

ILLINOIS IMPACT INITIATIVE

Illinois' CSP Grant - Subgrant RFA Executive Summary

Art In Motion Creative Arts Charter School (AIM) is a tuition-free, 7th-12th grade non-selective public charter school. In addition to core academics, the curriculum includes courses in vocal and instrumental music, literary arts, media arts, dance and visual arts. Among AIM students, 84% are economically disadvantaged and approximately 17% have an IEP. AIM plans to increase enrollment from a total of 559 students in 2023-2024 to 900 students by 2025-2026. Since opening in 2019-2020, AIM is rooted in strengthening academic outcomes through strong instruction, professional development, high-quality curriculum and expanded arts programming. These areas of focus are aligned to INCS' CSP goals of improving the quality of the charter sector. AIM's subgrants goals are:

Goal 1: Develop and implement a robust student recruitment and enrollment plan

Performance Measure: Increase enrollment by 60% to achieve maximum enrollment of 900 Middle and High School students within three years.

Rationale and Approach: AIM is committed to giving all students access to an arts integrated education. There is no testing or audition requirement to attend AIM or participate in any of the school's arts courses. CSP funding to expand to enrollment of 900 students will ensure as many students as possible have access to an educational model that combines rigorous academics, deep arts focus, social emotional learning, and mental health support. AIM will use CSP-allowed expenses to create an Enrollment and Recruitment Coordinator position, which is not currently included in the staffing model. This position will develop and implement expanded marketing campaigns, family and community engagement events, and will assist students and families with the enrollment and transfer process.

Goal 2: Improve academic outcomes for all High School and Middle school students and subgroups including diverse learners

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Performance Measures: Increase in Tier 1 Instruction Observation Quality Data from fall baseline by 15% annually; Improve student achievement for diverse learners and at risk students by 10% annually on state assessments.

Rationale and Approach: Students transfer to AIM from over 60 different schools. For many students, a fresh start at AIM includes the need for support to address social-emotional needs and credit deficiencies that were not addressed at their prior schools or that occurred as the result of pandemic challenges. As we prepare for our first graduating high school class, we are proactively preparing for a strong graduation rate and access to post-secondary pathways. CSP funds will expand and enhance credit recovery programming, address necessary curriculum adjustments aligned to academic data and feedback, and support robust professional development to improve Tier 1 instruction and address the needs of diverse learners and at-risk students.

Goal 3: *Acquire materials and equipment necessary to provide an expanded arts programming and curriculum that is culturally relevant and prepares students for college and careers*

Performance Measures: Equip the school building in order to expand the number of available arts courses

Rationale and Approach: AIM's open enrollment policy removes barriers to arts education for our students and we strive to continually enhance and expand the programs available to students. CSP funds will be used to provide necessary equipment, curriculum and professional development to increase visual arts, musical arts and digital media arts programming. Expanded performance and lab spaces will enable students to build artistic portfolios and engage the community.

The [Budget Narrative](#) and [Budget Summary](#) describe how CSP funds will support these goals.

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Project Narrative

A. Project Goals and Executive Summary

Please see Attachment 3.

B. Educational Philosophy, Key Design Elements, and School Culture

Educational Philosophy: Art In Motion Creative Arts Charter School (AIM) is a tuition-free, 7th-12th grade public charter school located in the South Shore community serving students from 60 Chicago communities. The mission of Art In Motion is to create diverse, joyful, welcoming communities rooted in social justice and rigorous learning. We support all learners to be engaged, curious and to achieve their full potential. Our students become confident advocates, creative problem-solvers and collaborative leaders. AIM provides each student with opportunities to achieve their fullest academic, artistic, and human potential through the values of Community, Creativity, Love, and Excellence.

AIM was born out of a community collaboration that sought to provide integrated full school arts programming for students on the south side of Chicago following the relocation of ChiArts. AIM opened in 2019-2020 to serve students in 7th and 8th grades, and has added an additional grade level each year. In 2023-2024, we will celebrate our first class of high school graduates.

As a charter school, AIM has the autonomy to create a unique learning environment that weaves artistic literacy into core academics and social emotional learning and teaches students to leverage art as communication, personal realization, culture, history, and a path to a sustainable career. In addition to core academics, enrichment is fully embedded in AIM's model and includes courses in vocal and instrumental music, literary arts, media arts, dance and visual arts. AIM also has the flexibility to meet student needs and interest through choice programs such as AIM

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Studio afterschool programming and sports offerings. AIM's student objectives are aligned to IL Learning Standards for the Arts (which are adapted from the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards) goals and are designed to cultivate artistic literacy & identity. Additionally, AIM serves as a demonstration site for the federal Department of Education Race, Equity, Arts and Cultural History Grant. This project is developing a national model for arts learning and arts integration in U.S. schools and offers three major categories of focus over time, Professional Development for Culturally Relevant Arts integration, Summer Institute and Artists in Residence for our students and staff. This focus empowers our educators in core academic content areas to develop, build, practice and implement culturally relevant arts integration practices.

AIM is managed and operated by Distinctive Schools (DS), a non-profit School Management Organization with a focus on innovation, culture and equity. DS was founded knowing all children deserve a rigorous public education regardless of zip code; teachers know best what children need to thrive and grow and should have a strong voice in a school; families are essential in creating a love of lifelong learning and supporting the whole child; and finally, communities can be transformed by the presence of an excellent school.

