview.doe.in.gov/>

Reading proficiency, grade 3	65.4%	27.6%	66.7%	47.8%	73.2%	--	--	77.8%	87.3%
ELA proficiency, grades 3—8	26.1%	9.7%	16.3%	15.1%	21.7%	13.8%	30.8%	17.5%	47.9%
Math proficiency, grades 3-8	25.1%	10.1%	16.3%	15.2%	21.7%	4.6%	33.3%	16.9%	47.8%
Science proficiency, grades 4 and 6	16.3%	4.5%	5.3%	5.3%	11.1%	8.0%	8.6%	9.2%	47.4%
Social studies proficiency, grade 5	19.5%	7.0%	6.9%	16.4%	7.1%	--	--	16.7%	46.0%
ELA proficiency, grade 10	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	40%	50.9%
Math proficiency, grade 10	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	9.8%	25.3%

Science proficiency, grade 10	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	5.7%	38.6%
Graduates entering college or a career credential.	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	88.9%	68.1%
*Numbers noted in red denote performance that is poorer than the state average.									

The Stanford Center for Education Outcomes (CREDO) estimates that COVID-19 pandemic-related learning losses in Indiana schools equal a lag of one full year in reading and mathematics at the crucial elementary school levels. The study estimated that the average student lost 209 days in math, surpassing the number of days in a full school year. The same study estimated that average students lost 130 days of reading skill development. Recognizing that GCSC and 21CCS students’ ELA, math, social studies, and science scores fell below state averages before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the consortium anticipates that there will be a continuous need to strengthen students’ academic skills through teacher training and student support services.

Needs of the targeted population, including needs of underserved populations most impacted by the issue, challenge, or opportunity, and plans to address these needs.

The Marian FSCS consortium will serve the students, families, and community of Gary, Indiana, located in Lake County in the northwest quadrant of the state. Gary is located along the southern shore of Lake Michigan, about 25 miles southeast of downtown Chicago. The city is

adjacent to the Indiana Dunes National Park and is within the Chicago metropolitan area. The city has been historically dominated by major industrial activity and is home to U.S. Steel’s Gary Works, North America’s largest steel mill complex. Pervasive stories coming from the media (Porter, 2018) as well as from popular literature (Vance, 2016) and research (Biddle & Azano, 2016) about rust-belt locales across the Midwest and Appalachian South construct these Rust Belt geographies in terms of narratives of high poverty. As such, Gary residents experience limited access to needed services such as healthcare, mental healthcare, and family support programs.

Table 4. City of Gary, Indiana, Community Characteristics (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020)

	Gary	Indiana
White	13.2%	59.3%
African American/Black	78.0%	13.6%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.1%	1.3%
Two or More Races	5.5%	2.9%
Hispanic or Latino	8.6%	18.9%
Language other than English spoken at home	4.4%	21.5%
High school graduate or higher among those age 25 or older	86.1%	88.8%
Bachelor’s degree or higher among those age 25 or older	14.4%	26.5%
Median household income	██████	██████
Persons in poverty	32%	11.4%
Children under age 18 in poverty	49.5%	14.9%
Children in food-insecure homes	23.9%	17.7%

Additionally, these social challenges perpetuate the ongoing difficulties for families experiencing transience and students moving to schools throughout the school year. Student enrollment in Gary Community School Corporation changes regularly each academic year, which speaks to the transient nature of students in Gary. According to the Indiana Department of Education data, as of the Fall of 2022, Gary Community School Corporation had 11,386 students who had legal settlements in Gary and were funded by state dollars. Over the year, the LEA lost 7,564 students in the 2022-2023 school year, a little over 66% of students meaning about 20%, transferred to surrounding public school districts in and around Lake County. Another 72% transferred to various Charter Schools within Gary, with nearly 25% of these students transferring to 21CCS, with a total of 1,312 students. Due to the transient nature of Lake County families, addressing gaps in student services because of the schools' economic and social conditions will be a focus of new partnerships. The school site coordinators will work with their program manager and school-based implementation teams to identify partners that can bring services into the schools, such as those that are available on a city-wide level but not currently offered in Gary, pipeline services that can be provided via telehealth (including using school computers when necessary), and training for school personnel that will enhance the staff's readiness to address concerns such as supporting students with mental health challenges.

Census data reveals that household and child poverty rates in Lake County exceed state averages. The impacts of poverty and adversities like trauma can produce "toxic stress" that impairs working memory and the ability to organize information, regulate behavior, and form positive adult and peer relationships (Brisson et al., 2020). The Marian FSCS consortium's plans are grounded in understanding the interconnections between academic and non-academic factors such as health, social-emotional well-being, family, and community. Research suggests that

student learning is heavily influenced by “non-academic” factors, which have been shown to account for approximately two-thirds of the variance in student achievement (Rothstein, 2004).

Adolescents and young adults’ needs: Research finds that a student’s low academic performance is connected to having less access to developmentally stimulating resources, opportunities, and relationships in the home or the community (Misty & Laura, 2011). Access to community-based services is especially challenging for students in Rust Belt communities. Gary students face significant barriers that make them less likely to find a job and earn a living wage and more likely to be poor and suffer from adverse outcomes. Students are at greater risk of dropping out of school, using alcohol and drugs, and becoming juvenile delinquents. With poor social and academic skills, youth who drop out of school perpetuates the cycle of the need for public assistance, unemployment, substance abuse, and crime.

For junior high school students, academic success is deeply connected to social, emotional, health, and family needs that may be invisible to teachers and school administrators when significant behavioral issues are not present. The 2022 Indiana Youth Survey found that GCSC 8th-grade students were at greater risk than other Indiana students in key areas (Jun, Gassman, Agle, Samuel, & Lee, 2022), including that 68.4% were at high risk for experiencing family conflict, 27.3% had seriously considered suicide, and 21.4% had made a plan about attempting suicide.

GCSC and 21CCS have implemented a variety of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) that provide a strong foundation for the FSCS project. City Life Center, Lift Counseling, and Rising Stars programming are offered to Gary area youth to grow academically, socially, and emotionally.

GCSC and 21CCS educator workforce: The makeup of the GCSC and 21CCS workforce differs from other Indiana LEAs in several areas. Table 5 provides data comparing the number of full-time educators and their years of experience at various schools in the Gary Community School Corporation (GCSC) and the 21st Century Charter School (21CCS) of Gary to the state of Indiana in 2020. The 21st Century Charter School of Gary has the highest percentage (61.8%), indicating a higher proportion of experienced educators than the other schools listed of experienced full-time teachers, defined by the Indiana Department of Education as those with more than two years of experience. However, this percentage is still lower than the average for Indiana (85.5%). Banneker Elementary has the highest rate (55.9%) of full-time educators employed for 20 years or more, compared to only 24.4% of Indiana educators. In addition, 79% of GCSC and 21CCS teacher workforce is identified as White (compared to about 6% of students), reflecting the demographics of the foreign-born immigrants and African Americans who originally settled in Gary to work for the steel mill when the town was founded in 1906.

	Banneker Elementary	Beveridge Elementary	Daniel Hale Williams Elementary	Glen Park	McCullough Elementary	Gary Middle School	Bailly Middle School	21 st Century Charter School of Gary	Indiana
Full-time educators	34	29	33	36	33	32	35	89	79,120

% of educators with more than two years of experience	11.8%	34.5%	24.2%	13.9%	34.2%	31.3%	48.6%	61.8%	85.5%
% of educators with 20+ years of experience	55.9%	37.9%	45.5%	41.7%	42.4%	40.6%	14.3%	5.6%	24.4%

Summary of FSCS’s identified strengths and needs. The Marian FSCS consortium will conduct Whole Class Reviews (identifying each student’s strengths and needs in different developmental domains) at each LEA in project Year 1 and the results to develop school-based intervention plans. As detailed in this proposal, preliminary plans and activities are grounded in initial findings of the strengths and need present in GCSC and 21CCS school communities across the social ecology for students, families, schools, and the community, as summarized in Table 6.

Table 6. Summary of GCSC and 21CCS FSCS Identified Strengths and Needs		
Domain	Strengths	Needs
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industrial heritage/economic potential Strong cultural significance Community resilience “Hard-working Hoosier mentality” Strong community connections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable economic development/job creation Adults (25+) have lower educational attainment rates than the state average.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community has a higher poverty rate than the state’s average • Public safety/extremely high crimes rates
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated educators: 41.2% with 20+ years of teaching experience and rated as “effective” • Student potential: students with diverse talents and potential. • Community engagement: organizations, parents, and stakeholders who actively engage with the school system to support positive change • Specialized programs: initiatives that cater to specific interests or vocational training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic achievement: challenges in improving academic achievement levels, including chronic absenteeism and ensuring students meet or exceed grade-level expectations. • Funding/resources: financial support to enhance facilities, provide up-to-date technology, instructional materials, and professional development for teachers. • Infrastructure and Facilities: schools require infrastructure improvements, including repairs and upgrades, to ensure safe learning environments

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student support services: Addressing the social and emotional well-being of students is crucial; counseling services, mental health support, and intervention programs • Addressing achievement gaps: students from low-income backgrounds or with disabilities is a priority. Implementing targeted interventions, personalized learning approaches, and culturally responsive teaching strategies to narrow gaps • Financial Recovery: The State took over the district in 2017, and regaining financial independence may create additional systemic changes.
Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resilience: families show determination and the ability to adapt to changing circumstances. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Opportunities: challenges include high poverty and unemployment.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong Community Bonds: a strong sense of community and support • Cultural Heritage: families in Gary have a rich cultural heritage, particularly within the African American community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthcare: access to affordable and quality healthcare service • Nutrition/Food security • Affordable and safe housing • Social Services: access to social services that support issues such as mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence, and childcare. • Domestic Migration
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proportion of students who pursue career and technical education is triple the state average. • According to MyConnects data, students/families displayed strengths in-class participation, worth ethic, peer relationships, school/family communication, and family support of learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over three-fourths of all students receive free or reduced-price lunches, and 100% are considered economically disadvantaged. • Both high schools have a lower four-year graduation rate than the state average.

Plans to address community, school, family, and student needs to improve school success.

To address community, school, family, and student needs to improve school success, the partners will implement a Full Service Community School approach through City Connects. City

Connects is a comprehensive approach to addressing the strengths and needs of every child in a school. Through City Connects, each student receives an individualized plan of support that matches the student to the services and enrichments that best meet their strengths and needs. City Connects works with community providers to understand their offerings and organizes services according to the tier of intensity (prevention/enrichment, early intervention, intensive/crisis intervention) and type of service (e.g., youth development, arts enrichment, mentoring, counseling, health/medical intervention). This information makes it possible to tailor a plan for every student, with the input of families and the collaboration of teachers and others in the school.

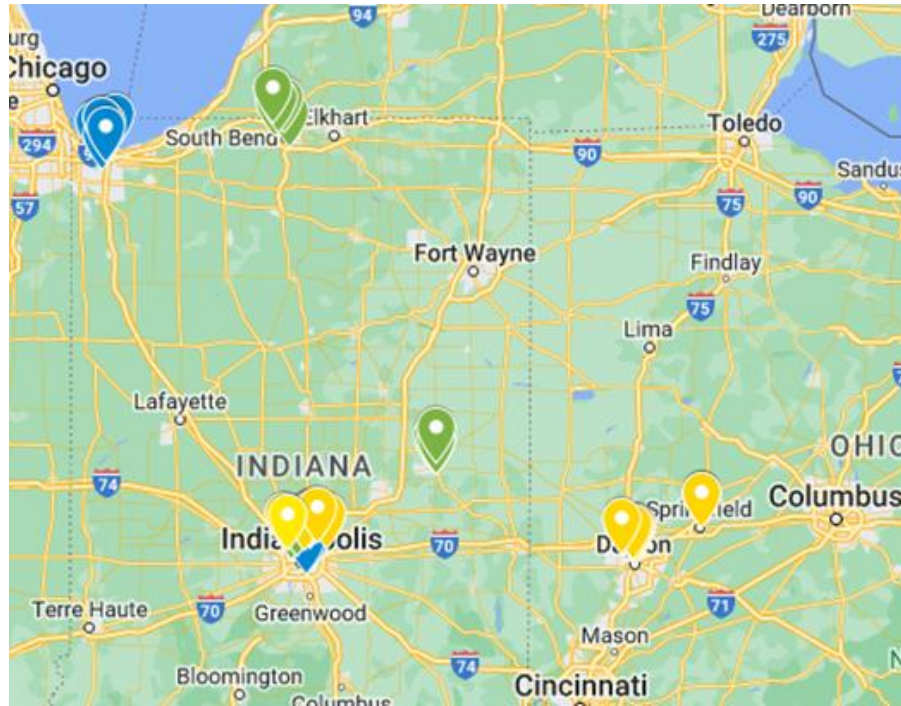
City Connects serves students and families marginalized and existing at the lower edges of socioeconomic stability. Marian began establishing City Connects school partnerships in Indiana in 2021 and currently supports 83 Indiana schools across the state, which includes traditional public schools, public charter schools, and non-public schools (Figure 2). Marian will implement the City Connects model with GCSC and 21CCS to improve students' success.

City Connects is an evidence-based program proven to be a good fit for schools. For example, according to data from the 2022 national City Connects survey of principals, administrators, and teachers from participating schools:

- 92% of principals reported satisfaction with City Connects, and 95% would recommend City Connects to another principal.
- 67% of principals reported having more time for their core work, and 92% reported that City Connects improved student support in their school.
- 90% of teachers reported satisfaction with City Connects, and 91% would recommend City Connects to a colleague.
- 90% reported being happy with the supports City Connects provides the school.

