PRESS RELEASE
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MAYOR GRANTS FULL SEVEN-YEAR CHARTER RENEWAL
TO THE ANDREW J. BROWN ACADEMY

INDIANAPOLIS – Mayor Greg Ballard announced today that the Andrew J. Brown Academy – a Mayor-sponsored charter school that opened in 2003 – has received a full seven-year charter renewal. Andrew J. Brown Academy is currently the only Mayor-sponsored charter school at the end of its first charter term, and thus is the only school to petition for charter renewal at this time.

“The decision to renew a school’s charter isn’t one I take lightly. A number of indicators must be carefully considered,” Mayor Ballard said. “The consistently high results achieved at Andrew J. Brown exemplify what Mayor-sponsored charter schools mean to the City of Indianapolis.”

While serving a substantially low-income (76 percent) and ethnic minority (96 percent) student population, Andrew J. Brown Academy has achieved very strong academic and organizational results. The school has met or exceeded standard in almost all areas of the Mayor’s Performance Framework; has met federal academic standards (i.e., Adequate Yearly Progress) in five of the six years it was evaluated; has received Indiana’s highest school rating, Exemplary, every year it has been in operation; has consistently ended each year with a balanced budget; and leadership among the governing board and school administrators has been strong and stable over time.

In addition to submitting a detailed formal petition for charter renewal, school officials were required to present their case for renewal during a public hearing before the Mayor’s Charter School Board – led by former Lt. Governor John Mutz. During the hearing the board questioned the school’s principal, Ms. Thelma Wyatt, and board chairperson, Dr. Thomas Brown, about the school’s performance to date and future plans for success. Parents and community members also shared their perspectives regarding the school’s performance and impact on the community during this public meeting.

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Every Mayor-sponsored charter school is evaluated annually against a set of clear, rigorous, and comprehensive criteria, and these results are made fully public via the Mayor’s annual Accountability Report. The Mayor’s accountability system includes regular school visits by members of the city’s charter schools staff, analyses of student and school performance on both ISTEP+ and Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) assessments, comprehensive site visits by local education experts, annual financial analyses by an independent accounting firm, and surveys from parents, staff, and students. These data collected over a seven-year period, in addition to the school’s petition and public hearing, form the basis for the Mayor’s renewal decision.

Andrew J. Brown Academy provides a challenging back-to-basics program aimed at developing students' abilities to master fundamental academic skills and increase achievement. The school strives to build good moral character and is rooted in strong parental involvement. Andrew J. Brown is managed by National Heritage Academies (NHA), an educational management organization with 61 schools in six states. Andrew J. Brown is located on the eastside of Indianapolis, 3600 N German Church Road, and serves approximately 650 students in grades K-8.

The renewal petition and Mayor’s Office report on Andrew J. Brown can be found online at http://www.indy.gov/EGOV/MAYOR/EDUCATION/CHARTER/CHARTERRENEWAL/Pages/default.aspx, and the charter board’s hearing can be found at http://indianapolis.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=3.

For more information on Indianapolis charter schools, visit www.indy.gov/mayor/charter.

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