AIM's educational philosophy, which aims to prepare capable, high-achieving, future-ready students, intentionally combines rigorous learning with personalized, student centered learning, social emotional learning, and an equitable experience for every student. To ensure all students find success in the DS Learning Model, the schools incorporates high-quality instructional materials, strong instruction and belief in all students within a Multi-Tiered System of Supports ("MTSS"), prevention-based framework for improving learning outcomes for all students through a layered (tiered) continuum of evidence-based supports. These supports integrate the academic and social emotional needs of students to foster lifelong success. Using a

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strengths-based approach, coupled with real-time feedback generated from short-cycle assessment data, DS educators coach students in the development of strong and positive student identity and agency. In turn, students become confident, well-rounded, resilient members of the learning community and are well-positioned for success in college, career, and life. The DS Academic Model combines fixed network elements (e.g, structures, curriculum and assessments, and frameworks) with opportunities for AIM to personalize based upon strengths, needs, and community voice.

AIM's team is focused on building a safe, positive learning environment, setting high expectations for student behavior, and ensuring clear and consistent responses to any unsafe behaviors. AIM takes a tailored approach to student behavior and discipline that is trauma-informed and centered in Restorative Justice. The AIM team implements a three-part personalized approach to discipline, which includes: (1) a natural/logical consequence for student misconduct, (2) restorative action(s) with community members hurt or impacted by the action or the larger school community, and (3) a skill-building plan to address any growth areas that the student might have demonstrated a need. In addition, the team introduced an accountability ladder that prioritizes in class interventions and family communication, created a Peace Room to provide a cool down space for students who are struggling, implemented culture walk throughs to observe progress and provide feedback, provided No Nonsense Nurturer training for staff in order to align mindsets and build skills, and created structures to encourage bell-to-bell engagement in learning. Weekly professional development further builds a shared understanding of school protocols, expectations, and restorative practices each week with all staff.

AIM is committed to partnering with families and students to provide a rigorous academic and arts experience. All teachers conduct Empathy Interviews with parents and

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students at the start of the year to ensure time to listen as they share their hopes, insights, and worries. Performance conversations continue at our Quarterly Family Conferences. Our families and students also utilize YouthTruth surveys to provide feedback for the school to respond. Survey responses are anonymous, and AIM leaders use the data to inform steps necessary to create a safe and caring community where all students can thrive and reach their personalized goals and where families' voices are valued. The AIM school board includes a parent representative who also serves as chair of the Parent Engagement Network, further amplifying parent perspectives in the school's leadership, decision-making and accountability.

Key Design Elements: The AIM Educational Model core tenets are:

Rigorous Academics: Students do the critical thinking and work in the classroom while engaging in complex, grade-level content and relevant learning activities that set them up for future success. Teachers hold high-expectations for students, believe that every student can learn, have a deep understanding of standards, and implement strong instructional practices.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL): Strong academic instruction and learning happens best when the academic, social, and emotional needs of the whole child are addressed and met. SEL is prioritized through the intentional development of teacher-to-student and peer-to-peer relationships, creating a culture of learning, and providing explicit instruction and opportunities to develop the five core competencies of social-emotional learning.

Personalized, Student-Centered Learning: Students are active partners in their education, and every child brings strengths, talents, and has the ability to learn. These mindsets are core to the personalized learning practices seen throughout the network. AIM has adopted the LEAP Learning Framework™ (“LLF”) to guide personalized learning and build upon the beliefs that personalized learning is FOCUSED on, LED with and DEMONSTRATED by the learner, and is

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CONNECTED to career-relevant, real-world skills and opportunities.

Equitable and Culturally Responsive Learning: Every learner deserves access to high-quality instruction and resources, rigorous learning, and culturally responsive learning environments and teaching strategies within an anti-racist school culture.

Arts Exposure and Development: Unique to the AIM model, this key design element includes:
1) a human centered and technology enabled environment that immerses students in the tools and systems that power the labor market of the future to connect human possibility, capability and adaptability; 2) Student-led creative agency that powers the AIM experience with embedded skilled training that builds our school community and spirit; 3) A locally sourced teaching artist collaborative to provide representation, mentors, and skilled arts instruction.

School Culture: AIM core values are **C.R.E.A.T.I.V.E.:** Community, Resilience, Excellence, Accountability, Tenacity, Identity, Voice, Empathy. We utilize these core values in all facets of the school day – in classrooms, the hallways, and the artists we contract – to encourage and celebrate positive behaviors, and they are the foundation of our school culture. Culture is intentionally fostered through the “3Rs”: relationships, routines, and rigor, and supported through a trauma-informed and Restorative Justice approach tailored to the campus community. Together, the “3Rs” create an environment conducive to learning and growth for all students, families and staff, while opportunities for co-construction and shared leadership elevate voice, equity and belonging. This approach also supports students to develop skills and mindsets that enable them to build deep relationships, empathy with people across lines of difference, and the habits that help them reach their goals.

AIM teachers and staff intentionally make personal connections with *all* students. These relationships show students that we value their presence and take an interest in them, creating a

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sense of belonging in our community that leads to deeper investment and engagement in their education. Opportunities for one-on-one connection, including empathy interviews, student learning profiles and mentoring, help staff members get to know students. Each student is assigned a mentor who supports goal setting, high-expectations, and is a champion for the student. The daily schedule includes a Community period where students develop a sense of belonging with peers, begin each day with intention, and learn explicit social and emotional competencies.

Student voice is key to the strong student culture at AIM. Students designed and selected the school mascot, weighed in on course offerings, provided feedback and insights on the Learner Advisory. Small group work, extra curricular activities, and the opportunity to select arts courses provide additional opportunities to build peer-to-peer connections and develop a strong student culture. Family connections are fostered through listening conferences, robust communication streams, family conferences, parent nights and workshops, assemblies and performances, parent-teacher organizations, and parent roundtables. In addition, the AIM school board includes a parent representative to further amplify parent voice in school priorities and decision-making.