- 86% are satisfied with the support provided to students and teachers.
- 96% felt that City Connects effectively identified the needs of their students.
- 92% agreed that City Connects effectively matches students to services.

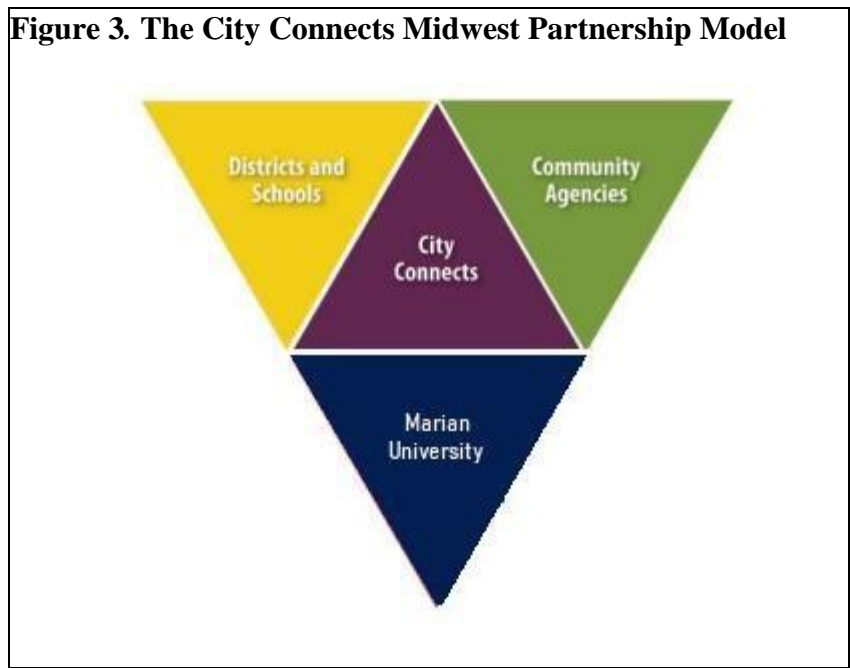
Figure 2. Current City Connects Midwest locations



2. Quality of the Project Design

Relevant and evidence-based findings from existing literature: City Connects will be how the partners will implement Full Service Community Schools in Gary. This evidence-based approach to student support in schools will help coordinate the specific services included in the proposal (i.e., Project Lead the Way, Be Strong Families, and IN*Source) and other community- and school-based services and enrichments such that every student receives an individualized plan of services and that the school and community are equipped to support students holistically.

Overview of the City Connects Model: City Connects is an intervention that creates a personalized network of resources and opportunities for each student by coordinating in the school and the community. The City Connects model was developed through a two-year planning period involving Boston College, Boston public schools’ administrators, teachers, staff, families, and community agencies. Today, the City Connects model is being implemented in more than 160 public, charter, and private schools across Massachusetts, New York, Connecticut, Ohio, Indiana, and Minnesota, reaching 50,000 pre-K through 12th-grade students. Marian



works collaboratively with LEAs and community agencies (Figure 3) to implement City Connects Midwest.

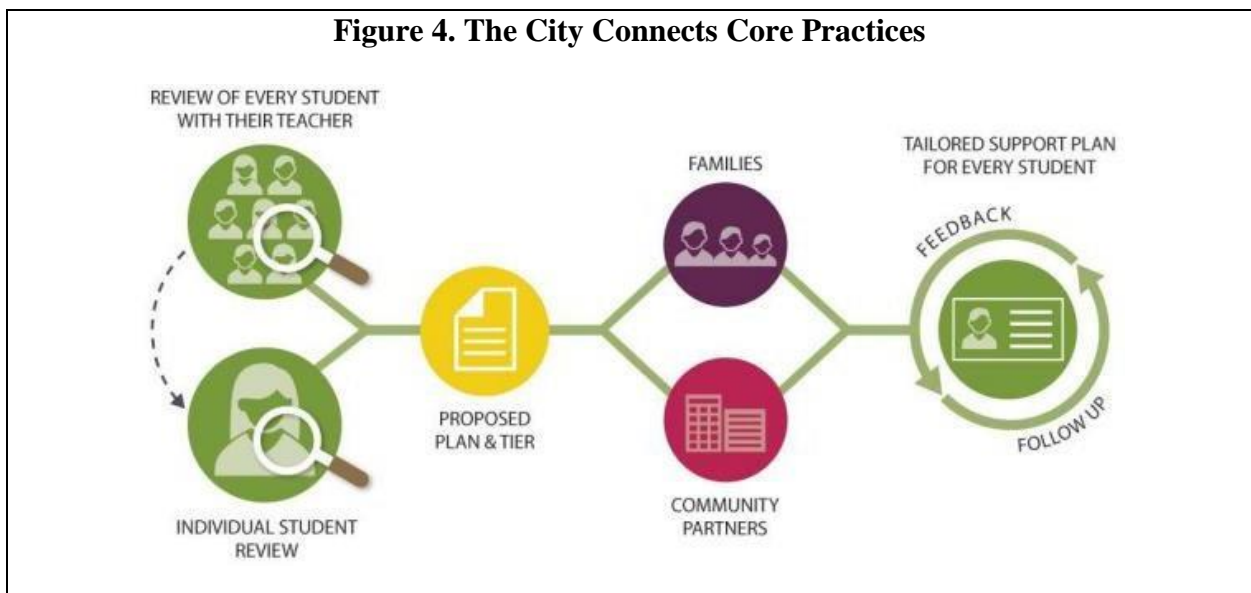
Before launching City Connects in a school, an assessment identifies the school’s strengths. It needs as the first step in identifying the range of pipeline services and tiered intervention programs most beneficial to students, families, and the school community. Marian's collaboration with GCSC and 21CCS represents a significant expansion of services in an urban Rust Belt region plagued by one of the country's most severe racial achievement disparities. This area is distinct

from other schools and communities within the City Connects Midwest network due to the intensity of need these students and families face. Through its partnership with GCSC and 21CCS, Marian aims to acquire valuable knowledge about the necessary resources and strategies to empower schools to embrace integrated student services. The ultimate goal is to bridge the gaps in educational outcomes by addressing out-of-school factors within a school district characterized by a transient student population plagued by the impact of poverty in a city that has predominantly relied on a now-declining manufacturing industry. Both to implement project plans with fidelity to the City Connects model and to create space for the Marian FSCS consortium to assess and learn about school and community needs, the first year of the proposed project will be critical in determining the full scope of tiered intervention services that will be made available at each school.

The City Connects framework has been applied in pre-K, elementary, and secondary settings. It considers an individual student's health, family, academics, and social-emotional circumstances within the home, school, and neighborhood. This context is used as the basis to develop an appropriate support plan that leads to positive academic outcomes. The Figure 4 model supports system-level change shifting the focus away from "fixing kids" and instead emphasizes the role of context in which students live and the necessity of close community-wide resource integration. The framework has four central tenets for implementation:

In every City Connects school, a site coordinator will deliver the core practices of the model, meeting with every classroom teacher every year to review the strengths and needs of each student across four developmental domains: academic, social-emotional/behavioral, health, and family (Whole Class Review). With the teacher's input, the site coordinator will propose a plan of services and enrichments tailored to the individual student's strengths, needs, and interests. For

students experiencing intensive risk, a second, more in-depth meeting with a broader team of professionals is convened (Individual Student Review), and goals are set. The site coordinator will then connect with the family to discuss the proposed plan, adjust as needed, and work to overcome barriers such as transportation. The site coordinator will also establish and maintain connections with community agencies to ensure a good fit for students. Details of each student’s plan are captured in City Connects’ proprietary software, MyConnects, to enable tracking of service delivery and follow-up. This practice is schematized in Figure 4.



School site coordinators use data to continuously improve the implementation of the City Connects model and support school decision-making. Researchers use data generated by City Connects schools to conduct rigorous independent evaluations.

By providing holistic support within the school, the model works well with low-income families who often have less time and fewer resources to dedicate to investing in supporting their children with homework help and extracurricular activities.

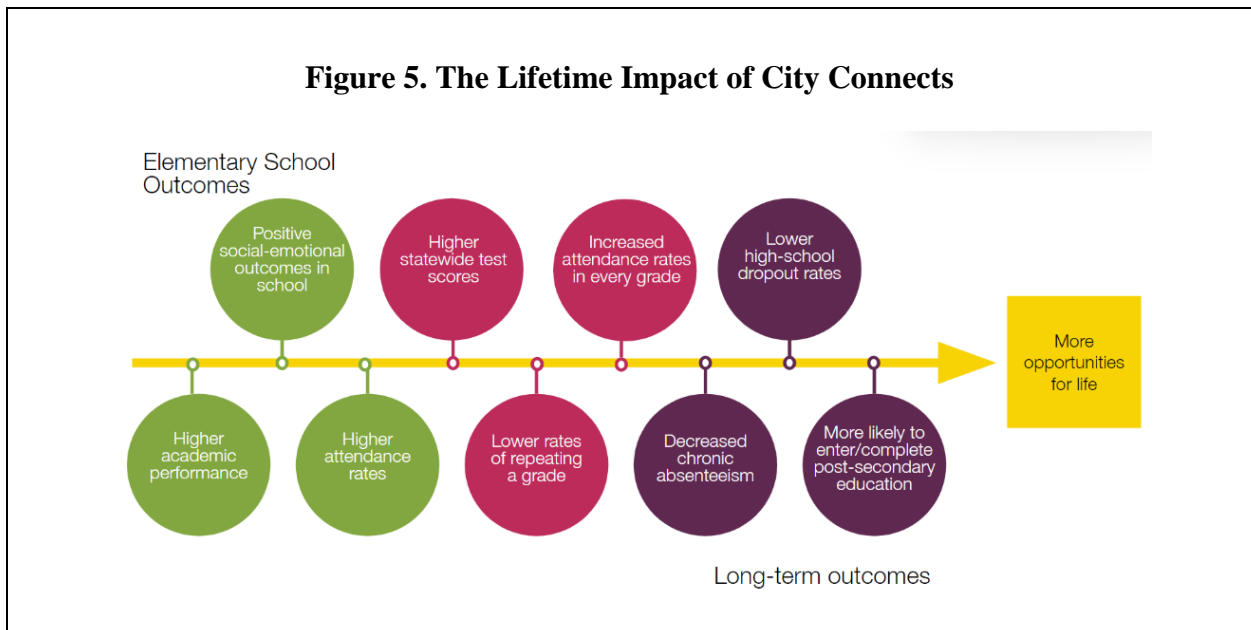
Benefits of Integrated Student Support: Integrated student support is an evidence-based approach for schools to provide student support by intentionally and systematically leveraging and coordinating the resources and relationships available in the school and in the surrounding community to address the comprehensive strengths and needs of each and every student in a school to help promote healthy child development and learning (Moore et al., 2017; Wasser Gish, 2021).

The City Connects approach to integrated student support aligns with effective practices that are grounded in research on the developmental sciences (Walsh et al., 2016):

- **Customized**, each student receives supports and opportunities designed to address their specific strengths and needs.
- **Comprehensive**, with supports that address multiple domains of development beyond academics (e.g., social-emotional/behavioral, health, family)
- **Coordinated**, with the designated point person in the school, facilitated services and communication with family, school, and community-based organizations to reduce duplication and support problem-solving to address obstacles to student success.
- **Continuous**, in that intervention services are ongoing and systematically implemented over time.
- **Data-informed**, in that decisions are grounded in the results of rigorous assessment, ongoing monitoring of performance indicators, and metrics of implementation success.

Evidence of improved academic outcomes: The benefits of City Connects for students have been demonstrated across studies using various methods, samples, and implementation settings and sites. Students who attend a City Connects school demonstrate measurable improvements at each stage of development and continue to improve as they advance from grade to grade. The specific benefits align with the identified needs of GSCS & 21CCS students.

City Connects provides an effective approach to student support that lays the groundwork to improve student success. Specifically, it includes induction, professional development, and coaching for school teams to implement City Connects with fidelity; offers a process for reviewing each and every student’s strengths and needs to prevent students from falling behind; connects each student to enrichment opportunities, prevention services, early intervention services, and/or intensive interventions; works closely with families to seek family input and support connection of students to services; engages community partners that support students and families and facilitates communication across families, community partners, and school staff; stewards community partnerships; uses a student support database to track individual student support with reporting tools that enable school administrators to see students’ areas of strength and need along with the services they are receiving; and provides information to support continuous school improvement that aligns with state and federal standards and guidelines.



Rigorous studies have shown that City Connects students outperform their peers on numerous measures of academic achievement and life chances (Figure 5).

- Students who attended a City Connects elementary school significantly outperformed comparison peers on measures of academic achievement (statewide test scores in English, mathematics, and grade point averages) in grades 6, 7, and 8 (Walsh et al., 2014).
- City Connects students were found to have a significantly lower total number of days absent than students from the comparison group beginning in 4th grade and continuing through 12th grade (City Connects, 2014).
- Students enrolled in City Connects elementary schools demonstrated lower chronic absenteeism rates in middle and high school (defined as being absent from school 10% of days or more) than students in comparison schools (City Connects, 2014).
- Once they reached high school, students previously enrolled in a City Connects school from kindergarten through grade 5 dropped out of school. (Lee-St. John et al. 2018).

City Connects has also benefited teachers, who say they are more available to focus on instruction and have more empathy for their students, contributing to improved climate and culture (Sibley et al. 2017). See City Connects 2022 for a summary of the benefits of City Connects.

One key finding from the above studies of the City Connects model has been that programs and interventions that address out-of-school and non-academic factors play an important role in improving learning.

