



A NETWORK of COLLEGE PREP ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

LEARN 10: 20-21 School Year Renewal Proposal

December 23, 2020

This document contains the narrative information requested by District 187 per the *School Works authored document for renewal proposal*. The accompanying documents requested in this document can be found [here](#), accessible/downloadable to Superintendent John Price.

I. Executive Summary

Requested LEARN Data

Total Applications Received from New Applicants for LEARN 10				
SY 2016-17	SY 2017-18	SY 2018-19	SY 2019-20	SY 2020-21
263	299	238	245	201
LEARN 10 Waitlist Count at Time of Lottery				
SY 2016-17	SY 2017-18	SY 2018-19	SY 2019-20	SY 2020-21
3	21	8	26	23

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS - RACE AND ETHNICITY								
SY	Black		White		Hispanic		Two or More Races	
	LEARN 10	District 187	LEARN 10	District 187	LEARN 10	District 187	LEARN 10	District 187
2016-17	32%	36%	20%	6%	37%	54%	6%	3%
2017-18	39%	36%	23%	6%	22%	54%	11%	3%
2018-19	37%	33%	20%	6%	32%	56%	9%	4%
2019-20	37%	31%	16%	7%	38%	56%	7%	6%
2020-21	36%	N/A	12%	N/A	42%	N/A	9%	N/A

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS - HISTORICALLY UNDERSERVED						
SY	Students with IEPs		English Learners		Low Income	
	LEARN 10	District 187	LEARN 10	District 187	LEARN 10	District 187
2016-17	9%	14%	25%	27%	56%	91%
2017-18	9%	15%	23%	28%	43%	92%
2018-19	15%	16%	29%	29%	48%	89%
2019-20	12%	12%	24%	34%	45%	82%
2020-21	9%	N/A	30%	N/A	47%	N/A

Mission and Vision

The mission of LEARN 10 is to provide children with the academic foundation and ambition to earn a college degree. We focus on elementary education because we believe that the ambition and academic foundation for college must be sown and cultivated early in a child’s academic career. Since its founding, LEARN 10 has pursued its mission by providing scholars with both a challenging academic program grounded in rigorous standards, including the Common Core State Standards, and individualized social-emotional support to grow and meet those standards. LEARN alumni graduate college at a rate that is 10 points above the national average for all students. Our goal is that 50% of LEARN’s scholars will attain a 4 year college degree within 10 years of graduating from LEARN 10.

Performance

LEARN 10 outperformed District 187 on the state-mandated students assessments and merits a rating of “high” as defined in the Agreement. During the 2018-2019 Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR) ELA and Math assessments administered by all Illinois elementary schools, LEARN 10 outperformed District 187 in absolute total performance and by sub-group, please see Table 1 and Table 2 below. The only exception is a slightly higher performance by the district in the math proficiency of English Learners.

Table 1. IAR Total ELA Proficiency

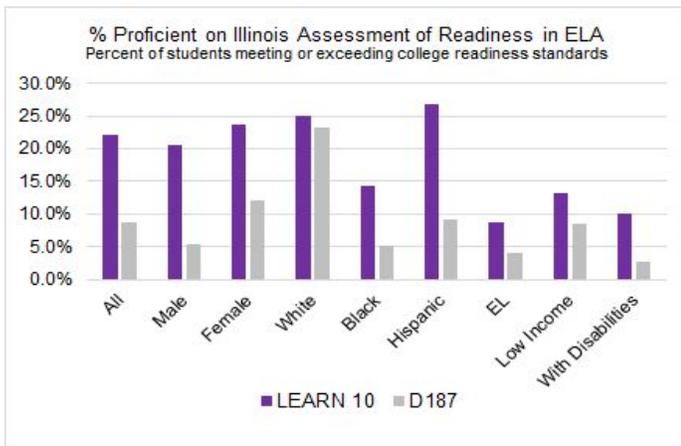
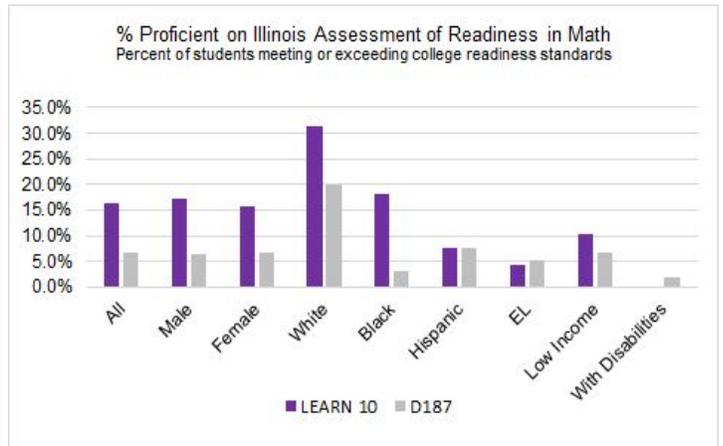


Table 2. IAR Total Math Proficiency



Growth rates on the Illinois Assessment of Readiness test were higher for LEARN 10 than for District 187 in 2018-2019 (the only year for which data is available) in both total and sub-group performance. The only exception was Black student growth on ELA. LEARN 10 outperforms D187 on Black student growth in Math.