C. Curriculum, Instructional Strategy, and Technology

Curriculum and Instructional Strategy: Curricula are selected based on AIM's mission and the DS Visions for Learning. We believe students should acquire and apply social and emotional skills; use their voice to advocate and create; have access to culturally responsive curriculum; and be challenged to achieve at high levels. The DS Academic Team uses student data, stakeholder input, third party tools (e.g., Edreports, Achieve the Core curriculum rubric), and outside partners (ie. TNTP) when selecting and identifying when a change in curriculum is

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needed. The team reviews data (e.g., end of unit summative, IAR, P/SAT) on an ongoing basis to monitor curriculum effectiveness and implementation. Data is disaggregated by subgroups to monitor student growth and curriculum effectiveness, and to identify when supplemental tools are needed to support student profile and additional goals. Additionally, the AIM Instructional Leadership Team and Academic Team engage in ongoing Instructional Walkthroughs to measure level implementation of curriculum and key look-fors of high-quality instruction for the content area. Instructional Walkthrough findings are reviewed to inform adjustments to instructional coaching, professional development, or other supports to improve implementation and student learning. The chart below identifies the curriculum used for each subject, the instructional strategies that complement the curricula selected, and the rationale for why each was chosen.

Subject	Curricular Resource	Standard Alignment	Core Instructional Strategies	Technology
English	Springboard (7th-12th) i-Ready (7th & 8th)	IL Learning Standards for 7th-12th grades	Evidence based reading & writing, Language Workshop, Whole Class & Small group Instruction	1:1 Chromebook Digital Platform
<p><i>Rationale: The Springboard curriculum is new for the 2023/24 school year in efforts to increase rigor, culturally relevant text, and provide students with a balanced literacy experience that includes writing, reading, and critical thinking. Having a universal curriculum promotes both vertical (7-8 & 9-12) and horizontal (across grade level teams) collaboration. The Springboard Curriculum is aligned to state standards and the core skills measured by the P/SAT and will replace Summit Learning.</i></p> <p><i>i-Ready, a supplemental tool, provides students with individual, competency-based pathways that provide explicit instruction to close gaps and engage in prerequisite skills and engage in grade-level content. i-Ready is utilized in the What I Need daily Intervention block.</i></p>				
Math	Illustrative Math (7th-12th) i-Ready (7th & 8th)	IL Learning Standards for 7th - 12th grades	Standards of Mathematical Practice, Representational & Abstract connections, Computational Fluency, and Problem Solving within whole class & small group instruction	1:1 Chromebook Digital Platform
<p><i>Rationale: The Illustrative Math curriculum is new for the 2023/24 school year in efforts to increase focus,</i></p>				

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<p>coherence, and rigorous learning experience. Students will have daily opportunities to engage in Standards of Mathematical Practice, discourse and spend a majority of class time on the Major Work clusters in an aligned sequence. Previously, elements of Illustrative Math were included in the Summit Curriculum. Illustrative Math is aligned to state standards.</p> <p>i-Ready, a supplemental tool, provides students with individual, competency-based pathways that provide explicit instruction to close gaps and engage in prerequisite skills and engage in grade-level content. i-Ready is utilized in the What I Need daily Intervention block in middle school.</p>				
Science	Summit Learning (7th - 12th)	IL Learning Standards for 7th-12th grades	Hands-on labs, direct instruction, self- directed learning, and real-world group projects	1:1 Chromebook Digital Platform
<p>Rationale: Summit Learning Science curriculum is based upon a project-based learning philosophy. Content and direct instruction is integrated into hands-on opportunities for labs, exploration, and discourse aligned to grade-level state standards. Students also have a daily opportunity for self-directed learning (SDL), a dedicated time for goal setting, planning, worktime, and reflection each day.</p>				
History & Social Sciences	Summit Learning (7th - 12th)	IL Learning Standards for 7th-12th grades	Project-based learning, self-directed learning, civic engagement	1:1 Chromebook Digital Platform
<p>Rationale: Summit Learning History Curriculum is rooted in a project-based learning philosophy. Content and direct instruction towards the five areas of social science integrating the past and present. Students also have a daily opportunity for self-directed learning (SDL), a dedicated time for goal setting, planning, worktime, and reflection each day.</p>				

Technology: As part of our Personalized Learning approach, AIM provides each student a Chromebook to support their learning that is available for take-home check-out to support student needs. Chromebooks are used to access the digital platforms, tools, and resources to support learning. The digital tools and technology are integrated with strong instructional strategies, paper/pencil activities, and grouping structures to promote a balanced learning experience. Google Workspace for Education suite provides student email, productivity tools (eg. Docs, Slides & Sheets) a shared workspace, and access to teacher created Google classrooms. AIM utilizes Gaggle, an online safety management software, to monitor appropriate use of content and proactively support students who may be struggling with identity, self-harm or harm to others, or disconnection.

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Each classroom set-up provides access to a projector/screen or TV, speakers, and whiteboards to display and engage with learning materials. Additional specialized technology is included in the arts classrooms based upon content and course need.

D. Assessment and Data

AIM uses multiple measures to monitor student growth and achievement, effectiveness of implementation, progress towards school and network goals/outcomes, and create action plans at the network, regional, and campus levels. The goal is to improve the student experience and increase student growth and achievement levels over a three year period with 2022-23 as the baseline. Expected outcomes for TNTP walk-through tools are to improve and have 100% curriculum implementation and assessment administration. Monitoring and accountability measures include:

YouthTruth: Student perception survey that provides insights on student belonging, educational program, and school/classroom experiences. The survey is administered annually in the fall to 7th - 12th grade students. A family version of the survey is also shared with parents and caregivers to incorporate family voice into our work.