Existing and additional pipeline services:

In addition to the existing and planned pipeline services outlined in Table 7, the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE), together with the Gary Community School Corporation (GCSC), Marian University's Center for Vibrant Schools (CVS), collaborated to implement the School-Based Mental Health Services (SBMH) Grant Program *Expanding Healthy Minds School-Based Mental Health Services Providers* (Healthy Minds) program. Healthy Minds offers pipeline

services included in project plans and will be supported by the school site coordinator and implementation teams (Table 7). Within this grant, schools are allowed an annual stipend to provide self-care, mental health, and general wellness intervention programming to faculty and staff in their buildings.

Orton-Gillingham (OG) professional learning community: Marian University also provides Orton-Gillingham professional development to districts nationwide. As an in-kind contribution to the FSCS Grant, Marian will offer GSCS & 21CCS elementary school teachers access to this training for the next two academic years. Established as an elementary reading instructional method, OG is a systematic, sequential, multi-sensory, synthetic, and phonics-based approach to teaching reading in which students learn phonology and phonological awareness, sound-symbol correspondence, syllables, morphology, syntax, and semantics. This multi-sensory pedagogy uses visual, auditory, and kinesthetic/tactile learning to help students master fundamental literacy and computational skills (Ritchey and Goeke, 2006). Veteran educators trained in Orton-Gillingham (OG) will provide virtual coaching and assistance to teachers during tutoring sessions and after-hours throughout the program. Coaching support sessions may be one-on-one, small group, and/or periodic MTSS and SEL professional development with larger groups, including the whole school. Orton Gillingham's coaching provides significant professional support for teachers to employ OG principles that undergird high-quality instruction to improve reading.

Additionally, the Marian FSCS consortium plans will strengthen and expand upon school pipeline services, adding at least two pipeline services at each school. The exact number of new pipeline services will be established following the Whole Class Review conducted with each school during project Year 1. At a minimum, every child at each school will receive an annual assessment of their academic, social-emotional, health, and family strengths and needs and a

customized plan to address any areas of need identified from the assessment. 21CCS' grades 7-10 will also benefit from new STEM programming from Project Lead the Way to build knowledge and skills for math and science. Middle School students will be able to participate in Project Lead the Way as well as Boys and Girls Club activities focused on addressing the mental health challenges teens encounter and increasing schoolwide supports to reduce suicide risk and other negative outcomes stemming from mental health concerns. The City Connects model provides a way to organize the supports described here, ensuring that the right support is delivered to the right student at the right time.

Table 7. Existing and Additional Pipeline Services in GCSC & 21CCS				
<i>Pipeline service</i>	<i>Existing or Planned?</i>	<i>Rationale</i>	<i>Expected results</i>	<i>Performance objective</i>
Elementary Schools				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banneker Elementary (GCSC) • Beveridge Elementary (GCSC) • Daniel Hale Williams Elementary (GCSC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glen Park Academy (GCSC) • McCullough Elementary (GCSC) • 21st Century Charter School of Gary – K-5 (21CCS) 				
Bright Path Support Services	Existing	Bright Path is dedicated to helping people from diverse backgrounds pursue self-awareness,	To improve the community's mental health through quality counseling, advocacy, support, and education.	Family Engagement, Social emotional learning, & improved academic

		personal development, and healthy, fulfilling relationships.	Bright Path Support Services desires to provide services to individuals in the community with care to help them become healthier.	and attendance performance.
Head Start at Bethune Early Childhood Center	Existing, Planned	To address the educational and developmental disparities faced by children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds	Expected results include improved school readiness, enhanced family engagement, health and nutrition, and community partnerships.	To assess the effectiveness of performance measures, include evaluating children's cognitive, language, and social-emotional development progress.
Lift Counseling Services	Existing	Offering professional counseling sessions for individuals, couples, and families will allow schools to utilize the expertise of Lift to address out-of-school	Lift has a dedication to helping people from diverse backgrounds pursue self-awareness, personal development, and healthy, fulfilling relationships. This	Family Engagement, Social emotional learning, & improved academic and attendance performance.

		factors impacting students at school.	approach will aid in violence prevention efforts and increase academic outcomes.	
Food Bank Northwest Indiana	Existing	Students cannot learn if their basic needs are not met. This partnership ensures that students have food after school and on the weekends.	The Back Pack Program is designed to meet the needs of hungry children when other resources are unavailable, such as weekends and school vacations. Backpacks are filled with food that children can take home on the weekends. The food is child-friendly, nonperishable, and easily consumed. The backpacks are discreetly distributed to children on the last day before the weekend or holiday vacation.	Family Engagement, Improved attendance, and academic performance

Girls on the Run	Existing	Community belonging and community connections are important to student success and overall wellness. A club can not only help students establish social and community support, but it can also build their relationship skills and social-emotional capacity.	Girls on the Run inspires girls of all abilities to recognize their strengths while building a sense of connection in a team setting. Volunteer coaches facilitate lessons that blend physical activity with life skill development, enabling girls to adapt to whatever comes their way. At the end of the season, the team completes a 5K together, which provides a tangible sense of accomplishment and sets a confident mindset into motion.	Social-emotional learning, Community Belonging & Engagement
Annual individual student assessment	Existing, Planned	By assessing every student every year, the project will identify social-emotional,	Every student has an individual plan to support their success.	Improved attendance and academic performance

		academic, family, and health needs and establish individualized plans to address the identified needs.		
Healthy Lifestyles Curriculum	Existing, Planned	This Tier 1 curriculum for students in grades 2–5 gives school-aged children knowledge and skills for physical fitness, healthy eating, making healthy choices, and taking care of themselves and others.	Through in-class health and wellness activities, students in grades 2–5 will gain knowledge and skills to make healthy choices about food, fitness, decision-making, and peer relationships.	Improved eating habits, increased physical activity, and increased engagement and attendance at school
Be Strong Families at Banneker Elementary 21 st Century K-2 buildings	Planned	By leveraging the value of family and community in Gary, transformative change can be created by developing and sustaining conversations that	Through empowered engagement in programs, workshops, training, and technical assistance through a Parent Café, including a kindergarten readiness program designed to prepare	Through individual deep self-reflection and peer-to-peer learning, participants explore their strengths, learn about the Strengthening

		nurture the spirit of family, promote well-being and prevent violence.	young children for a successful transition through a parent collaborative effort	Families programs, and create strategies from their wisdom and experiences to improve their lives.
IN*Source	Planned	Train site coordinators to provide high-quality information, training, and support to families of children and young adults with disabilities and the individuals and organizations who serve them.	Results are expected to assist parents, caregivers, and professionals stay current with the latest laws, trends, and topics that affect children and are critical to their overall success.	To provide an array of resources to parents/caregivers to quickly assist their children regardless of topic – including social-emotional wellness, academic, legal, bullying prevention, civil rights, and much more
Orton-Gillingham (OG) Reading Approach	Existing (In-Kind Service)	All participating GSCS & 21CCS elementary school teachers are trained in the OG Reading Approach,	Established as an elementary reading instructional method, OG is a systematic, sequential, multi-	

		<p>which integrates the Indiana Academic Standards, Indiana Teacher Content/Developmental Standards, and Social/Emotional Learning Competencies (SELC) corresponding to age-appropriate reading performance levels.</p>	<p>sensory, synthetic, and phonics-based approach to teaching reading in which students learn phonology and phonological awareness, sound-symbol correspondence, syllables, morphology, syntax, and semantics.</p>	
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<p>Middle Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bailly Middle School (GCSC) • Gary Middle School (GCSC) • 21st Century Charter School of Gary – 6-8 (21CCS) 				
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Rising Stars Academy	Existing	<p>The organization offers family-centered therapy, holistic case management, supervised visitation, and differentiated</p>	<p>Results are expected to empower students with the skills, knowledge, and resources they need to thrive in the ever-changing world.</p>	<p>The objectives of services can include Personalized care, Student first principles,</p>
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		tutoring/literacy programs.		Interactive online tutoring, Proven Illuminated 3-Step Learning, and Family & friendship first principles
Lift Counseling Services	Existing	Offering professional counseling sessions for individuals, couples, and families will allow schools to utilize the expertise of Lift to address out-of-school factors impacting students at school.	Lift has a dedication to helping people from diverse backgrounds pursue self-awareness, personal development, and healthy, fulfilling relationships, aiding in violence prevention efforts and increasing academic outcomes.	Family Engagement, Social emotional learning, & improved academic and attendance performance.
City Life Center	Existing	By offering after-school programming & family support, this organization supports the whole family and addresses out-of-school	City Life Center's after-school programs offer STEAM & a social-emotional learning curriculum. Family Support programming	Social Emotional Learning, Academic Improvements, & Family Engagement, Community Engagement

		factors that might impact the students' entire family.	includes resilience training, building community connections, parenting and child development skills, & education on cognitive, social, and emotional development.	
Annual individual student assessment	Planned	By assessing every student every year, the project will identify social-emotional, academic, family, and health needs and establish individualized plans to address the identified needs.	Every student has an individual plan to support their success.	Improved attendance and academic performance
Healthy Lifestyles Curriculum	Existing, Planned	This Tier 1 curriculum for students in grades 2–5 gives school-aged children knowledge and skills for physical fitness, healthy eating,	Through in-class health and wellness activities, GSCS & 21CCS students in grades 2–5 will gain knowledge and skills to make healthy choices	Improved eating habits, increased physical activity, and increased engagement and attendance at school

		making healthy choices, and taking care of themselves and others.	about food, fitness, decision-making, and peer relationships.	
Project Lead the Way 21CCS Grades 7-8	Planned	Indiana released the first standardized test scores in two years, showing that elementary student learning suffered dramatically under COVID and the economic shutdown. Student proficiency measures for Grades 3-8 students in math and science are significantly below grade-level standards and expectations in Gary, Indiana.	<i>PLTW Gateway</i> for grades 6-85: PTLW Gateway is a curriculum designed to open paths that create meaningful futures. It connects students to careers in areas they can and cannot imagine. Each PLTW Gateway unit engages students in middle school STEM curriculum that builds knowledge and skills in computer science, engineering, and biomedical science and empowers students to develop essential skills such as problem-solving,	All PLTW pathways address Next Generation Science Standards and Common Core State Standards for Mathematics and English Language Arts.

			critical and creative thinking, communication, collaboration, and perseverance.	
IN*Source	Planned	Train site coordinators to provide high-quality information, training, and support to families of children and young adults with disabilities and the individuals and organizations who serve them.	Results are expected to assist parents, caregivers, and professionals to stay updated with the latest laws, trends, and topics that affect children and are critical to their overall success.	To provide an array of resources to parents/caregivers to quickly assist their children regardless of topic – including social-emotional wellness, academic, legal, bullying prevention, civil rights, and much more
High School				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21st Century Charter School of Gary – 9-12 (21CCS) 				
Annual individual	Planned	By assessing every student every year, the project will identify	Every student has an individual plan to support their success.	Improved attendance and academic performance

student assessment		social-emotional, academic, family, and health needs and establish individualized plans to address the identified needs.		
Healthy Lifestyles Curriculum	Planned	This Tier 1 curriculum for students in grades 2–5 gives school-aged children knowledge and skills for physical fitness, healthy eating, making healthy choices, and taking care of themselves and others.	Through in-class health and wellness activities, GSCS & 21CCS students in grades 2–5 will gain knowledge and skills to make healthy choices about food, fitness, decision-making, and peer relationships.	Improved eating habits, increased physical activity, and increased engagement and attendance at school
Project Lead the Way 21CCS Grades 7-10	Planned	Indiana released the first standardized test scores in two years, showing that elementary student learning suffered dramatically under	<i>PLTW Gateway</i> for grades 6-85: PTLW Gateway is a curriculum designed to open paths that create meaningful futures. It connects students to careers in	All PLTW pathways address Next Generation Science Standards and Common Core State Standards for Mathematics and

		<p>COVID and the economic shutdown.</p> <p>Student proficiency measures for Grades 3-8 students in math and science are significantly below grade-level standards and expectations in Gary, Indiana.</p>	<p>areas they can and cannot imagine. Each PLTW Gateway unit engages students in middle school STEM curriculum that builds knowledge and skills in computer science, engineering, and biomedical science and empowers students to develop essential skills.</p>	<p>English Language Arts.</p>
IN*Source	Planned	<p>Train site coordinators to provide high-quality information, training, and support to families of children and young adults with disabilities and the individuals and organizations who serve them.</p>	<p>Results are expected to assist parents, caregivers, and professionals to stay updated with the latest laws, trends, and topics that affect children and are critical to their overall success.</p>	<p>To provide various resources to parents/caregivers to quickly assist their children regardless of topic – including social-emotional wellness, academic, legal, bullying prevention, civil</p>

				rights, and much more.
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High-quality plan for implementation integrating the four pillars of full-service community schools and the use of appropriate evaluation methods to ensure successful achievement of project objectives

Marian University will implement the “City Connects Midwest: Reimagining Student Success in the Magic City” Full-Service Community Schools Program with Gary Community School Corporation (GCSC) and GEO Academies’ 21st Century Charter School (21CCS), located in Gary, Indiana. Marian, GCSC, and 21CCS will comprise the Marian FSCS consortium to address FSCS Absolute Priorities 1 and 4, as well as all Competitive Preference Priorities, through the following goals and objectives:

Goal 1. Marian University’s City Connects Midwest Training and Technical Assistance Center, within the Fred S. Klipsch Educators College’s Center for Vibrant Schools, will improve the coordination, integration, accessibility, and effectiveness of services for Indiana children and families by providing capacity building and development services in collaboration with two FSCS-eligible schools.

Objective 1.1 Each FSCS will improve the coordination, integration, accessibility, and effectiveness of services for children and families by establishing and implementing a capacity-building plan.