Table 5. Student Growth in ELA

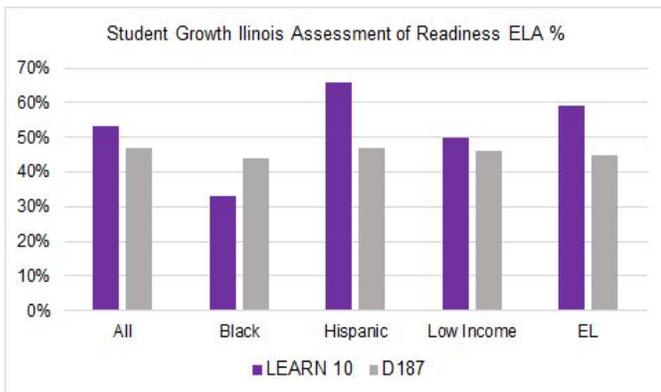
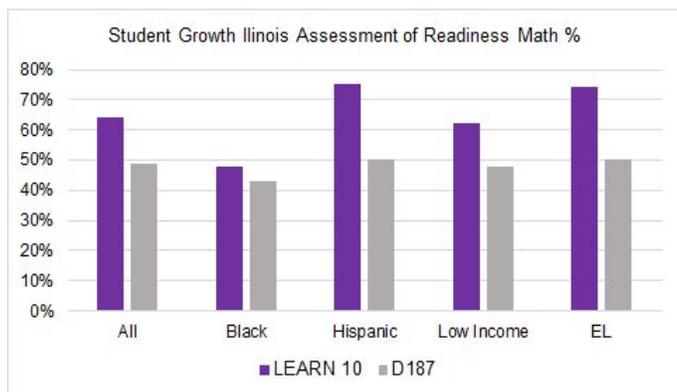


Table 6. Student Growth in Math



Educational Program

LEARN 10 continues to strengthen its academic program by adopting proven programs and the best practices of the network. Its program includes:

- KIPP Wheatley reading & writing curriculum, which features multicultural texts and strong instructional support that allows students to succeed at complex, grade-level reading and writing assignments.
- Two foundational language arts programs, Amplify CKLA programming and Wilson Foundations, to give our youngest scholars a solid start in decoding, reading, and writing.
- Reading Interventionists to support those English Learners and students in the lowest quartile.
- Ready Classroom Mathematics in grades K-4, and Teach To One personalized mathematics program in grades 5-8, anchor students in grade-level Common Core math standards, while providing practice and support in individual areas of need.
- Similar to our Reading Interventionists, LEARN will deploy Math Interventionists to provide remedial support for students in the lowest quartile and to mentor students in the highest quartile.
- We implemented Amplify Science this fall, with its highly effective remote learning modules, across all grades.
- We will adopt Personalized Learning strategies in FY 22-23 through a partnership with LEAP Innovations.
- All grades will engage in Executive Functioning training in order to instill a growth mindset and teach time management and other skills essential to academic success.

LEARN firmly believes that social-emotional competencies are vital to college completion and life-long success. LEARN invests in a dedicated social worker for its school supported by a network Student Support Services team. LEARN 10 follows the evidence and research-based Responsive Classroom model. One key practice is Morning Meeting, which builds community. Built into these morning meetings are lessons from the Second Step curriculum, teaching, modeling, and allowing students to practice social-emotional skills in research-based lessons. We also adopted Calm Classroom practices, teaching students techniques to build self-awareness and emotional well-being. Morning meetings have continued throughout remote learning.

The COVID 19 pandemic has taken its toll on the students and families attending LEARN 10. Despite the challenges experienced this school year, LEARN is proud of the fact that 100% of its teachers are conducting synchronous learning and 95% of its students regularly attend their daily lessons. LEARN 10 provided Chromebooks for those students that needed a computer, they offered emergency financial support, and food services. The LEARN 10 social worker continues to provide individual and group counseling services remotely to its scholars and LEARN 10 teachers place well being calls each week to check in on each student and family.