State Assessments: Annual Assessment that measures proficiency of grade-level standards. The Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR) is administered to 7th-8th grade students in Illinois in math and reading. The P/SAT assessment is administered to Illinois high-school students. New for 23/24 will be formative assessments aligned to P/SAT and IAR taken 3 times per year.

Classroom Observation Tools: Classroom Observation Protocols are used to measure culture of learning, attention to key shifts of the standards, strong instruction, and student ownership. These tools were the foundation for the Academic Diagnostic process and are used to monitor change

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over time through formal periods of data collection. The walk-throughs are completed by campus, regional, and network leaders.

Curricular Assessments: Formative and summative assessments evaluate learning, identify misconceptions, and guide instruction within each subject area. The assessments are aligned to grade-level standards and the key shifts for each content. Teachers review data as individuals and as teams to design appropriate instruction and responses.

The following table outlines how AIM teachers differentiate instruction and utilizes a Multi-tiered System of Supports (“MTSS”) framework. The reading and math instructional blocks include an opportunity for data-driven small group instruction where teachers can reteach, provide additional scaffolds, and address learning misconceptions or foundational skills. Focus has been on developing a deep understanding of the standards, curricular tools, and data-driven instruction to support high-quality Tier 1 instruction and supports. Professional development, lesson planning structures, instructional coaching and feedback, and collaboration opportunities are core strategies used to support teachers in planning and implementing strong instruction.

Distinctive Schools MTSS Levels of Support		
Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
<p>All students receive strong instruction rooted in evidence-based practices of Universal Design for Learning and supported by high-quality instructional materials.</p> <p>All students receive “just-in-time” instruction along with needed scaffolds and differentiation to counteract unfinished learning and access grade-level concepts and materials.</p> <p>Includes, when needed, appropriate, evidence-based Diverse Learner and Culturally & Linguistically Diverse effective scaffolds, accommodations and language strategies.</p>	<p>Rely-heavily on the high-quality instructional materials from Tier 1 (core) to guide Tier 2 instruction.</p>	<p>Instruction supports current or upcoming core instruction and instructors maintain strict fidelity to the evidence-based curriculum being used to support Tier 3 instruction</p>

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Students in the whole class will receive the necessary differentiation during core instruction to meet grade-level expectations.	Students with goals for areas of need supported by: Whole class differentiated instruction + small Group targeted Instruction in addition to core instruction (core + more).	Students with goals for areas of need supported by: Whole class core differentiated instruction + additional targeted instruction (often small group in addition to core instruction) + intensive support
Students in small groups will receive personalized instruction according to the model in order to receive what they need .	Students in groups of 5-8 receive supplemental, “just-in-time” instruction that focuses on providing increased opportunities to practice and learn skills that support current or upcoming core instruction.	Students in groups of 1-4 receive supplemental, “just-in-time” instruction that is more explicitly focused on the recovery of unfinished instructional concepts and skills and is provided for a longer frequency and/or duration of time.
Student progress will be monitored through data protocols and measured by grade level success criteria .	Monitor student’s biweekly progress aligned to small group targeted instruction for desired rate of progress towards the goal . Teacher monitors student’s progress aligned to small group, targeted instruction for desired rate of progress towards the goal .	Monitor student’s weekly progress aligned to small group targeted instruction for desired rate of progress towards the goal .

E. Effectively Serving All Students

AIM has high-expectations for all students and provides access to strong instruction, high-quality instructional materials, high-expectations, and rigorous learning experience for all students. AIM currently serves a student population that is nearly 100% Black or African American, with 84% of students identified as economically disadvantaged. Seventeen percent of students are diverse learners who qualify for special education services. Due to our track record of leveraging our personalized learning approach to support all learners’ academic and social emotional growth, this figure exceeds the district rate by nearly two percentage points. The table below lists the enrollment percentages of special student populations at AIM over the last three school years:

School Year	Diverse Learners	English Learners	STLS	Economically Disadvantaged
2022-23	16.82%	0.72%	4.47%	84.04%
2021-2022	16.49%	0.26%	7.73%	74.48%

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2020-2021	18.70%	0.00%	1.15%	58.4%
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Curricular resources and tools support teachers in providing differentiated instruction to support the unique needs of students. While the standards and high-expectations remain the same for all students, the pathway and instructional support may vary for each learner. AIM offers Resource and Self-Contained content classes when appropriate based upon a student's IEP.

Economically Disadvantaged Students: AIM provides equal access to quality education for all students, regardless of their economic background. AIM works to make school programs and activities accessible and inclusive for all students by providing no-cost activities and programs - such as AIM Studio (after school enrichment clubs) and For the Culture (performance art show put on by students). AIM also waives all fees for economically disadvantaged students. Understanding that economically disadvantaged students and families may face additional challenges outside the classroom, AIM offers wraparound services including access to healthcare, counseling, social services, and other support systems that can positively impact a student's overall well-being and readiness to learn. Our Community Hub model was developed to give parents, caregivers, students, and other stakeholders a voice in determining which services they most need, and - in collaboration with local agencies, non-profits, and businesses - those services are offered at no or low cost, breaking down the financial barrier economically disadvantaged families face when trying to access them.

Recognizing that all students – including those from low-income families - have unique learning needs, AIM creates personalized learning plans for each student to cater to their strengths, weaknesses, and aspirations. AIM's 1:1 technology model also ensures that economically disadvantaged students have the same learning tools and resources as their peers to enhance their education. To further support low-income families, AIM engages parents and

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caregivers through workshops, family events, and other activities to create a strong support system for students.