Objective 1.2 Each FSCS will establish a school-based collaborative leadership team that will lead the implementation of schoolwide capacity-building activities and strategies.

Objective 1.3 At least 50 teachers, principals, and administrators will strengthen their skills for providing integrated whole-child support by participating in the City Connects intervention's core practices" (because training, coaching, and professional development are offered to site coordinators, not teachers and principals, and City Connects does not offer curriculum).

Objective 1.4 City Connects Midwest will partner with external evaluators from Indiana University Bloomington Center for Evaluation and Education Policy (CEEP) to collect data on FSCS performance indicators, use data to conduct program evaluations and provide for continuous improvement of capacity-building services.

Goal 2. The MU FSCS consortium will improve educational outcomes for children in GCSC and 21CCS by supporting the LEA-wide adoption of the City Connects model and increasing the availability of integrated academic, social/emotional, and behavioral supports.

Objective 2.1 Every student (n = 4,548 annually) will be reviewed annually via a Whole Class Review that identifies their individual social/emotional, family, academic, and health support strengths and needs and receives a customized support plan based on the identified strengths and needs.

Objective 2.2 Each FSCS will establish a set of tiered, age-appropriate academic, social, emotional, and behavioral supports based on a student's strengths and needs and the wider needs of the school.

Objective 2.3 Following collaboration with families, each student will be connected with at least one service, which can be measured through MyConnects (percentage of students receiving 1, 2, 3+ services).

Objective 2.4 All students and teachers will benefit from violence prevention and mental health education through professional development and school-based activities in partnership with Project Lead the Way, In*Source, or Be Strong Families.

Annual and project-period outcomes: As a result of the five-year City Connects Midwest: Reimagining Student Success in the Magic City, Marian anticipates the following annual outcomes for 4,548 GCSC and 21CCS students:

1. Increased attendance and reduced chronic absences.
2. An increased percentage of students attain proficiency on statewide ELA, math, social studies, and science assessments.
3. Demonstrated positive social-emotional outcomes. - To measure SEL outcomes, we will use attendance, behavioral data, and assessment scores as proxies for improved SEL outcomes. We also intend to use self-reported surveys like youth-self report (YSR) and strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) that will allow us to track SEL improvements over time. In addition, FGDs and interviews with students, teachers, site coordinators, and principals will provide qualitative insights about SEL outcomes.
4. At least 357 GCSC and 21CCS teachers, principals, and staff will increase their knowledge and skills in delivering an integrated student support model. This will be gauged using FGDs and interviews with teachers/staff, site coordinators, and principals, in addition to a few pre and post test surveys for the key components of the training.

Through these activities, the Marian FSCS consortium will produce two long-term results:

1. GCSC and 21CCS Full-Service Community Schools will demonstrate improved coordination, integration, accessibility, and effectiveness of services for underserved children and their families.

2. Marian’s City Connects Midwest Center will have expanded capacity to serve Rust Belt region LEAs in Indiana and surrounding states.

FSCS Project Activities

FSCS Capacity-Building Plan (Objective 1.1)—Once the whole school assessments are complete, each school will compose a planning and implementation team. The team at each FSCS will include the program manager, school site coordinator, principal, school leaders, and parent representatives. The team will establish a high-level vision for the school, including setting multi-year goals. These goals will be interpreted as aspirational themes for the project, translated into specific intervention activities, and aligned with individual student support plans. The implementation teams will reflect on school data to identify groups of students that may benefit from particular interventions. Each year, the implementation teams will re-visit their implementation goals to serve as a continuous improvement loop for the duration of the funding period. The teams will compare progress using yearly student outcomes, review accomplishments, and identify opportunities to strengthen interventions or add new strategies to accelerate progress toward achieving the implementation goals. This process will be facilitated by the school site coordinator, who will work with the team to develop goals and plans. Once the plan is established, the school site coordinators will identify key staff and community partners who will be integral to achieving plans and will manage the implementation of student plans. The program manager will support the school site coordinators and team implementation processes by assisting with problem-solving when implementation challenges arise.

Collaborative leadership teams (Objective 1.2)—The Marian FSCS consortium will use three collaborative team structures to implement project plans and activities:

(1) District-level FSCS management team, including the district principals, GCSC and 21CCS leadership staff, City Connects Program Manager, and the Project Director or Assistant Director of Implementation, and a representative from Boston College will meet quarterly throughout the project period to (a) set goals and establish a vision for how City Connects will address social-emotional, academic, health, and family needs through the project; (b) provide guidance and support for City Connects implementation; (c) assess how well the FSCS project is being implemented; (d) discuss and problem-solve any implementation issues; (e) identify strategies to broaden parent and community engagement and ensure that each school site coordinator has the supervision and support to operate effectively. The team will provide a formal space for both LEAs to collaborate through the project consortium.

(2) School implementation teams: Each FSCS will designate a planning team, including the principal, teachers, parent representatives, local stakeholders, and the school site coordinator. This group will review assessment information, make decisions about intervention strategies, and support the site coordinator in identifying community partners that can collaborate to provide student and family supports.

(3) Individual student review teams: When the Whole Class Review process identifies a student, who may need additional assessment and support, the site coordinator will organize an interdisciplinary team with the key adults who support that student's success, including the classroom teacher, school counselor, principal or assistant principal, and other school staff as appropriate (such as special education staff or a coach). This team will review individual assessment results, identify additional assessment needs, and formulate support plans. The team will establish individual plans for every student developed with Specific, Measurable, Achievable,

Realistic, and Timely (SMART) goals for students with intensive needs, for social-emotional, academic, family, and health needs.

Professional learning community (Objective 1.3)—Robust professional development is a fundamental component of the City Connects model. The Marian FSCS consortium will leverage regional and statewide City Connects professional learning community resources to support each LEA in adopting integrated student supports. School site coordinators will join the Indiana City Connects learning community. The Indiana City Connects learning community meets for bi-weekly virtual professional development sessions, which the City Connects program manager provides. City Connect Professional Development Modules include *Launching City Connects; Opening of School Presentations; Administering Student Interest Surveys; MyConnects (database) Training; Creating High Quality Student Support Plans (Part 1); Creating High Quality Student Support Plans (Part 2); Uncovering Root Causes; Whole Class Review Practice Session; Exploring District Strategies Across Domains; Conducting Individual Student Reviews; Problem of Practice (case study) – Whole Class Review; Capturing Partnerships & Services Data in MyConnects; Individual Student Review Practice; Service Labels & Service Providers; Problem of Practice (case study) – Individual Student Review; Understanding, Presenting, and Acting on Mid-Year Report Data, Summer Services; Follow Up & Continuous Supports for All Students; Social/Emotional/Behavioral Development; Family Partnerships; Promoting Health & Wellbeing; Identifying Accomplishments & Areas of Refinement; and Understanding, Presenting, and Acting on End-of-Year Report Data*. Professional development concludes with a regional end-of-year celebration. In addition, quarterly in-person regional meetings will be a forum for school site coordinators to network with other school coordinators, learn about emerging issues and

opportunities, and connect with community service providers to provide high-quality integrated student support.

- *IN*Source Customized Training-* Marian University will partner with IN*Source to create a series of customized training that will occur virtually twice a year for the duration of the grant cycle. While City Connects Site Coordinators as highly skilled clinicians in the mental health field, their professional training does not include training on IEPs, 504s, and the general understanding of how this process works for schools and families. To bridge this gap, IN*Source will create a series of customized training specifically targeted at City Connects Site Coordinators. Topics will include navigating the IEP process, navigating the 504 processes, how to support families in these processes, understanding the resources available to families, how to best communicate with schools & families, and how to advocate for families experiencing these processes. The hope is that site coordinators will be better equipped to support families with students with special needs and better engage in the process with their school colleagues.

Professional development for GCSC and 21CCS teachers and administrators: Leaders and teachers at each LEA will receive initial training in the City Connects approach. The program manager and project director will hold bi-monthly meetings with school leadership staff for several months before implementation and will address (1) *What is City Connects?*, (2) *What will City Connects look like in your school?*, (3) understanding existing student support in the building (internal/external interventions), (4) hiring and training of site coordinators, and (5) launching the program and reviewing the first three months of implementation.

Training plans will be established annually, based on the whole school and individual student assessments, to align training offerings with the greatest areas of need. Training opportunities for educators will include:

- *Be Strong Families (Banneker Elementary & 21CCS K-2)*- Teachers can participate in this training alongside families and the City Connects Site Coordinator.
- *Project Lead the Way (21CCS Grades 7-10)*

Professional Learning Materials: Site coordinators can access evidence-based curricular resources through the City Connects partnership. Instructional materials are developed by Boston College’s Center of Optimized Student Support.

Integrated student support (Objectives 2.1, 2.2)—At every City Connects school, a full-time school site coordinator who is a school counselor, social worker, or mental health professional is embedded at the school to implement the City Connects practice. The school site coordinators establish integrated student supports within the school by:

1. Reviewing with the classroom teacher strengths and needs of each student across academic, social-emotional and behavioral, health, and family domains
2. Identifying and locating appropriate school and/or community-based services and enrichment services
3. In collaboration with families, establishing identified service providers and individual children and their families
4. Documenting and tracking the delivery of individual student support services
5. Providing ongoing follow-up to ensure the appropriateness of fit for the identified services

As a part of this process, site coordinators and teachers refer to multiple sources of information (attendance records, grades, test scores, and additional information from the student information

system, school nurse, or similar.) about each student that contributes to a holistic understanding of strengths and needs. Benchmark assessment data, grades, attendance, discipline, and other existing data from the beginning of the school year are used to inform an understanding of the strengths and needs of each child.

The school site coordinator will use the information from this review to identify appropriate tiered interventions that address the student's unique circumstances. For students experiencing intensive risk, a broader team of professionals will conduct an At this time, needs for additional assessments, such as an Individual Student Review, and set specific goals, which will be monitored for progress.

The core City Connects practices for reviewing each student lead to a customized plan of service referrals. When concerns such as food insecurity, housing insecurity, unemployment, and childcare issues are identified, the school site coordinator will lead the process of connecting the student and/or family to community-based services and support. At the same time, strengths are identified, such as having strong parent communication, grandparents' involvement, or regularly bringing a packed lunch with healthy foods. The plan capitalizes on these strengths, often referring students to enrichments that build upon their skills and interests.

Community- and school-based interventions will range in intensity from prevention and enrichment services, such as having an interest and talent in the arts or sports, arts or sports programs, to intensive or crisis interventions, such as mental health counseling or violence intervention. Students identified as the most at risk will receive more intensive levels of support.

As a hub of student support in schools, each school site coordinator will serve as the school's liaison by cultivating partnerships with community agencies and collaborating with families. City

Connects software enables school site coordinators to document, track, and report on service referrals and follow-up to assure service delivery and assess effectiveness.

The school site coordinator’s role is guided by the program manager and activity period-focused checklists for the opening of the school year, classroom and individual student reviews, mid-year, and close of school. Checklists provide a structured set of activities and data needs for each period and are used to maintain consistent engagement from school leaders and faculty throughout the school year (Table 8).

Table 8. Yearly City Connects Implementation Tasks	
Month	Activity
July/August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School site coordinators provide opening-of-school presentations (typically during faculty/staff professional development training before the return of students) to prepare the building to implement City Connects, including outlining key tasks and roles/ responsibilities of the school site coordinator, school implementation team, and faculty, staff, and administrators. • School site coordinators will review any students “Flagged for Fall” identified for Individual Student Reviews in the previous year.
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School site coordinators access an “Opening-of-School Checklist” in the MyConnects portal. • The program manager, school site coordinator, and administrators meet to review the checklist and establish plans to complete all activities. • The school site coordinator conducts classroom observations and holds teacher pre-meetings for Whole Class Review. • The school site coordinator uploads student data into MyConnects.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Student Review Referrals begin and will remain ongoing.
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School site coordinators complete Opening of School checklist tasks. • School site coordinators begin Whole Class Reviews • School site coordinators enter data about services referred and delivered, check-ins, Individual Student Reviews, and/or reactivation of services for “Flag for Fall” students (those who need additional follow-up). • Individual Student Review Referrals continue, and interdisciplinary meetings begin.
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least half of the Whole Class Review meetings are completed.
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The program manager and school site coordinators review Whole Class Reviews to check the progress. • All Whole Class Review meetings completed. • Individual Student Review Referrals continue, and interdisciplinary meetings begin.
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All data entries are due for the fall semester (Whole Class Review, Individual Student Review, Service Referrals). • School coordinators complete the Whole Class Review checklist in MyConnects. • The program manager, school site coordinator, and school leaders meet to review the Whole Class Review checklist. • City Connects holds a mid-year data review of the Summary Report to explore findings from completed Whole Class Reviews.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site coordinators’ Whole Classroom Review checklist closes.
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School site coordinators continue holding follow-up conversations with teachers about student progress, strengths, and needs (ongoing). • Individual Student Review Referrals continue, interdisciplinary meetings continue, and follow-up on existing plans continues.
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School site coordinators complete the Individual Student Review checklist in MyConnects. • The program manager, school site coordinator, and school leaders meet to review the checklist. • School site coordinators hold follow-up conversations with teachers by sharing classroom reports and meeting with teachers individually as schedules permit. • Individual Student Review Referrals continue, interdisciplinary meetings continue, and follow-up on existing plans continues. • The school site coordinator finalizes Individual Student Review checklist activities and data entry. • “Re-tiering” begins as school site coordinators review student support plan outcomes to identify and modify students’ tiered services based on students’ successes or new challenges that occurred during the second semester.
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school site coordinator finalizes student re-tiering and data entry. • Individual Student Review Referrals continue, interdisciplinary meetings

	continue, and follow-up on existing plans continues.
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school site coordinator begins the close-of-school checklist. • The program manager, school site coordinator, and school leaders review the close-of-school checklist and establish plans to complete activities.
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school site coordinator finalizes close-of-school checklist activities and completes data entry in MyConnects.
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final school and student data for year-end is reported from MyConnects.