Community and Local Connections

LEARN 10 is committed to being a good partner to the community. LEARN 10 collaborated with Abbvie, District 187, and Kaboom! to design and build a new playground on the west side of the building that included equipment for developmental play and outside gathering areas accessible to both the school and community. We had a wonderful crew of parents, staff, and community volunteers participate in creating the playground.

For three years, LEARN 10 has partnered with Reading Power, a local nonprofit, that provides ongoing one-on-one tutoring and mentoring from trained volunteers in reading skills for our K-2 students. Other partnerships include Heart of the City which provides after school soccer camps, Cub Scout Pack 621 which meets on our campus, and University of Chicago's Kellogg School of Management which sends volunteers to read to and mentor students. Prior to the pandemic, we met with Warhawk Summer Up! which we hope to implement as soon as we can safely do so next school year.

Leadership and Governance

LEARN 10 has both a full time principal and assistant principal. School leadership is supported by a Managing Director of Teaching and Learning and a Chief of Schools. In addition, LEARN has a Director of Student Support Services who leads the network's social-emotional learning programs, staff psychologists and other resources available to LEARN 10. The network is led by Greg White, President and CEO and an independent Board of Directors.

Fiscal Health

LEARN has strong financial oversight and internal control policies to safeguard funds, manage cash flow and ensure sufficient liquidity. The LEARN Finance Committee completes a detailed review of the annual audited financial statements and internal controls with the independent auditor. LEARN has consistently had clean audit results and unqualified audit opinions. The Finance Committee and the Board of Directors review quarterly financial results to budget, variance analysis, and key statistics. LEARN is current in meeting financial obligations including but not limited to payroll and applicable taxes, benefits, TRS pension obligations and debt payments.

II. Looking Back: The Record of Performance

A. Pupil Performance

As stated in the Renewal Application and put forth in the Executive Summary, LEARN 10 outperforms D187 elementary schools in aggregate performance and in growth both in total and by sub-group.

B. Fiscal Management

Please see the Fiscal Management section of LEARN's application for charter renewal. LEARN has no additional information to share.

C. Legal and Charter Compliance

Please refer to the legal and charter compliance sections of LEARN's application for charter renewal. All compliance concerns have been addressed, as described above, and District 187 has not communicated any additional concerns.

D. Other Organizational Areas

1. Mission and Educational Design

The mission of LEARN Charter School Network is to provide children with the academic foundation and ambition to earn a college degree. The goal of its educational design is to provide scholars with a rigorous academic foundation and the social-emotional foundation and persistence to earn a college degree.

Our language art program is a prime example of the challenge and support we provide each student. We adopted the KIPP Wheatley reading & writing curriculum, as we found the level of rigor and strong instructional support allows our students to succeed at complex, grade-level reading and writing assignments. KIPP Wheatley's multicultural texts allow students to see their own cultures reflected in their reading. Each module guides students to hone their writing skills in the genres covered in the Common Core State Standards. Teachers and staff continually monitor progress and design small group instruction for guided reading and skills practice. These groups are flexible based on teachers' observations, analysis of student work, classroom assessment data, and grade-level team data analysis.

Math instruction at LEARN 10 is designed to support all students in learning challenging grade-level content. Teachers in kindergarten through fourth grade classrooms use Ready Classroom, a curriculum designed to meet the Common Core Standards of Mathematical Practice, which call for problem solving, discourse, and productive struggle. In addition to the Tier 1 instruction, aligned to CCSS, each student receives a personalized learning pathway in iReady, an online system that includes trimester assessments and tailored lessons or individual practice. Teachers use iReady's formative assessment data to lead small math groups with guided practice.

In grades 5 to 7, the Teach to One program provides a fully personalized approach to learning mathematics. Three times a year, students take the adaptive online Teach to One assessment which combines the NWEA MAP test with a diagnostic test to identify gaps and strengths. Teach to One then provides an individual plan for mastering grade-level mathematics for each student with daily lessons that include a combination of teacher-led instruction, small group investigations, and individual learning. Each day students complete a quick online assessment that generates data and adjusts their pathway and upcoming lessons.

While a solid academic foundation is critical for scholars' acceptance to college, we believe developing their ambition and social-emotional competencies is just as vital to earning their degree. The school follows the evidence and research-based Responsive Classroom model, which guides teachers to create a classroom

environment conducive to learning, including strategies for classroom management and relationship building. Two key practices are a daily Morning Meeting and Closing Circle which bring students together to greet one another, share experiences, participate in an activity, and either prepare for or reflect on the day. Built into these morning meetings are also lessons from the Second Step curriculum, explicitly teaching, modeling, and allowing students to practice social-emotional skills in research-based lessons. Additionally, we have adopted Calm Classroom practices, which teach students techniques to build self-awareness.