Homeless/Migrant Students: AIM students who are in temporary living situations (“STLS”) receive many of the same services our economically disadvantaged students receive. The AIM STLS Liaison notifies every family about McKinney-Vento student rights to help identify and support McKinney-Vento eligible students during the enrollment process and throughout the year. The STLS Liaison has private, personal conversations with each family to support them in their application process, and she works closely with school administrators to train staff regarding the needs and rights of STLS. In addition, AIM’s two full-time Social Workers partner with staff throughout the year to answer questions and provide additional support and information to ensure compliance and adherence to all federal laws and regulations. AIM ensures compliance with and documents fee waivers for all McKinney-Vento eligible students by digital spreadsheet, which our STLS Liaison and school administrators access and maintain on a regular basis for the entire school year.

Diverse Learners (Special Education): The Diverse Learner model at AIM is part of a model of inclusivity for all learners regardless of any identification and wherever they are on the academic achievement continuum. In 2021, we identified Learning Acceleration as a core priority and strategy to address unfinished learning caused by the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis. The Learning Acceleration approach ensures all students have access to grade-level instruction; it strategically prepares students for success in current grade-level content, and simultaneously readies students for new learning. Rather than providing “just in case” learning, which assumes that students require additional teaching in below-grade level skills in order to meet grade level expectations, Learning Acceleration provides grade level content coupled with

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“just in time” learning. Teachers provide temporary scaffolds strategically and to ensure students can access grade level content. As warm demanders, teachers hold high standards for all learners, including Diverse Learners, while offering emotional support and encouraging productive struggle.

When there is a reason to suspect a student may have a disability and may be in need of special education and related services, a multidisciplinary team of individuals, including the parent/guardian are brought together to review data, interventions implemented, and progress. The team determines which of the eight domains (academic performance, general intelligence/cognitive functioning, social/emotional status, health, vision, hearing, communication status, and motor abilities) are relevant, reviews data, determines need for additional information and sources from which it will be obtained. Consent is obtained for evaluation using appropriate documents in SSM.

AIM utilizes Individuals with Disabilities Act (“IDEA”) Eligibility Criteria when determining if students qualify for services under certain eligibility. For students who qualify for services under the eligibility of mild, moderate, and severe disabilities, IDEA eligibility checklist for cognitive disabilities is utilized. Individualized Education Plan (“IEP”) teams look at intellectual development, cognitive ability, adaptive behavior, and academic achievement and use a checklist to identify Mild, Moderate, or Severe disabilities. We also provide specific guidance for special education teachers, related service providers, and paraprofessionals to ensure consistent implementation of processes, roles, and mindsets across the network, and high expectations for all staff.

Gifted and Talented: AIM’s established goal to “accelerate achievement for all students through an identity-affirmed, learner-centered environment” means that regardless of where

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students are on the academic achievement continuum, they are challenged and supported. Further, our Personalized Learning approach meets students where they are and generates unique, student-directed learning paths. So, gifted students are able to grow supported by strong instruction and conditions that provide equal opportunity for them to engage in depth of grade-level or above rigor. New content courses added to provide advanced math and English based upon student interests and needs.

Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Learners (English Language Learners): A sense of belonging is developed when students can be their authentic selves in a safe and joyful learning community. Bilingualism, biliteracy, and multiculturalism are part of a student's identity and are seen as assets to leverage in the student experience. This mindset is central to AIM's vision and also supports the meaningful engagement of students identified as English language learners into the school community and educational program.

While the number of AIM students who are English Language Learners is statistically insignificant, our "all means all" approach of high expectations, rigorous learning, strong instruction, and access to an equitable learning experience respects that each AIM student comes to school with varied educational backgrounds and experiences, languages, and/or cultural connections. We honor those differences and incorporate them in the personalized learning experience for each student. Support and instructional strategies are implemented by classroom teachers. Robust professional learning and instructional coaching are key to supporting mindsets and instructional practices, and core curricular resources provide tools, instructional strategies, and supports that teachers need to best meet students' language proficiency levels and goals.

Nutritional Plan: Art In Motion participates in the Community Enrollment Program provided by Chicago Public Schools to provide free breakfast and lunch to all students. As part

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of this program, AIM maintains a School Wellness Policy available to families on the school website. The Nutrition Policy specifies that, “All reimbursable meals served for the purposes of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) must meet or exceed USDA nutrition standards and regulations. This includes meeting standards for each of the meal pattern components (i.e. Grains, Meat/Meat Alternates, Fruits, Vegetables, and Milk) as well as meeting or exceeding the limitations set for calories, sodium, saturated fat, and trans fat. Additionally, fresh fruits & vegetables will be served daily; meal and menu items are to be minimally processed; low sugar and saturated fat foods; and free of artificial flavors.” Additional guidance is provided for food items available at the school outside of the school meal program. AIMs plan meets all Illinois requirements and standards for Health Education, including nutrition and nutrition promotion. The plan also specifies other wellness goals.

Transportation Plan: As outlined in the Transportation Plan, AIM provides transportation options to ensure equitable access. AIM maintains a fleet of school buses to provide transportation services to/from school in addition to those required for STLS and Diverse Learners. This is exceptionally rare in Chicago but signals our commitment to helping South Side students access arts education.

F. Staffing and Professional Development Plan:

Approach to Staffing: Through the management contract, Distinctive Schools is the employer of all AIM team members and provides services including human resources, finance, marketing and communications, strategy, compliance, academics, student services and more. Through this relationship, AIM is able to access robust support and expertise at a fraction of the cost of direct hiring for all of these leadership positions. AIM also accesses economies of scale in

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purchasing, employee benefits and other areas through this partnership, allowing more funds to flow into AIM classrooms than if operating independently.