Tiered, integrated student support (Objective 2.2)—School site coordinators will use the comprehensive review of strengths and needs completed with the classroom teacher. Tailored plans for prevention, intervention, and enrichment services ensure that students receive grade-level instruction and remediation when needed. City Connects emphasizes matching students to the right resources for their unique needs, recognizing that there is no one-size-fits-all approach. In some instances, students will be aligned with one-on-one help. When a group of students is identified as having similar support needs, the school site coordinator can also establish intervention groups. For example, at the elementary level, the site coordinator can host a weekly lunch meet-up with students to develop conflict resolution or social skills. At the junior/senior high school level, the school site coordinator may partner with a local community-based organization to provide after-school science enrichment programming or tutoring. By reviewing assessment information and using data to drive intervention plans, City Connects schools have established chess clubs, music programs, farm collaborations, running clubs, and other enrichment opportunities that address students’ social, emotional, academic, health, and family needs. The City Connects program manager will work with each school site coordinator to identify support and enrichment

opportunities that address students’ needs, as identified, across the multi-tiered service structure. Examples of tiered services are provided in Table 9.

Table 9. Tiered Intervention Services Within City Connects	
Tier	Examples of Available Services
Tier 1 Prevention and enrichment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • before-school, after-school, summer, and vacation programs • arts enrichment • sports/ physical activities • youth development programming • academic enrichment, including math and reading programs • violence prevention • health and wellness curricula
Tier 2 Early intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • behavior plan special observation • classroom-based social skills interventions • adult mentoring • psycho-social groups • academic support with a focus on math, literacy, and ESL • classroom-based health interventions • supplemental educational services • tutoring • family support, assistance, and outreach
Tier 3 Intensive support and crisis	<p>regular check-ins with school site coordinators</p> <p>mental health counseling</p> <p>informal screening and diagnostic assessments</p>

intervention	<p>health and medical interventions</p> <p>special education evaluation or screening</p> <p>crisis intervention</p> <p>attendance support</p> <p>family counseling and stabilization supports</p> <p>violence intervention</p> <p>high-intensity mental health services</p>
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Family engagement (Objective 2.3)—“Family” is one of the four domains of the City Connects program, with integrated opportunities for parents and guardians to be involved throughout the program. At the opening of the school year, the school site coordinator may hold an informational meeting for parents, participate in the beginning of school activities, and will coordinate communication with parents at the beginning of each school year to learn about the program. Families are involved in building their student’s individualized student support plan each year and are invited to participate in individual student review meetings. In addition, one of the core responsibilities of the school site coordinators will be to find innovative and meaningful ways to engage parents and families based on the strengths and needs of the school community, including through enrichment activities for students and families.

Networks of community support (Objectives 1.4 and 2.4)—City Connects customizes a student support structure for each school, resulting in a unique list of partnership programs and community groups based on student and family needs, resource availability, geographic location, and other needs factors. Depending on the priorities identified by each school-based implementation team, these services may include centers and programs such as Lake County CASA, Boys and Girls Club of

Northwest Indiana, Purdue Extension, YMCA, and the Indiana Department of Education, as well as local public library literacy programs, and school-based enrichment programs. To support the whole educational pipeline for children and families, the school site coordinator will work with Be Strong Families and Bethune Early Childhood Center, the Head Start and Early Head Start provider in Lake County, to strengthen connections for children and families and support kindergarten readiness for incoming students. The school site coordinator and Director of Marketing and Outreach will work together to inventory, identify, and establish connections with community-based resources that address all pipeline services and FSCS pillars (Table 10).

The partnerships established within the network of this model are critical for the effective implementation of each student’s plan. The City Connects model’s infrastructure, leveraged with the community’s partnerships, will provide robust student support strategies and service options. By building a collaborative network of partnerships, the Marian FSCS consortium will bring needed services into schools, eliminate duplicative efforts across the region, and ensure that students are matched to the specific supports that will lead to strong academic success. The consortium plans to partner with Project Lead the Way & Be Strong Families to provide professional development for GCSC and 21CCS teachers and/or site coordinators to support these objectives.

Table 10. Plans to Implement FSCS Pillars		
Requirement	Project Objective/s	Implementation Plans
Pillar 1: Integrated Student Supports		
<i>(i) Medical, dental, vision care, and mental and behavioral health services, including</i>	2.2	Each school site coordinator will inventory, and document which

<p><i>mental health literacy for students and staff and trauma-informed services to prevent, intervene, and mitigate adverse childhood experiences (ACEs); (ii) individuals to assist with housing, transportation, nutrition, citizenship preparation, or criminal justice issues and other services</i></p>		<p>services exist and/or have been available in the past. Based on the inventory, the site coordinator will connect students and families to services and establish new relationships with other providers to address the highest priority needs through the Whole Class Review.</p>
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Pillar 2. Expanded and Enriched Learning Time and Opportunities

<p><i>(i) Emphasize real-world project-based learning where students can apply their learning to contexts that are relevant and engaging</i></p> <p><i>(ii) Art, music, drama, creative writing, hands-on experience with engineering or science, career and technical education, tutoring and homework help, and recreational programs</i></p>	<p>2.2, 2.4</p>	<p>Tier 1 enrichment services will be evaluated, and new services will be established based on the results of the school-wide assessments conducted in Year 1 and in response to the needs and interests of the students. The school site coordinators will connect students to learning enrichment opportunities based on their individualized needs.</p>
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Pillar 3: Active Family and Community Engagement

<p><i>(i) Brings parents, families, community members, and leaders into the school as partners in students' education, including meaningfully involving parents and families in decision making</i></p>	<p>2.3</p>	<p>Involvement in individual student review meetings</p>
<p><i>(ii) Makes the community school a hub for services, activities, and programs for students, families, and members of the neighborhood that the community school serves</i></p>	<p>2.2</p>	<p>The school site coordinators will serve as the student support teams' point persons and coordinate family engagement events and service fairs.</p>
<p><i>(iii) Provides adults with desired educational and employment opportunities and other supportive services</i></p>	<p>2.2</p>	<p>The school site coordinators will serve as the primary point of contact between families & the school.</p>
<p><i>(iv) Provides centralized supports for families and communities, such as English as second language classes, citizenship preparation, computer skills, art, housing assistance, child abuse and neglect prevention supports, health and mental health, literacy programs, digital literacy training, or other programs that bring community members into a school building for meetings, events, or programming</i></p>	<p>2.3</p>	<p>The school site coordinator will provide resource and referral services in partnership with community organizations to support the whole family's needs, including housing assistance, parenting education, employability training, etc.</p>

Pillar 4: Collaborative Leadership and Practices to support high-quality Teaching

<p><i>(i) Include a school-based leadership team with the representation of family leaders and a community voice; a community school coordinator; and a community-wide leadership team; (ii) Include other leadership or governance teams, community school steering committees, or other community coalitions, educator learning communities, and other staff to manage the multiple, complex joint work of the school and community organizations.</i></p>	<p>1.2, 1.3, 1.4,</p>	<p>Individual student review team with parent involvement</p> <p>School implementation teams with parent and community organization involvement</p> <p>District-level implementation teams</p> <p>FSCS management team</p>
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Indiana Academic Standards. Addressing academic needs and closing learning gaps is a fundamental outcome for all City Connects schools. The program is aligned with the success indicators identified in Indiana’s *Core 40*, the educational foundation established by the Indiana Department of Education to ensure that all students are well prepared to succeed in college, apprenticeship programs, military training, and the workforce. The Core 40 diploma has been required for high school graduation in Indiana since 2007. Academic supports at GSCS & 21CCS will improve graduation rates, ensuring every student receives the academic and advisory support needed to complete the Core 40 diploma. Core 40 requirements are provided in Table 11.

Table 11. Indiana Core 40 Diploma Requirements	
Subject Area	Requirement
English/Language Arts	Eight credits, including a balance of literature, composition, and

	speech
Mathematics	Six credits, including Algebra I (2 credits), Geometry (2 credits), Algebra II (2 credits), or Integrated Math I, II, and III (6 credits) Students must take a math or quantitative reasoning course each year in high school.
Science	Six credits, including Biology I (2 credits), Chemistry I or Physics I or Integrated Chemistry-Physics (2 credits), and any Core 40 science course (2 credits)
Social Studies	Six credits, including U.S. History (2 credits), U.S. Government (1 credit), Economics (1 credit), and World History/ Civilization or Geography/History of the World (1 credit)
Directed Electives	Five credits, which may include World Languages, Fine Arts, and/or Career and Technical Education
Physical Education	Two credits
Health and Wellness	One credit
Electives: 6 credits*/ College and Career Pathway	All students are strongly encouraged to complete a College and Career Pathway (selecting electives in a deliberate manner) to take full advantage of career and college exploration and preparation.

3. Quality of the Project Services

Plans to ensure that a diversity of perspectives is brought to bear in the design and operation of the proposed project, including those of students, youth, families, educators and staff, beneficiaries of services, school leadership, and community leadership

The City Connects model was originally designed via a two-year process that brought together district and school leaders, teachers, other school staff, parents, community agency representatives, and researchers at Boston College. To this day, the implementation of City Connects relies on integrated input from parents, community members, school leaders, other school student support staff, and teachers to help students achieve their best. The Marian FSCS consortium will engage each stakeholder group in the design and implementation of project plans through a variety of mechanisms, including:

- Whole Class Review input
- Opening-of-school activities to communicate with families about City Connects and the programs it organizes and to begin receiving family input.
- Whole Class Review conversations with every classroom teacher, followed by communication with the family about student support plans
- Individual student review teams with teachers, parents, and other adults who support the student (such as coaches and special educators)
- Annual satisfaction surveys: Each spring, City Connects conducts confidential surveys of principals, teachers, and community partners connected to the program to assess their satisfaction with City Connects and to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement. The survey is administered electronically using the Qualtrics survey tool. After three years of implementation in a district, teachers and community partners are surveyed every other year.

In addition, the project will use several mechanisms to invite students' voices in the planning and implementation. A student interest survey will be conducted each fall to provide information about students' desired enrichment and support activities. Each school site coordinator regularly contacts students by supporting small groups and whole school activities. Because this role assures continual contact with students throughout the school year, the school site coordinator builds

trusting relationships and has numerous opportunities to seek input from students about the activities they want most. The evaluation plan includes conducting periodic focus groups with students to understand how well the FSCS project meets their needs.

4. Adequacy of Resources

Plans for a full-time coordinator at each school, including a plan to sustain the position beyond the grant period and a description of how this position will serve to plan, integrate, coordinate, and facilitate programs and services at each school

Each school will host a full-time school site coordinator. School site coordinators provide essential leadership for City Connects implementation by (1) establishing and facilitating a Student Support team and process in the school that identifies and responds to the strengths and personal developmental needs of each and every child in the school; (2) connecting students and families to prevention, early intervention, and intensive services programs that address physical, emotional, cognitive, and social development; (3) developing and enhancing community partnerships with varied community agencies to meet the identified needs of students, families, and the school; (4) collaborating with school staff, including classroom teachers, to implement the City Connects model; (5) promoting the City Connects model to the school community, families, and community agencies; (6) engaging families and caregivers in learning about and supporting children's education, including understanding the ways in which academic outcomes are enhanced by addressing the social, emotional, and personal development needs; (7) working with community partners to provide services to address out-of-school factors as part of the ongoing school student support team; and (8) collecting data on the implementation of the model and the delivery of services. Qualified school site coordinators will possess a master's degree in school counseling or social work (or another licensure-eligible master's level mental health credential) and have

experience working collaboratively in a school environment, providing case management for children and/or families, and using culturally responsive practices.

Plan to sustain school site coordinator positions after FSCS funding concludes: The school site coordinator role is fundamental to all City Connects schools and must be maintained once integrated school supports have been fully implemented to generate long-lasting student success results. Given this history, schools within the City Connects Midwest network have adopted various funding strategies to support school site coordinators, which the Marian FSCS consortium will review and consider. Nationally, many City Connects schools have successfully supported site coordinators' roles with Title I, Title III, Title IV, IDEA, SEL, or ESSER funding. In most cases, funds from several sources are allocated to a percentage of each position, distributing the salary and benefits across multiple funding sources. In some cases, City Connects schools have combined existing roles within the school into similar functions, such as those of a school counselor, school social worker, or behaviorist. This model can be effective for schools with three to five years of successful implementation where a baseline capacity has been established. In these cases, the City Connects coordinator becomes embedded in the school as the primary student support staff person. Supervisory and coaching roles are often absorbed into a district-level position, minimizing the need for the level of support provided by City Connects Midwest in the initial years of implementation. In all cases, City Connects regional and national technical assistance and support will be continuously available at whatever level a school or district needs to maintain integrated student supports.

5. Quality of the Management Plan

(A) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project

Marian University will lead the City Connects Midwest Reimagining Student Success in the Magic City under the leadership of project director Jillian Lain, MA. Lain is the Director of City Connects Midwest at the Center for Vibrant Schools at Marian University. Lain holds a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology, Youth & Child Programming from the University of Indianapolis and a Master of Arts from DePaul University in Sociology focused on youth services and urban sociology in Chicago, Illinois. She is a member of the North Central Sociological Association and the Association for Humanist Sociology. She is uniquely positioned to manage this initiative effectively as a long-time non-profit leader with experience in regional program management and implementation. Lain will commit 20% FTE to the project, which Marian will contribute in kind. Lain will facilitate the active involvement of all Marian FSCS members to carry out the project’s capacity-building and student support objectives.