LEARN 10's social worker and behavior interventionist support teachers with coaching and problem solving to implement equitable practices and improve their techniques in class. They work with students in small groups or individually needing further practice with specific skills such as anger management or executive functioning. These specialists also confer with parents on how to support scholars in practicing these skills at home.

2. Family and Community Engagement

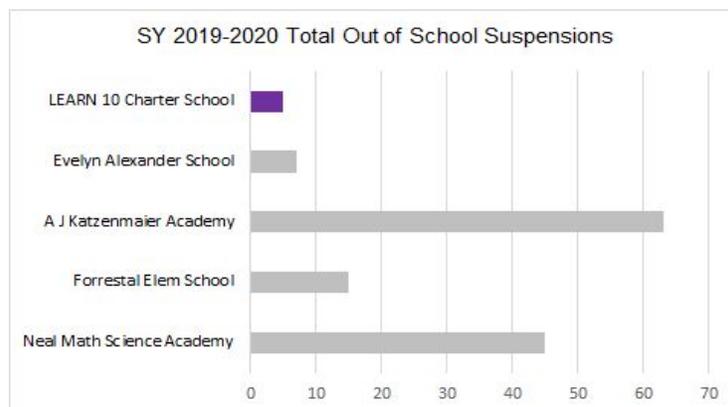
On LEARN 10's most recent 5Essentials report, it received the highest possible rating for "Involved Families." Participation in semi-annual parent-teacher conferences is strong: 90% of families attend in person with the remaining conferences conducted via phone or other means. To keep parents well-informed throughout the school year, we share information via email, our website, our PowerSchool Portal which includes students' attendance information, current grades, assignments, our school bulletin, and more. Each teacher also communicates regularly via the ClassDojo app, sharing both general announcements and texting with individual parents and responding to any questions or concerns.

At the beginning of each school year, we invite families for a curriculum night to meet teachers and staff and visit their child's classroom to learn more about the academic program and routines. This year we were able to hold small group parent orientations via videoconferencing which allowed for even more parent input, feedback, and problem solving, especially regarding remote learning. LEARN 10 has several formal organizations to solicit parent input. All parents are invited each fall to attend our annual Parent Advisory Council meeting and provide input on our disciplinary policies and school budget. Our Bilingual Parent Advisory Council, organized in partnership with District 187 and LEARN 6, meets monthly to solicit feedback on the bilingual and English learner programs.

3. Suspension and Expulsions

LEARN 10 has not expelled any students during its contract term. Its suspensions compared to similar D187 elementary schools are shown in Table 7, below.

Table 7. SY 2019-2020 Student Out-of-School Suspensions



Source: <https://www.isbe.net/pages/illinois-state-report-card-data.aspx>

LEARN 10 implements the principles of Responsive Classroom, which aligns to our core values of a safe and nurturing environment, culture of respect, and high expectations. We believe that scholars are more likely to follow rules and expectations when they feel a sense of ownership over them and understand their purpose. For that reason, students in each classroom are guided to develop rules and expectations collaboratively. The leadership team uses the LEARN handbook to assess an infraction's level: minor, major, or critical, and the proportional response. This provides us a guide to determine the disciplinary outcome as we gather all the appropriate information from those involved, including the student. Out-of-school suspensions occur in the instance of major or critical infractions, and as a last resort when all interventions have been exhausted. A central database is maintained of disciplinary actions and the network implements a coordinated response if a teacher exceeds network averages.

III. Reflection on Best Practices

LEARN 10 has implemented a number of best practices, described below, and would welcome the opportunity to share with other schools in the next charter term. This could include hosting shared professional development sessions for District 187 teachers or inviting principals and district leaders to join in our learning walks. LEARN 10 has benefited from the partnership with District 187 to provide professional development for our teams that serve diverse learners and English language learners. We look forward to extending this partnership to other areas and will keep the district informed of our professional development schedule.

Internalization & Practice with Coaching

One of our most important practices, that has proven to promote growth in both teaching and student learning, is a weekly cycle of lesson planning and practice, data review, and instructional coaching for each grade level or content team. The cycle begins with a team meeting to review the upcoming curriculum unit or module, discuss the focus standards, review assessments for their alignment to the standards, identify resources (such as texts or supplements) and discuss how to scaffold or enrich students' learning throughout the unit. Once the unit launches, the team meets once a week, along with their instructional coach, to discuss and further plan a targeted lesson for the week. The most beneficial portion of the meeting is the teacher practice section. Each teacher practices leading a key part of the lesson, receives feedback from both peers and their coach, and rehearses that section of the lesson again, incorporating the feedback.