Art In Motion seeks to hire highly qualified and properly certified teachers for all teaching positions. As the employer for AIM staff members, Distinctive Schools (DS) supports all hiring and human resources services for the campus in partnership with the Principal and accountable to the AIM school board. DS has engaged in effect size studies to determine areas of improvement to drive student outcomes. These studies show that while a licensed teacher has a larger impact, having a consistent teacher is an important determinant of growth and achievement. Therefore, when fully certified teachers are not available, DS utilizes charter school license flexibility to engage long-term pending-certification teachers and provides robust support for the certification process and continued professional development to ensure student growth and achievement. Art In Motion is compliant with Charter Law staffing requirements which stipulate that at least 75% of staff must hold proper certification in the grade/level and subject in which they are teaching.

Hiring occurs year-round to ensure consistent staffing for all Art in Motion roles. The recruitment cycle includes talent attraction, talent engagement, conversion and orientation. Distinctive Schools implements additional long- and short-term strategies to recruit top talent, including certified teachers and teachers in hard-to-fill subject areas including job fairs, posting on various job sites, targeted outreach to active and passive candidates, and social media campaigns. Incentives including signing bonuses, tuition reimbursement, robust benefits, and transparent career and compensation pathways are also a component of the recruitment strategy for these areas. Distinctive Schools actively engages in partnerships that target, promote, and develop certified teachers including Relay Graduate School of Education, TeacherReady and

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National Louis University as mentioned above. AIM also engages these partners to develop current staff members interested in obtaining their certification. Alternative certification programs (Relay, NLU, etc)

The Recruitment and Hiring process is led by the DS Network Talent Team including the Chief Talent Officer, Manager of Talent Acquisition, Talent Recruiters, and Human Resource Generalists. For roles based at AIM, the campus hiring team includes the Principal, who serves as the hiring manager, and designated AIM personnel who comprise a diverse interviewer team. The hiring process is highly collaborative between the regional, network and campus teams, with specific responsibility and accountability assigned at each step of the process. The process allows for autonomous candidate hiring decisions to be made at the campus level, with guidance and support from the Talent Team and other applicable network and regional teams.

Innovation: A core tenet of the DS model is innovation. The DS Expanded Design Teams (EDTs) meetings are scheduled throughout the year to support innovation, ensure strong implementation of new initiatives and pilots ,and encourage continuous improvement and best practice. Design Teams during the 22-23 school year were Grading and Reporting, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Learner Agency, Innovation, Culture and Retention, Community Hub, and Student Retention. AIM has multiple representatives on every DS Design Team ensuring voice and perspective from both middle, high, and enrichment teachers.

A goal for the 23-24 school year is to deepen personalized learning mindsets and practices through the creation and integration of Learner Profiles (LP). The LP is a two-way communication tool and vehicle to strengthen a student's sense of self, influence the learning process, and support the pathway to college or career. AIM launched STATshot, the academic part of the LP, in January, a resource that provides student access to individual key data such as

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attendance, core curriculum mastery, and state assessment data in one location. The AIM members of the Learner Agency EDT will provide input into the design of the highschool LP connected to the arts and post-secondary success.

AIM provides multiple opportunities for teacher innovation and design through AIM Studio, lesson planning, community course, and curricular pilots.

Professional Development: Across its entire network, DS sets conditions for professional learning through a strong network culture. The phrase *By Teachers, For Teachers, With Teachers* is a network-wide mindset for how DS approaches continuous improvement and professional learning through the intentional integration of stakeholder voice. At AIM, all new and returning teachers engage in professional learning on the DS Teaching and Learning Playbook, key changes, key expectations, and monitoring systems each fall. Job-embedded professional development and coaching on high-quality instructional materials, assessments, and pacing guides occurs throughout the year by instructional leadership team members, instructional coaches, mentor teachers, and the academic team. Explicit training on devices, tech tools, and digital programs are also provided for staff. These efforts are led by both school personnel and the DS Technology Team. Structures are in place to support individual teachers, teams, grade-levels, schools, and the region/network.

The calendar is another structure that sets conditions for professional learning to occur:

- Grade level and content teams have common plan time multiple times per week to engage in data analysis, unit internalization, lesson planning, and professional development.
- Each Wednesday, students are released at 1:00pm to provide dedicated time for professional learning and collaboration at the school level.

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- Regional collaboration opportunities provide time and space for regional teachers and leaders from different campuses to come together in job-alike groups each quarter during Wednesday early release.
- Institute Days, or non-student attendance days, provide full-days of professional development, collaboration, and focus on school improvement.

AIM's Principal and Instructional Leadership Teams, in partnership with network aligned support, design the professional learning scope and sequence for the school. The team considers the topic, intended audience, format (e.g, train-the-trainer), timeline, goals, and action steps when designing a robust experience. Professional development is often differentiated for staff based upon years of experience (e.g., first year), coaching needs, voice and choice, and grade level band, content area, or role. Topics for professional development are derived from: local, state, or federal compliance; the Academic Planning Process; data analysis including but not limited to academic, non-academic, formal observation, and observational structures; network priorities; Campus Growth Plans; DS Academic Model; best practices for student learning; and network/regional determined topics. Clear expectations, monitoring systems, and accountability practices are key to successful professional development. Formal observations provide key benchmarks of professional growth and progress. Principals and regional leaders also utilize Observation Structures to look-for and monitor implementation within Whetstone and/or Google Forms to support data collection. These walk-throughs are in addition to formal observations.