School site coordinators will lead site-based program implementation, conduct student assessments and plans, identify and coordinate community-based partners’ services, and support teachers in adopting City Connects resources and instructional materials. By resourcing schools with a point person for community partners to connect with students and families, the City Connects model alleviates the pressure for teachers and other school staff to make referrals for students and allows school counselors to provide more direct support to students and families. Project plans will leverage partnerships with organizations to provide prevention, intervention, and enrichment support that may or may not exist in the schools and local community.

Table 12. Key Personnel	
Personnel	Role/ Responsibilities
<u>Project Director</u> Jillian Lain, MA	Lain will oversee the FSCS project as the PROJECT DIRECTOR, including coordinating and facilitating the

<p>(0.20 FTE in-kind)</p>	<p>Marian FSCS consortium team; supervising and supporting the program manager; providing for financial management and grant oversight; coordinating marketing and outreach with the marketing director; facilitating long-term planning to support the sustainability of project activities; administering LEA partnerships; and facilitating access to City Connects resources for project activities. The City Connects Technical Assistance Center at the Center for Vibrant Schools will support each school site coordinator's hiring, training, and practice facilitation. Lain’s time will be contributed in kind to the project.</p>
<p>Assistant Director Margaret Smith (0.30 FTE)</p>	<p>Smith serves as the 1:1 coach for the Program Manager, provides guidance and facilitation for planning the bi-weekly professional development for site coordinators, and supports the coordination of the implementation teams. Smith will meet with the Program Manager weekly to aid in problem-solving, coaching strategies, and ensuring implementation fidelity. Additionally, Smith works collaboratively with CTC to annually review and update professional development content for school site coordinators and then works with the local Program Manager to deliver the content bi-weekly to school site coordinators.</p>

<p>Program Manager</p> <p>Emily Edwards</p> <p>(0.50 FTE)</p>	<p>Edwards will maintain Marian’s relationship with GCSC and 21CCS and will recruit and support school-based school site coordinator hiring and onboarding at each school; provide bi-weekly professional development and coaching on the City Connects model of student support for site coordinator; facilitate ongoing professional development for school site coordinators; provide regular coaching and implementation guidance sessions with school site coordinators (and leadership as needed); support the evaluation of site coordinators; monitor the fidelity of implementation of the City Connects model of student support at each school; collaborate with principals and school leaders to support school site coordinators in delivering the program; assist the school site coordinators to develop and maintain relationships with community-based agencies and organizations through events, communications and committees; support the collection of high-quality student support data and use data to monitor progress; provide annual reports to the school principals about the project; and communicate with the larger City Connects organization on policy, practice, and implementation of the City Connects model of student support.</p>
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<p>School Site Coordinators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Banneker Elementary at Marquette</i>, To Be Hired, (1.0 FTE) 2. <i>Beveridge Elementary</i>, Antoinette Thurmond, (1.0 FTE) 3. <i>Daniel Hale William Elementary</i>, Leona Chandler-Felton, (1.0 FTE) 4. <i>Frankie Woods McCullough Academy</i>, Ivery McKinzie (1.0 FTE) 5. <i>Glen Park Academy</i>, Tamara Macklin, (1.0 FTE) 6. <i>Gary Middle School</i>, To be Hired (1.0 FTE) 7. <i>Bailly STEM Academy</i>, To be Hired (1.0 FTE) 8. <i>21st Century Charter School (Grades K-2)</i> 	<p>Each school site coordinator collaborates with teachers in every classroom to review the strengths and needs of every student every year, including by establishing and leading a student support team (or joining an existing student support team’s process if this exists) to identify and respond to the strengths and personal developmental needs of each child in the school; connecting students to prevention, early intervention, and intensive services and programs to address physical, emotional, cognitive, and social development; developing and enhancing partnerships with community agencies to meet the identified needs of students, families, and the school; collaborating with staff and classroom teachers to implement the City Connects model; promoting the City Connects model to the school community, families, and community agencies; engaging families and caregivers in understanding and supporting the education of their children and the ways in which academic outcomes are enhanced by serving the social, emotional, and personal development needs of the child; and collecting data on the implementation of the model and the delivery of services, and using data to support school-level decision-making.</p>
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<p>Marilyn Garrison (1.0 FTE)</p> <p>9. <i>21st Century Charter School (Grades 3-5),</i> Tonya Thomas-Willis</p> <p>10. <i>21st Century Charter School (Grades 6-8),</i> Martin McCary, (1.0 FTE)</p> <p>11. <i>21st Century Charter School (9-10), To be hired, (1.0 FTE)</i></p>	
<p>Director of Marketing Outreach</p> <p>Samantha Holifield</p> <p>(0.20 FTE in-kind)</p>	<p>Holifield is the Center for Vibrant School’s designated public information officer and will plan, develop, and implement all City Connects marketing, communications, and public relations activities.</p>
<p>Director of Business Strategy & Operations</p> <p>Alex Cipoletti</p> <p>(.10 FTE)</p>	<p>Cipoletti will maintain Marian's relationship with schools and recruit and support site coordinator hiring and onboarding; provide professional development and coaching; support the evaluation of school site coordinators; monitor the fidelity of program implementation; collaborate with principals and school leaders in program delivery; assist the site coordinators in developing and maintaining relationships with community-based agencies and organizations; support the collection of</p>

	<p>high-quality student support data and use data to monitor progress; provide annual reports to the school principals; and communicate with the larger City Connects organization on policy, practice, and implementation of the City Connects model of student support.</p>
<p>Coordinator of Business Operations & Special Projects Samuel Orrell (.05 FTE)</p>	<p>Orrell is the Center for Vibrant Schools coordinator for business operations and will support the Director of Business Strategy & Operations work in managing the financial portions of the grant. Orrell will support the schools' reimbursement process, payment of partner organization fees, and prepare grant-related expense reports, check requests, and purchase orders.</p>
<p>Technology Specialist Mathew Sheldon (.20 FTE)</p>	<p>Sheldon will provide technical assistance to site coordinators and school leaders on the use, configuration, and data uploads for the MyConnects database. Sheldon also provides daily technology support to help troubleshoot system issues and errors and coaches around the usage of MyConnects. Finally, he will assist with data management and reporting throughout the grant cycle.</p>

Consortium and implementation: Under the guidance of the project director, three formal work groups will manage FSCS project implementation. The School Implementation Teams, Individual Student Review Teams, and District-level FSCS management teams' roles and

composition are described under Objective 1.3 above. The organizational chart (Figure 6) depicts lines of communication and relationships among consortium members, staff, and partners.

Table 13. FSCS Consortium Members	
Stakeholder	Role/Responsibilities
Marian University	Will serve as the capacity-building and technical assistance resource for the FSCS project by (1) providing program management and support to school-based implementers; (2) connecting each FSCS to the City Connects program and resources; (3) providing structured weekly and bi-monthly professional development support for school site coordinators; (4) coordinating and facilitating professional development for GCSC and 21CCS teachers, principals, and staff; (5) administering all aspects of FSCS project evaluation; (6) supporting each FSCS to conduct an annual assessment of every student and whole-school assessment at the outset of the project; (7) facilitating District-level FSCS project management meetings; and (8) supporting LEA partners to identify community-based organizations and agencies to provide student and family-facing interventions, support services, and enrichment opportunities.
Gary Community School Corporation	Will serve as an FSCS partner for the project by (1) hiring and supervising a school site coordinator; (2) completing the initial City Connects implementation training; (3) conducting a school-wide assessment in Year 1; (4) conducting individual student assessments for every student every year; (5) supporting and facilitating

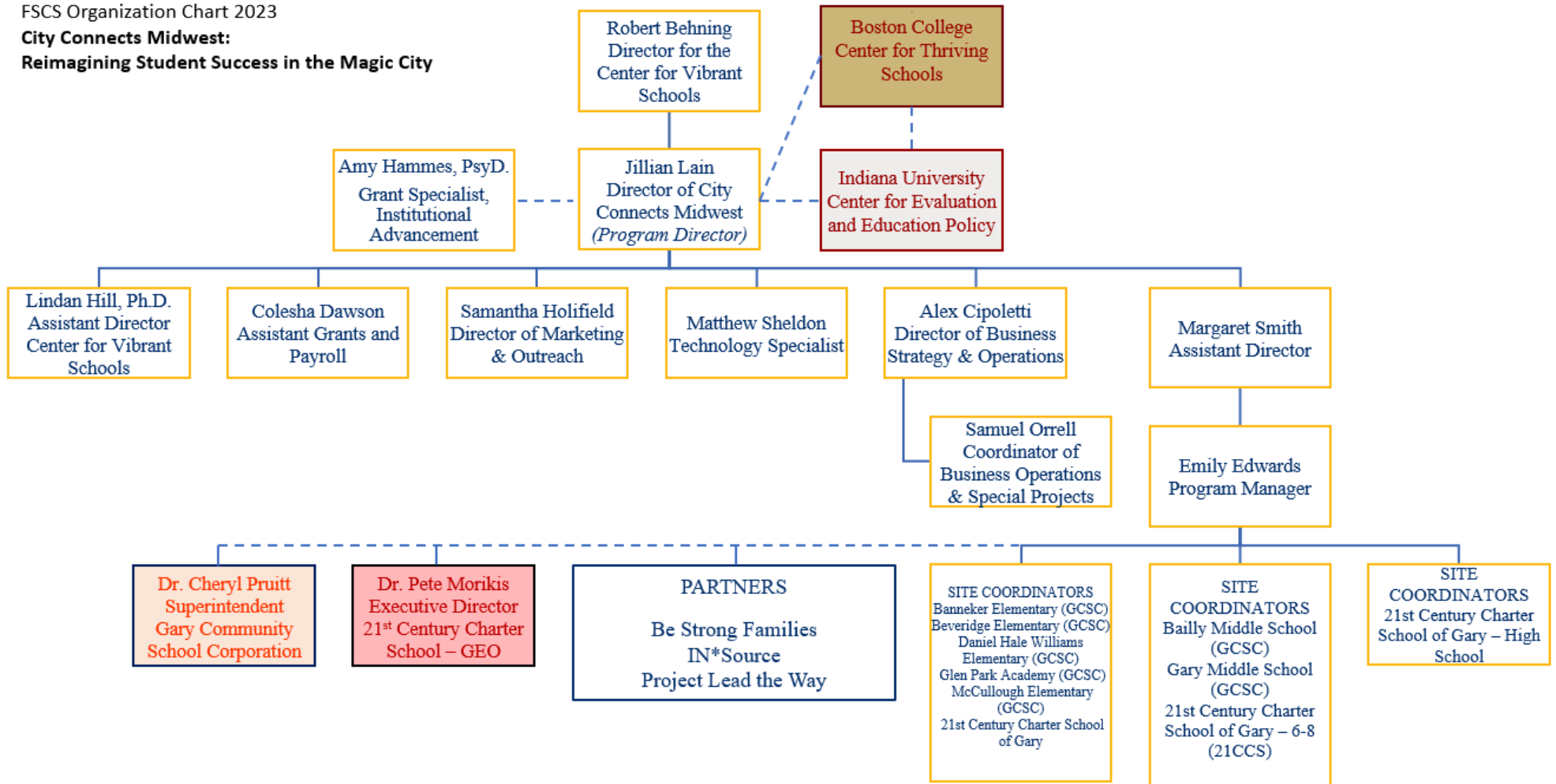
	<p>professional development for the school site coordinator, teachers, administrators, and other key staff throughout the project; (6) providing leadership-level staff to participate on the project implementation and management teams; and (7) supporting the adoption of integrated student support, including from community-based organizations and providers.</p>
<p>21st Century Charter School (GEO Academies)</p>	<p>Will serve as an FSCS partner for the project by (1) hiring and supervising a school site coordinator; (2) completing the initial City Connects implementation training; (3) conducting a school-wide assessment in Year 1; (4) conducting individual student assessments for every student every year; (5) supporting and facilitating professional development for the school site coordinator, teachers, administrators, and other key staff throughout the project; (6) providing leadership-level staff to participate on the project implementation and management teams; and (7) supporting the adoption of integrated student support, including from community-based organizations and providers.</p>
<p>Be Strong Families</p>	<p>Site coordinators and parents/caregivers will be trained through the Parent Café Training Program to create a parent collaboration to create transformative change by developing and sustaining conversations that nurture family spirit, promote well-being, and prevent violence.</p>

IN*Source	Provides high-quality information, training, and support to families of children and young adults with disabilities through the Indiana Parent Training Program, which instructs parents about their rights and responsibilities in early intervention and special education processes under state and federal laws by disseminating information and materials and conducting training workshops throughout Indiana.
Project Lead the Way	PTLW will provide a hands-on, interdisciplinary STEM-based curriculum with pathways in computer science, engineering, and biomedical science that empowers students in grades K-12. Middle school students will also receive an exploration of career interests, increasing the likelihood of continuing their education after high school.
Boston College/ City Connects	Will support all project objectives by providing an evidence-based approach to comprehensive student support. The City Connects model organizes and coordinates the efforts and resources of the consortium partners listed in Table 13. Boston College provides coaching and support for the Technical Assistance Center Director and Assistant Director of Internal Affairs. City Connects is the practice for coordinating and conducting a Needs Assessment and presenting assessment results to each school’s leadership; providing an annual report to summarize the implementation data gathered each year; working with the Technical Assistance Center staff to share school-level data with school leadership; administering and analyzing

	<p>annual satisfaction surveys and reporting results to the Technical Assistance Center to inform quality improvement efforts for the following year.</p>
<p>Additional community partners</p>	<p>Based on the Whole School Assessment in Project Year 1 and student assessments in all project years, the school site coordinator and Project Director will identify other community agencies that can provide pipeline services and support for GCSC and 21CCS students and families.</p>

Figure 6: FSCS Organizational Chart

Marian University
 FSCS Organization Chart 2023
City Connects Midwest:
Reimagining Student Success in the Magic City



Community outreach: Engaging the local community as champions for students and families is essential to the City Connects strategy. For the school site coordinators to effectively engage with community partners providing pipeline services, the consortium anticipates that staff will need to build relationships with local partners. The school site coordinators will lead these efforts with support from the City Connects Midwest Director of Marketing and Outreach. The school site coordinators will serve as the schools' liaison to community agencies by making referrals for individual students and families and providing follow-up to support service delivery. The director of Marketing and Outreach will further support community engagement by providing a variety of media resources, including coordinating local news media coverage for school events; hosting town halls and community events to engage the community; promoting City Connects at community events; coordinating tabling events at each school; facilitating City Connects network newsletters features on the Marian FSCS consortium project; linking City Connects web resource via school homepages and digital school calendars; creating and distributing flyers with QR codes to share City Connects program information with families; creating Facebook events for school activities to engage parents and family members; sharing project successes through social media posts, photos, and links to resources and community partners' websites.