Instructional coaching is a consistent practice in our schools. Teachers are observed at least every two weeks by their instructional coach or leader, but often weekly, and receive feedback within 24 hours. Coaches determine action steps to improve teacher practice with both school goals for student learning and each teacher's self-identified professional improvement goals in mind.

Data Review & Analysis Cadence

Timely and actionable data is an invaluable resource for educators. LEARN 10 teachers review student data from quizzes and unit assessments, and also from daily "exit tickets" to adjust their instruction for the next day. The data review determines whether a skill needs to be retaught or if students grasped it more quickly than expected and can move forward. Data analysis is conducted daily by teachers, during individual coaching sessions, and with the grade level or content team.

Data analysis also occurs at the school and network level so that the leadership team can monitor progress towards goals in the school's strategic plan. Following structures provided by the Accelerate Institute, leadership team members gather at the end of each month to review key assessments from the previous month and plan for course corrections in the month to come. Patterns are identified based on student assessments, data on attendance or suspensions, observations and root causes are determined.

Parents as Partners

During remote learning due to COVID-19, partnering with parents to support their children's learning is more critical than ever. With remote learning, we knew we needed to change the structure of our parent engagement so that families were prepared to help scholars log into classes at home and complete their school work more independently.

In the weeks leading up to the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, we held virtual Parent Orientation sessions with small groups of no more than five parents at a time. Teachers were able to give parents an overview of the curriculum, and teach them how to access the programs and platforms for remote learning. This small group structure allowed for teachers and parents to get to know one another, and materials for remote learning to be efficiently distributed (including Chromebooks, student texts, manipulative, etc). Both

parents and teachers reported that the meetings were hugely successful in establishing stronger relationships and communicating school expectations prior to the start of remote learning this school year.

Strong Student Culture

LEARN has been at the forefront of social-emotional learning for close to two decades. Our practice of beginning each day with morning meetings helps establish a positive culture. Through these meetings, scholars greet each other, welcome new members of the classroom, share experiences, get to know one another, and establish norms for supporting one another and treating each classmate with respect. Students also learn to advocate for themselves and their needs and find out who they can go to with a problem. Moving into remote learning, we knew we had to preserve this approach to culture-building and support, especially as students would experience new stressors and traumas during the pandemic. Via videoconferencing, teachers have continued morning meetings and every scholar is assigned a staff member who checks in on them weekly and helps identify students and families most in need of individual support.

IV. Looking Forward: Plans for the Next Charter Term

A. Educational Program

There are no significant changes to the essential terms of LEARN 10's educational program.

B. Financial Plans *Provide a five-year projected budget for the next charter term.*

The 5-year projections for LEARN 10 are aligned with our mission and vision of academic excellence and providing substantial resources to students. The following are key revenue and expense assumptions:

- Revenue projections are based on FY21 revenue allocations, with a modest annual increase and adjusted each year for projected enrollment.
- Enrollment projections reflect student recruitment and outreach over the next 5 fiscal years.
- Salary and benefits include annual salary increases, additional instructional and administrative staffing based on enrollment, and associated pension and healthcare benefit costs.
- Other student expenses include a continuation of LEARN's food service program and educational and classroom supplies.
- Occupancy reflects anticipated increase in security, property and casualty insurance and other building maintenance costs.
- Additionally, we believe in budgeting proactively to mitigate against unforeseen financial events. As such, the attached budget includes a contingency of 4% of total expenses.

C. Organizational and Facility Plans

While there will be no changes to the school bylaws or committee structures, LEARN will add a North Chicago parent to its board of directors in the next six months. Currently, there are no changes planned for the existing school leadership or staffing model or the relationship between the school and the charter network. We do not anticipate any change to our location.

D. Future Contract Terms

With regard to its contract for renewal, LEARN requests that the district consider the following amendments.

1. District 187 will submit to ISBE for the reimbursement of all LEARN 10 transportation costs.
2. An increase in LEARN 10's enrollment cap to 400 students to accommodate demand for its program.
3. D187 shall pass through to LEARN its prorated amount of Title 1 federal funds based on the percentage of Learn 10 Low Income Students defined as federal free and reduced lunch eligibility.
4. D187 will share complete parent contact information for all D187 students Pre K - 8th grades and support LEARN's efforts to make parents aware of this learning opportunity.