The data is reviewed and the monitoring team determines next steps to improve the implementation. This process is similar to an individual coaching cycle but on a larger scale. Exit slip data is also collected after each professional learning activity, and is reviewed and analyzed to determine opportunities for improvement, inform next steps, and identify any misconceptions.

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AIM also partners with external organizations to provide professional development and coaching as needed. External partnerships are seen as a value-add in the organization and provide expertise and/or services to help the organization improve.

Ongoing coaching and feedback cycles are another critical lever in changing instructional practice. AIM's Coaching Model is student-centered, strengths-based, and centered on teacher voice and collaboration. Similar to the Teaching Framework, the Coaching Model is based upon the research and best practice works of Jim Knight, Elena Aguilar, Zaretta Hammond, and Diane Sweeney. Coaching is personal and must utilize different tools and approaches in order to see improved instructional strategies and student growth and achievement.

G. Financial Management and Monitoring Plan

Art In Motion's financial management and performance consistently meets or exceeds accountability standards established by Chicago Public Schools. Solid financial practices, a robust financial support team, and accountability from AIM's Board of Directors will ensure strong financial performance for AIM throughout its expansion. AIM's Financial Policies and Procedures (Attachment 13) are developed in partnership between the Distinctive Schools Operations and Finance Teams and include selected policies from the Distinctive Schools Accounting Policies and Procedures Manual and Operations Manual. The policies are reviewed annually by the Art In Motion Board of Directors. The financial plans focus on sustaining financial health and compliance with rules and regulations through consistent review, assessment and monitoring. All compliance requirements are tracked and a team approach to monitor against monthly, annual and long term goals is in place. The DS Finance team meets monthly with principals and functional subject matter experts to ensure the partner schools remain in financial compliance and stay on target for financial annual goals while achieving all school academic and

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operational goals. These meetings allow principals to discuss changes (programmatic, staffing or other) that occur throughout a school year and receive guidance and support to navigate the financial and compliance related impact of those changes. The various teams (programmatic, academic, operations, talent, etc.) collaborate with the principal to help them achieve the school goals while meeting the financial goals and overall compliance to rules and regulations. In addition, the AIM school board finance committee also meets regularly.

Annual and long-term financial goals are established and monitored throughout the year(s) and any disruptions to plan are addressed in a timely manner to minimize adverse financial impacts. The DS finance team monitors cash flow, compliance, revenue oversight, expense approvals and monthly reporting for our partners and authorizers. The DS finance team also follows all contractual expectations for oversight and submissions and manages day to day banking, accounting, and reporting in addition to full participation and cooperation with annual audits while maintaining the highest quality accounting and auditing process as top priorities.

At the campus level, AIM's Board of Directors has built a culture of accountability that is critical in ensuring effective planning, and approving a financial model that allows for long term financial solvency. The Board, with AIM's leadership team, continuously plans, evaluates and reports financial status to ensure fiscal resources are available for the school's operations, while also achieving academic achievement goals. For instance, step one is making sure that the school's budget is sound, followed by ensuring that regular reporting takes place. This practice allows the Board and Leadership team to understand what resources are available and ensure that our plan maximizes the use of those resources.

In its first three years of operation, AIM leadership responsibly stewarded the school's annual expansion with funds from the CSP start-up grant, demonstrating their ability to adhere

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to an established implementation plan. Under the guidance of the schools' co-directors and now its principal, all key dates were met except for those related to the building expansion (which was delayed due to COVID supply chain delays, labor strikes and other unavoidable issues). The budget narrative and CSP Budget Template detail the planned expenditures, impact and timeline.

Given that enrollment can be challenging to predict even in the most stable of economic and other circumstances, AIM's Board of Directors budgets income conservatively and to meet planned objectives. As a charter school, AIM's Board has the autonomy, authority, and flexibility to modify the budget should enrollment levels exceed those predicted. AIM is also grateful to have the support of community partners, philanthropic organizations and others from whom we can confidently request additional funding as necessary and reasonable.

H. Board Capacity and Governance Structure

Art In Motion ("AIM") is governed by the Art In Motion Board of Directors ("Board") consistent with Illinois charter and applicable laws. The Board includes five members with a strong commitment to AIMs success, including a parent representative, neighborhood residents and members of the business community. Board President Matthew Williams, Jr. is a member of New Life Covenant Church, a community partner of AIM. The board meets bi-monthly and hosts committees dedicated to monitoring specific functions including an Academic Committee and Finance Committee. The AIM Board, as well as the AIM leadership team, provides expertise to the school in essential areas and ensures that the school is serving the best interest of our students while providing access to the quality education they deserve. The Board also consistently identifies the school's priorities for funding, and continuously evaluates AIM's

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academic performance and fiscal soundness, so when needed, the budget may be adjusted to align to the resources needed to achieve the school's mission.

All Board members complete all annually- required training around board governance, employment policies and practices, and financial management as required by law. The AIM Board complies with all vendor and conflict of interest policies in all hiring, in selecting its financial service provider, auditor, and other vendors (food, transportation, etc.). Furthermore, AIM Board members play specific roles to ensure the school financial operations run effectively while getting results for our students. For example, the Board President guides the full board on all its actions and makes sure that the school's mission is always put first in any action that is taken. The Board Vice President has awareness of the top priorities of AIM and assists the President as needed. Lastly, the Board Treasurer provides evidence that dollars are used wisely and serves as a voice of the Board by providing fiscal leadership and expertise. The treasurer also monitors expenditures, ensures alignment with the approved budget and mission, and issues timely financial reports and statements.