(B) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes

Marian University is a private, non-profit university serving 4,071 undergraduate and graduate students on its 200-acre campus in Indianapolis, Indiana. Founded in 1851, Marian has a long history of innovation in education, focusing on students and families of racial diversity, economic hardship, and underserved neighborhoods. Through Marian's strategic goal of *access and success*, the university aims to attract, retain, graduate, and professionally place diverse students, including

minority individuals, economically challenged students, non-traditional urban and rural students, and adults.

Within Marian, the Fred S. Klipsch Educators College (Educators College) provides programs to support the formation of teachers, the development of leaders, and support existing educators in schools. The Klipsch Educators College was created with a vision to recruit the most diverse, highly talented students and train them to advance into educational careers, leading schools to dramatic improvements in student outcomes. The program's strengths include early and intentional clinical placements and teaching simulation, study abroad experiences in countries with exceptional educational systems, a year-long paid residency program, and a pathway to attain a master's degree within five years. The Educators College's Academy for Teaching and Learning Leadership (Academy) was established in 2010 to develop leaders for schools with significant needs. Over 150 graduates have completed the program, many of whom have led schools in Central Indiana to substantial improvements in student success.

Marian's **Center for Vibrant Schools** serves as the Midwest Training and Assistance Center for City Connects (City Connects Midwest). Launched in 2021, the Marian University Center for Vibrant Schools offers subject-matter expertise, school-improvement programs, and process-enhancement techniques to strengthen student learning outcomes. Center staff collaborate with local educators and schools to address the root causes struggling students encounter through comprehensive, personalized support.

As the City Connects Midwest Technical Assistance Provider, the Educators College has the capacity and experience to enable its school partners to explore and implement systematic, evidence-based student support. Marian has strong relationships with K-12 schools across the state, including traditional public and charter schools.

Marian has consistently demonstrated its ability to manage federally funded programs over the last decade. The university's reputation for providing a wide array of critical services to schools and districts across Indiana is well established through well-trained, highly qualified staff with a clear understanding of the population of students and families served. Prior University-community partnerships that Educators College has seeded and supported include:

- The Center for School and Community Success was formed due to the acquisition of Goodwill's INI Schools. This program supports school improvement efforts by removing administrative and non-academic burdens from the school administrator (i.e., finance/accounting, state reporting, and compliance).
- Marian partnered with Duke Energy between 2013–2017 to provide direct services to Indiana schools, including a leadership development program for Greater Clark Schools, teacher certification in Vincennes, diversity recruitment for teachers in Kokomo, and strategic planning for the Sheridan School Corporation.
- Beginning in 2021, Marian began providing the Learning Loss Recovery 1 Program to train teachers to provide tutoring in the evidence-based Orton Gillingham reading and math programs. The program aims to improve reading and math readiness among K-3 students in underserved and economically disadvantaged schools and neighborhoods.
- Through the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Program, the Center has trained 1500 teachers in the Orton-Gillingham reading program to support students who struggle the most with reading skills effectively.
- The Center trained teachers at Neighborhood Charter Network Schools, Enlace, and Kindezi Academies through the Oh, Gee! Let's Read! Indianapolis Summer Youth Program to use the Orton Gillingham reading program.

- From 2018–2020, Marian conducted dyslexia training for teachers in MSD Lawrence Township, Marion County. Center staff trained and coached 130 teachers in the Orton Gillingham Reading Approach. Students made double-digit gains in reading proficiency rates through the program.

In addition to the above projects Marian has managed and implemented, the institution has received several federal grant awards in recent years:

- In 2021 the Richard M. Fairbanks Foundation awarded [REDACTED] to the Klipsch Educators College to provide a five-year program with a one-year residency, enabling students to simultaneously earn a bachelor’s and a master’s degree in education.
- Klipsch Educators College received a five-year *U.S. Department of Education Teacher Quality Partnership* program grant of [REDACTED] in 2019.
- Marian received a U.S. Department of Justice Grant to Reduce Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, and Stalking on Campus grant of [REDACTED] in 2020 to support campus-wide violence prevention and response efforts.
- In 2020 Marian received grants from the National Science Foundation’s Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program of [REDACTED] and Scholarships in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (S-STEM) of [REDACTED] to support undergraduate STEM scholarships and support services.
- City Connects piloted a rural program in 2022 with the Metropolitan School District of Shakmak (MSD Shakamak) in Jasonville, Indiana, to implement the proposed *U.S. Department of Education Full-Service Community Schools (FSCS) Program*.
- In 2023, in partnership with the Indiana Department of Education, Marian began implementing the *U.S. Department of Education School-Based Mental Health Services (SBMH) Grant*

Program in Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS), Fort Wayne Community Schools (FWCS), South Bend Community School Corporation (SBCSC), and Gary Community School Corporation (GCSC).

- Marian implemented the *U.S. Department of Education Mental Health Service Professional Demonstration Grant Program* in the Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS) Innovation Network in 2023 to expand the pipeline of high-quality, trained providers to address the shortages of mental health service professionals in schools.

(C) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks

Marian University has a long history of managing grant-funded projects and federal agency funding. The project director will manage the grant program by overseeing the school partnership, connecting with the City Connects and Technical Assistance Center staff, and managing and supporting site coordinators. Table 14 provides a high-level overview of the key tasks, timeline, and milestones for the FSCS project across the implementation period.

Table 14. Marian FSCS Work Plan			
<i>Key Tasks</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Milestones</i>	<i>Person(s) Responsible</i>
Project Management/All Objectives			
Hire and onboard school site coordinators.	Ongoing as needed New Schools- May 2024	Two site coordinators hired and trained	Program manager, GSCS & 21CCS principals

Hold City Connects information sessions at each school to introduce the program.	February 2024	School staff and faculty understand project goals, roles, and responsibilities.	Program manager and school site coordinators
Conduct community outreach about the City Connects program	Ongoing, all years	Result in at least one school community event per year	Director of Marketing and Outreach
Objective 1.1 Each FSCS will improve the coordination, integration, accessibility, and effectiveness of services for children and families by establishing and implementing a capacity-building plan.			
Establish the FSCS management team.	January 2024	Conduct meetings quarterly	Program Manager
Hold stakeholder meetings to review assessment results and set overarching goals.	By August 2024	Each school establishes City Connects multi-year goals	Program Manager
District-level teams use assessment results to formulate City Connects implementation goals.	By August 2024	School-wide implementation goals are established and used to drive intervention strategy selection.	Project Director
The school site coordinator works with	Ongoing Years 1–4	Timely performance monitoring and reporting	School Site Coordinator

stakeholders to implement and monitor progress toward achieving goals.		support the data-driven implementation.	
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Objective 1.2 Each FSCS will establish a school-based collaborative leadership team that will lead the implementation of school-wide capacity-building activities and strategies.

Establish school and district-level teams.	August 2024	Meet as outlined below regularly.	Program Manager and Site Coordinators
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School-level implementation team meetings	Quarterly, all years	Meet monthly (or more frequently as needed)	Project Manager and School Site Coordinators
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District-level management team meetings	Bi-Monthly, Year 1 Quarterly Years 2-4	Y 1 – Meet bi-monthly Y 2 – Quarterly	Project Director and Program Manager
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Objective 1.3 At least 350 teachers, principals, and administrators will strengthen their skills for providing integrated whole-child support by participating in a City Connects professional learning community with training, coaching, professional development, curricular resources, and technical assistance.

Establish an annual professional development plan and schedule for school site coordinators.	By July 2024 and annually	Annual Opening of School presentation to teachers and principals Weekly one-hour professional development	Program Manager
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		sessions for site coordinators	
Hold bi-weekly virtual professional development for school site coordinators.	Beginning August 2024 and ongoing	School site coordinators trained to implement City Connects with fidelity	Program Manager
Hold quarterly in-person professional development for school site coordinators.	Beginning October 2024 and ongoing	School site coordinators trained to implement City Connects with fidelity	Project Manager
GSCS & 21CC principals attend City Connects professional development group	Annually	Principals will attend an annual two-hour professional development session each year with other principals from the City Connects network.	Project Manager

Objective 1.4 City Connects Midwest will partner with external evaluators from Indiana University Bloomington Center for Evaluation and Education Policy (CEEP) to develop a thorough year 1 and a high-level multiyear evaluation plan spanning the duration of the program after notification of the award. As delineated in detail in the evaluation section, the evaluation plan will comprise formative and summative evaluation plans that leverage the data available through the school site, site coordinator, IDOE, and Marian University. These available datasets will be used in conjunction with the primary data

<p>gathered by the evaluation team comprising of FGDs with parents, teachers/staff, and students; interviews with parents, teachers/staff, site coordinators, school administrators, community partners, and community stakeholders; and pre and post training surveys for specific training. The findings from the formative evaluation processes will be reported periodically to inform practice, and findings from the summative evaluation processes will be shared yearly with stakeholders.</p>			
Establish Year 1 and project-duration evaluation plans	By April 2024	Detailed evaluation plans in place	CEEP and Project Director
Identify baseline sources for all performance indicators	By April 2024	Baseline information supports ongoing data collection for all indicators	CEEP and Project Director
Conduct formative evaluation	Beginning in Year 1 and ongoing	Provide data to support continuous program improvement	CEEP and Project Director
Conduct summative evaluation	End of Year 1; annually and/or as required for funder reporting	Understand outcomes of project capacity-building and student services efforts	CEEP and Project Director
<p>Objective 2.1 ~400 students per school (n=650 annually) will be reviewed to identify strengths and needs in social/emotional, family, academic, and health domains. They will receive a customized support plan based on the identified strengths and needs.</p>			

Conduct Whole Class Reviews	Annually, September–December	All students will have a new/updated individualized student support plan created by January/February each year.	School Site Coordinators
Conduct Individual Student Reviews	Annually, September–June	Individual student reviews will occur on an ongoing basis throughout the duration of the year, with an increased occurrence as students are identified during the Whole Class Review process.	School Site Coordinators
Establish Individualized Student Plans	Annually, October–December	Students and families are linked to services that support their unique needs.	School Site Coordinators
Re-tier students based on changes in strengths and needs	Annually, March–May	Student service plans will reflect their current strengths and needs and grow with them throughout the school year.	School Site Coordinators
Objective 2.2 Each FSCS will establish integrated, tiered, age-appropriate academic, social, emotional, and behavioral supports based on school and student assessment information.			

Inventory community partners and school resources	Beginning in Fall 2024 and ongoing	A completed audit of existing community partnerships and in-school resources will provide a baseline for future community partnerships.	School Site Coordinators
Identify new community-based partners that address students' needs	Following completion of the Whole School Assessment and ongoing	Community organizations are identified to provide a range of services and support for students and families	School Site Coordinator and Director of Marketing and Outreach
Establish school-based enrichment services.	Upon completion of Whole Class Reviews in Year 1 and ongoing	Each school has tiered individual, small-group, and whole-school programs and services that support student success.	School Site Coordinators and school leadership
Individual Student Reviews conducted	Following Whole Class Reviews (Ongoing)	Students with higher levels of support need to receive targeted interventions matched to their circumstances.	School Site Coordinator

Objective 2.3 At least 10% of parents/guardians at each school will be engaged in the FSCS project through students’ individualized support plans and school-based enrichment activities.			
Parent/family enrichment activities	Following school assessment and ongoing	Regular family engagement/enrichment opportunities build upon families’ strengths and lessen families’ needs.	School Site Coordinators
Objective 2.4 Selected schools will benefit from training by Be Strong Families that will indirectly address violence prevention through professional development and school-based activities.			
Be Strong Families	Annual training	Annual training to guide the implementation of Parent Cafés in Year 1 with annual training offerings to account for turnover of volunteer leaders.	Identified faculty/staff, School Site Coordinator, & parent/guardians

6. Quality of the Project Evaluation

(A) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project

Marian will contract with the Indiana University Bloomington Center for Evaluation and Education Policy (CEEP) to provide external evaluation for the project. Evaluators Christopher

Lubienski, Ph.D., professor of education policy at Indiana University and director of CEEP; Jason Curlin, Ph.D. candidate; and Moaaz Hamid at Indiana University School of Education will work closely with the project director to establish mixed-methods formative and summative evaluation plans. CEEP has a long history in program evaluations since its founding in 2005. CEEP will collaborate with the project director and, as relevant, with City Connects Team leadership to determine appropriate methods, collect data, conduct analyses, and summarize results. The CEEP team will meet with the project director monthly for evaluation activities. CEEP will provide evaluation reports semi-annually and annually and more frequently as needed to comply with all funder reporting requirements. Evaluation plans will be guided by the logic model (Figure 7), which includes inputs, activities, outputs, short-term outcomes, intermediate outcomes, and long-term outcomes for the project.

