



INDIANA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

BEFORE THE INDIANA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

IN THE MATTER OF:)	
)	Cause No. 01-042021
TRINITY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL)	
(SCHOOL #C561),)	REQUEST PURSUANT TO
)	IC 20-51-4-9
PETITIONER,)	
)	

COMBINED FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND PROPOSED DETERMINATION

Pursuant to IC 20-51-4-9(b), Trinity Christian School (“Trinity”) requests that the Indiana State Board of Education (“Board”) grant the school a waiver from the consequences imposed under IC 20-51-4-9(a) so that Trinity may enroll new choice scholarship students for the 2021-2022 school year. The undersigned recommends Trinity’s waiver request be granted.

I. Basis for Agency Review

During the 2017 legislative session, the Indiana General Assembly enacted P.L. 251-2017, which, in relevant part, amended IC 20-51-4-9 to include subsection (b). Subsection (b) permits an eligible school that is subject to the consequences imposed under IC 20-51-4-9(a) to request that the Board waive those consequences for one year.

A. Consequences under IC 20-51-4-9(a)

In general, an eligible school may accept choice scholarship funds from eligible choice scholarship students enrolled at the school. However, an eligible school that receives any combination of Ds or Fs in consecutive years shall have its ability to enroll new choice scholarship students suspended. Under subsection (a), the eligible school’s ability to enroll new choice scholarship students shall remain suspended until the eligible school receives a C or better in consecutive years.

B. Requests for a Waiver or Delay of Consequences under IC 20-51-4-9(b)

IC 20-51-4-9(b) affords eligible schools an opportunity to seek a waiver from the Board to avoid the consequences imposed under subsection (a). Pursuant to IC 20-51-4-9(b), an eligible school that is subject to the consequences imposed under subsection (a) may submit a request to the Board to waive or delay the consequences for a period of one year. In order to obtain the waiver, subsection (b) provides, in relevant part, that the Board “may grant a request to an eligible school that requests a waiver or delay under this subsection **if the eligible school demonstrates that a majority of students in the eligible school demonstrated academic improvement during the preceding school year.**” (emphasis added).



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In other words, the Board's ability to grant an eligible school's request for a waiver is contingent upon whether the eligible school satisfies the legal threshold by showing that a majority of students demonstrated academic improvement during the preceding year. Waivers can only be granted for one year; however, a school may return to the Board and ask for a waiver the following year until the school is removed from consequences under the statute.

II. Combined Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law

Trinity is a K-12, nonpublic school that serves approximately 148 students in Indianapolis, Indiana. Because Trinity has been assigned one of the two lowest letter grades for three (3) consecutive years, absent a waiver, the school's ability to receive choice scholarship funds for new students will be suspended until the school receives two (2) consecutive grades of a "C" or higher.¹ See IC 20-51-4-9(a)(2). Jeramie Carroll, Trinity's principal, submitted a request for a waiver of consequences based on demonstrated academic improvement by a majority of Trinity's students during the 2019-2020 school year.

Data from the Indiana Department of Education ("Department") show Trinity received a "D" for the 2017-2018 school year, a "D" for the 2018-2019 school year, and a "D" for the 2019-2020 school year. Over that three (3) year period, all of which preceded the passage of P.L.2-2020, the total points earned by the school has increased. Additionally, a majority of Trinity's students showed growth in either English language arts or math during the 2018-2019 school year, the last year for which statewide assessment data is available.

To determine whether an eligible school has demonstrated that a majority of its students have demonstrated academic improvement, the Board has historically considered three things, each of which is calculated using student-level data from the statewide assessment: whether the eligible school's A-F grade or the total points associated with that grade has increased from one year to the next; a hypothetical letter grade calculated using an N-size of 0; and student growth data. Because the 2019-2020 administration of the statewide assessment was canceled, student-level data is not available. In the absence of student-level data from the statewide assessment, Trinity has provided the Board with student performance data from its most recent administration of its benchmark assessments in English language arts and math. Trinity has also provided an explanation of the changes the school has made with respect to its implementation of dual credit courses through Ivy Tech and updated curriculum.

III. Proposed Determination


In limited instances such as this, where student-level data from the statewide assessment is unavailable, academic improvement may be demonstrated through other means. Trinity has

¹ Pursuant to P.L.2-2020, Trinity's 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 letter grades may not be used in the determination of consequences under IC 20-51-4-9. Further, Trinity's letter grade for the 2020-2021 school year shall be considered Trinity's letter grade for the school year immediately following the 2017-2018 school year for purposes of applying consequences under IC 20-51-4-9.