Data sources: Performance measurement data that will be used to track all project indicators, objectives, and outcomes will include information from various sources, as identified in Table 15.

Data collected by the school site coordinator: The school site coordinator will enter student, and school assessment data into the City Connects MyConnects database, which will provide access to aggregate data regarding integrated student support services, community partnership referrals and services, and other implementation information.

Data collected by each school: Each school will share various student data, including attendance, grades, test scores, disciplinary data, and other disaggregated individual-level quantitative data.

City Connects Professional Development modules: The professional learning community includes several professional development sessions led by City Connects staff that are

measurable through practice data. For example, in the High-Quality Student Support Plans module, school site coordinators review the components of a high-quality student support plan and practice building one independently. Participants build on this practice by participating in a “collaborative colleagues” discussion to offer feedback on the developed practice plans. In implementing individual student plans, each school site coordinator will document students’ plans in the MyConnects portal. In the Uncovering Root Cause for More Effective Tailoring module, school site coordinators will deepen their skills in preparing for and engaging in root cause analyses to tailor student services. Participants will engage in a group discussion of a case study presented by a school site coordinator. The percentage of students in each school who have completed Individual Student Review in MyConnects, including established goals and completed follow-up, will provide a measurable result for this module.

In addition, professional learning opportunities will also be provided to school principals. The learning provided will be through professional learning communities, where the program manager will coordinate 1-3 annual regional meetings in Gary, Indiana, to facilitate learning around implementation, general troubleshooting, how to support their site coordinator and the implementation process, how to remove any barriers, review of implementation data, and future planning. The content for these meetings will vary based on feedback from the field and will be customized based on that feedback.

All data from CTC will be summarized and shared with the Marian FSCS consortium throughout the project as it is available.

Data collected for the FSCS project evaluation: In addition to data from all sources described above, Marian has engaged Indiana University Bloomington Center for Evaluation and Education Policy (CEEP) to provide external evaluation for the project. Evaluation plans (detailed in Section

6) include tracking several performance measures using available data from the school, City Connects, and the project. In addition, the evaluators will conduct interviews and focus groups with teachers, parents, students, and principals; collect and review professional learning community results from data; and establish additional evaluation methods to ensure that all performance measures are carefully monitored and that data is used to support the consortium to strengthen implementation and achieve all objectives.

Upon notification of funding, the project director will meet with the CEEP evaluation team to establish a detailed evaluation plan for Year 1 and a high-level multi-year evaluation plan. The CEEP evaluation team will consult City Connects Team Leadership to illustrate the City Connects program goals and share measurement strategies. Evaluation methods will be developed with input from the consortium members, including City Connects Program Team Leadership, and revised to fully track all required performance indicators. The project director will complete all federal reporting requirements in consultation with the external evaluators and project staff. Evaluation information will be regularly shared through each school’s implementation team to inform future implementation efforts and identify course corrections and opportunities to strengthen progress toward achieving all objectives. The project director will share summative evaluation results with consortium stakeholders annually and more frequently as information is available. The marketing director will communicate with the broader community about project results within the context of the detailed project communication plans. A preliminary list of indicators, methods, and data sources is provided on the following page in Table 15.

Table 15. City Connects Midwest: Reimagining Student Success in the Magic City	
Evaluation Indicators, Methods, and Data Sources	
Performance Indicator	Method/Data Source

(1) Student chronic absenteeism rates	Annual and longitudinal analysis of school performance data from each school and the Indiana Department of Education
(2) Student discipline rates, including suspensions and expulsions	Annual and longitudinal analysis of school performance data from each school and Indiana Department of Education; interviews with school administrators
(3) School climate information	Student, parent, or teacher surveys and interviews on school climate and culture; school discipline reports; Marian FSCS consortium Whole School Assessment findings and report
(4) Provision of integrated student supports and stakeholder services	Review of inventory of community supports (completed in Year 1); focus groups and/or interviews with students, parents, and community stakeholders to understand how well-integrated student supports meet the needs of the school community
(5) Expanded and enriched learning time and opportunities	Interviews with teachers; results from classroom observations and follow-up discussion with teachers (including MyConnects aggregate report summaries)
(6) Family and community engagement efforts and impact	Interviews with parents and community stakeholders

<p>(7) Information on the number, qualifications, and retention of school staff, including the number and percentage of fully certified teachers, disaggregated by race and ethnicity, and rates of teacher turnover</p>	<p>Annual and longitudinal analysis of school staffing data from each school and Indiana Department of Education</p>
<p>(8) Graduation rates</p>	<p>Annual and longitudinal analysis of school performance data from each school and the Indiana Department of Education (after three years of implementation)</p>
<p>(9) Changes in school spending information</p>	<p>Annual school budget review (as appropriate)</p>
<p>(10) Collaborative leadership and practice strategies</p>	<p>Documentation of school site coordinators' and principals' participation in Indiana and regional professional learning communities; annual professional development plans for FSCS teachers and staff; professional development learning outcomes and results from pre-/post-tests for specific training</p>
<p>(11) Regularly convening or engaging all initiative-level partners, such as LEA representatives, city or county officials, children's cabinets, nonprofit</p>	<p>Periodic review of district-level management team agendas, meeting notes, and attendance records</p>

service providers, public housing agencies, and advocates.	
(12) Regularly assessing program quality and progress through individual student data, participant feedback, and aggregate outcomes to develop strategies for improvement.	Annual school and student assessment summaries; evaluation reports. Impact on academic achievement expected after three years of City Connects implementation.
(13) Organizing school personnel and community partners into working teams focused on specific issues identified in the needs and assets assessment.	Implementation of team agendas, meeting notes, and attendance records; partnership inventory information and mapping to assess how community partnerships are organized, communication flows, and effectiveness of collaboration; annual City Connects satisfaction surveys with community partners.

(B) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes

CEEP evaluators will work with the project director and consortium members and consult City Connects Program leadership, as appropriate, to complete formative and summative evaluations. Formative evaluation mechanisms will be built into the daily program utilizing the project’s workflows to organically gather data relevant to Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which will allow the evaluation team to generate information about the effectiveness of implementation strategies, including performance dashboards and reports designed to minimize the lag between

data collection and implementation. The performance dashboards and reports would inform subsequent program design and implementation. The project director, evaluation team, and identified Boston College staff would meet at least bimonthly to review formative evaluation findings or flag any immediate concerns as soon as determined, irrespective of the meeting schedule. The project director will share evaluation information with the project management team and lead periodic discussions about opportunities to strengthen activities and improve results. Formative data will include data collected by the school site coordinators, project manager, and project director, as well as qualitative data from focus groups and interviews conducted by the evaluators. By regularly reviewing quantitative and qualitative data from various sources, the consortium will be well-positioned to use data to inform the design and direction of the project.

(C) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide valid and reliable performance data on relevant outcomes

CEEP evaluators will establish annual evaluation plans that align with the Marian FSCS consortium's work plan to collect, summarize, and share valid and reliable performance data that enables the consortium to closely monitor progress toward achieving relevant outcomes. The evaluators will identify sources for high-quality baseline data at the outset of the project period and compare future results against these baselines. When accurate, reliable baseline data is unavailable, the CEEP will work with the project director and project management team to establish relevant indicators that can be used throughout the project period.

CEEP will work with the project director and project management team to establish plans to collect qualitative data through interviews and focus groups with various project stakeholders. CEEP will complete Institutional Review Board application or waiver processes as appropriate to the scope of the evaluative activities. This practice will ensure that data provided by individuals

who have participated in the interventions are delivered in ways that generate reliable information to contribute to the overall evaluation that does not interfere with their real or perceived benefits from the services students and families receive.

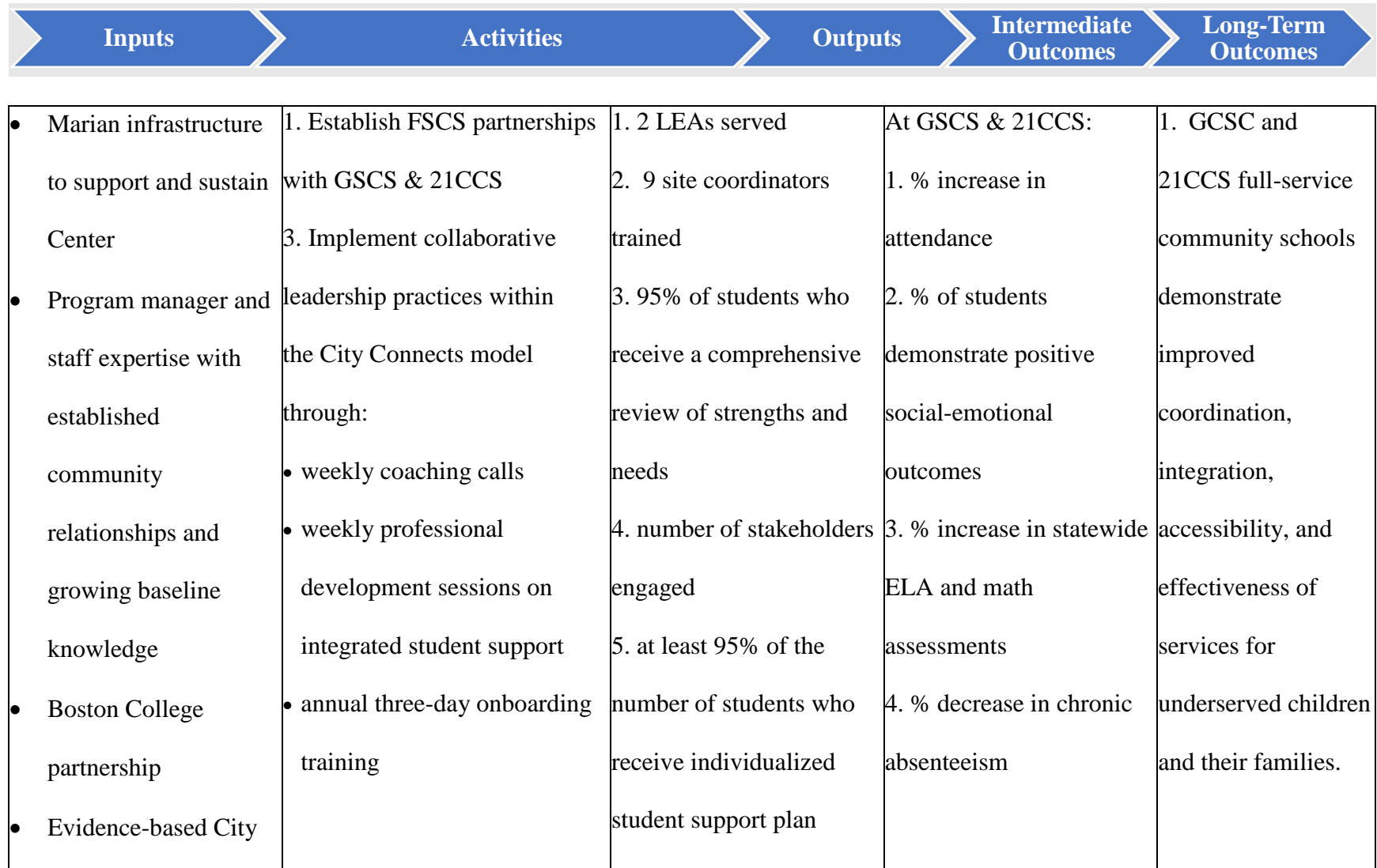
The project will benefit from various available data from the schools, Indiana Department of Education, City Connects, and other sources, as described above.

MyConnects City Connects Software: The City Connects Technical Assistance Center at the Center for Vibrant Schools will facilitate access to aggregate data from *MyConnects*, the licensed City Connects data management platform. Data that will be available from the MyConnects system will include some aggregate data at the school level from:

- service provider information
- aggregate information about the specific services and tiers of services students receive
- aggregate numbers of students served at each grade level and the classroom level
- the percentage of students participating in each tier of services

At the project's outset, each school will provide student data using a unique student identifier, which will be transferred into the project database. Once student records are created, the school site coordinator will be able to track each student's individualized support plan, the tier of the services they receive, and the progress students are making. The school site coordinator will input data from assessments and implementation activities. The platform will enable school site coordinators and the program manager to generate reports to track core activities. Using this standardized, program-specific tool will contribute to the availability of aggregate high-quality, valid, reliable performance data for the outcomes of interest.

Figure 7. City Connects Midwest: Reimagining Student Success in the Magic City Project Logic Model



<p>Connects model (including programmatic, technical assistance, and data resources)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GSCS & 21CCS • Project Lead the Way • Be Strong Families • IN*Source 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bi-monthly technical assistance support meetings with school leaders • learning community for site coordinators and principals <p>5. Support LEAs to provide tiered, integrated student supports</p> <p>6. Engage parents, guardians, and family members through student assessments and plans and in enrichment and support activities</p> <p>7. Conduct formative and summative evaluation; gather KPI data (annual surveys,</p>	<p>6. 95% of students receive at least one service</p>	<p>5. Site coordinators will increase their understanding of IEP processes and best practices.</p> <p>6. Teachers, principals, and community partners report satisfaction with City Connects</p> <p>7. Stakeholders report that students are receiving needed services</p>	<p>2. Marian’s City Connects Midwest Center has expanded its capacity to serve high-needs LEAs.</p>
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	interviews, and focus groups with beneficiaries, principals, teachers, parents, and community partners)			
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