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provided student performance data from its most recent administration of its benchmark assessments in English language arts and math. That data, coupled with the school's prior demonstrated improvement in total points and student growth on the statewide assessment, demonstrate that a majority of Trinity's students demonstrated academic improvement during the prior school year, as required under IC 20-51-4-9(b). Therefore, the undersigned recommends Trinity's waiver request be granted.


Chad E. Ranney
General Counsel
Indiana State Board of Education

Trinity Christian School Voucher Waiver Petition Memo
2021-2022 School Year

To whom it may concern:

Trinity Christian School (TCS) is a small, private school located in inner-city Indianapolis. We serve a low-income area with various demographics. It serves grades kindergarten through 12. TCS is seeking a waiver of consequence for the 2021-2022 school year. As understood, Covid-19 has affected the ability to properly conduct state standardized test. The tests are used in appropriating school grades and without the tests, TCS has continued to be penalized and held to a previous grade. As a result of this holding, a consequence continues to be implemented and increased. Without the standardized testing and the continuance of punishment for a previous grade, TCS is left seeking a waiver of consequence. Further, TCS is left with using summative and formative assessment data conducted within the school to show growth. Please take note of the development of the school below as well as summation of data from our assessments.

Over the last three years, TCS has:

- Seen its highest retention and return rates
- Implemented dual credit courses through Ivy Tech
- Updated its curriculum to provide both print and digital access
- Increased its technological learning opportunities
- Implemented specific intervention times as part of its daily schedule in grades 6-8 to help close gaps
- Improved graduation rates
- Improved CCR rates and opportunities
- Maintained attendance rates of 95% or higher

With the waiver and opportunity to accept new voucher students, TCS is hoping to:

- Expand its movement within the work-readiness pathway for students looking to move into the workplace immediately after high school
- Expand its dual-credit opportunities
- Expand its technology
- Develop an audio and visual production program for students

TCS utilized the CARES Act money to expand our technological resources by purchasing 40 Chromebooks. Each teacher has now received a set of Chromebooks to implement in the daily practices of student learning.

Assessment Data for Growth in the 2020-2021 School Year

Our school utilized Edmentum Study Island benchmark assessments, HMHCO benchmark assessments, and HRW benchmark assessments. The benchmark was specific to the program used at the different grade levels. However, all programs utilize the same Indiana Standards and all benchmark assessments measured growth against the Indiana Standards. The time frames vary as implementing new technology at the beginning of the year, waiting for new curriculum to be delivered due to backorder, and Covid-19 issues proved difficult to create initial benchmark tests at the beginning of the year. As soon as TCS was able to return in January, TCS assessed our students so that we could adjust accordingly. With ILEARN being primarily 3-8, we want that to be the focus of the numbers. However, we did expand our math data as the programs offered greater flexibility to do so. In our time frames, we noticed an average of 92.4% of our students showed growth in MATH and 73.61% in ELA.

MATH

	Math (Average Point Growth)	# of Students	Time Frame	percentage of students in class who showed growth
K	10.85	7	1/2021-3/2021	100%
1	5.63	11	1/2021-3/2021	81%
2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
3	5.9	10	8/2020-3/2021	90%
4	5.16	6	8/2020-3/2021	83%
5	2.1	10	8/2020-3/2021	80%

	Math (Average Point Growth)	# of Students	Time Frame	percentage of students in class who showed growth
6	18	6	1/2021-3/2021	100%
7	11.78	9	1/2021-3/2021	100%
8	30.27	11	1/2021-3/2021	100%
9	22.3	9	1/2021-3/2021	90%
10	15.7	10	1/2021-3/2021	100%

ELA

	ELA (Average Point Growth)	# of Students	Time Frame	percentage of students in class who showed growth
K	0.9	7	1/2021-3/2021	40%
1	2	11	1/2021-3/2021	90.90%
2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
3	5.6	10	8/2020-3/2021	100%
4	1.8	6	8/2020-3/2021	83%
5	2.2	10	8/2020-3/2021	60%
6	0.9	6	1/2021-3/2021	83%
7	2	9	1/2021-3/2021	44%
8	3.1	9	1/2021-3/2021	88%

*Take note that we do not have 2nd grade for MATH or ELA. It is not understood what happened to the data. It seems to have either been deleted or misplaced.

Jeramie Carroll Jeramie Carroll
Principal