I. School Leadership and Management

AIM is led by a Principal and a Director of Partnership and Creative Development. The principal leads the school leadership team, which includes Assistant Principals, Grade Level and Content Instructional Coaches, Special Education Instructional Coaches, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learner Coaches, Case Manager, Deans, Assistant Deans, and Campus Operations Managers. Each of these team members are responsible for leading teams to ensure a strong fidelity of our school model as well as provide coaching, development, feedback and support a strong team and school culture. Each leader is responsible for upholding the school's Campus Growth Plan and related strategic priorities and goals across all functions of the school,

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especially related to academic growth and achievement, culture, attendance and operational/fiscal performance. The Director of Partnership and Creative Development leads enrollment, partnerships, fundraising, enrichment programming, and the development of the AIM arts programming model.

Founding Principal Kara May has over twenty years experience and a deep passion for the hearts and development of young people. Mrs. May, who majored in French with a dual minor in Music and English at Truman State University, served as the school's founding principal. Mrs. May now serves as the school's Director of Partnerships and Creative Development. Mrs. May is charged with working to secure new programs and partnerships for the students, families, and community. She is also responsible for fundraising to help fund these new programs and ways to bring more philanthropic development opportunities to the campus.

Following Mrs. May's transition into the Director of Partnerships and Creative Development role, the AIM board selected Dion Steele, a youth and community advocate, administrator, entrepreneur, and exceptional leader, as Principal beginning in the 2023-2024 school year. Mr. Steele joined AIM with over 10 years of experience in school leadership. He served as Director of External Partnerships and the Extended Day Program at University of Chicago Charters, and as Assistant Principal and Principal at Urban Prep Academies. Dion is a graduate of Illinois Math and Science Academy, earned his bachelor's degree from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and his masters from the University of Chicago. He believes without equivocation that *all* students can learn and should be held to high standards, he is committed to addressing the needs of the whole child, and strives to create a culture of inclusiveness and connectedness. The deep knowledge, high expectations, and leadership experiences Dion brings to AIM will be an asset to the entire community.

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In the DS model, principals are the leaders of their buildings, with accountability for all aspects of their school community including operations. Each principal is supported by an experienced DS Network and Regional operations team that provides resources to support the daily and long term operations of the schools. The DS Network Operations Team is a service unit offering leadership and operations management to principals and campus-based operations leaders. This team leads and manages non-academic services including building operations, maintenance, technology, transportation, front offices and compliance. The DS Student Services team manages school nurses; before and after care programs are managed by Community School Coordinators and overseen by the Network Director of Partnerships and Community Hubs.

DS daily operations are overseen by the chief leadership team—Chief Executive Officer, Chief of Schools, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Talent Officer, Chief Education Officer, Chief Engagement Officer, Chief Financial Officer, and Chief Strategy Officer. The chief leadership team works closely with network and campus leaders to execute the DS strategy, implement the goals set forth by the board on an annual basis, and ensure alignment and achievement of authorizer goals, accountability systems and shared values.

J. Need Analysis

Please see Attachment 5.

K. Growth Plan

With a transformative multi-million dollar investment, AIM is developing a former Solo Cup Factory from an unused commercial site into a leading learning and cultural center for youth and their families, supporting the growth, restoration, and prosperity of Chicago's South Side. Ultimately, this investment will provide an arts education for 900 students in grades 9-12, while also creating a dynamic performance space and cultural venue for the South Shore neighborhood.

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This building expansion was informed by expressed interest from community members and accompanied by the addition of new positions and an expanded marketing budget.

AIM currently serves 559 students; our 2023-2024 school year enrollment target is 700 students. As seen in the table below AIM has added a grade level each year, nearly tripling enrollment since opening, and signaling strong interest in our model. The school will complete its final grade expansion in 2023-2024.

Campus Expansion Growth Plan							
School Year	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Enrollment Target	209	258	288	559	700	800	900

AIM's enrollment goals are aligned to the CPS Enrollment cap and Pillar 5 of the Distinctive Schools network plan. Pillar 5, Strategy 2 aims to effectively engage families to meet enrollment, retention and attendance targets. AIM's target is to meet the enrollment cap of 900 students within the next two years based on the historical enrollment trends. Once the enrollment cap is met, we will continue to welcome new students to 7th grade and 9th grade annually, and to fill any openings that may occur with interested families.

The Art In Motion team collaboratively facilitates a year-round Recruitment to Enrollment Pipeline strategy through the dedicated engagement of our Distinctive Schools Network Engagement Team, AIM's Campus Recruitment and Enrollment Leads, and the School Principal. We implement this plan with the goal of engaging the full school community in recruitment initiatives throughout the year and building strong relationships with prospective families from the initial point of contact through the students' first days of school. Hiring a full-time recruitment and enrollment coordinator for the next two years will enable us to deploy

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the following recruitment and enrollment strategy, a combination of new and previous used strategies, to meet our target of 900 enrolled students:

- **Awareness:** AIM provides multiple venues for families to be introduced to the school. A robust branding and marketing strategy will provide a variety of entry points to begin forming relationships between the school and prospective families, and will be expanded with support from CSP funds. Marketing avenues include the school website, paid social media, neighborhood canvassing, participation in community events, a CTA advertising campaign, and more.
- **Community engagement:** AIM serves as a community hub in which we allow residents to access resources, arts education programming, volunteerism and attend AIM's public performances. The enrollment coordinator and AIM's leadership will devise an awareness and recruitment strategy so we can intentionally use community performances and events to provide residents information on enrollment.
- **FamilyEngagement:** Strong student and family retention is the result of creating and nurturing strong family partnerships and a robust educational experience through the course of the full school year. It is built upon, among other things, personalized instruction, consistent communication, and strong family engagement within the community of the school. We disseminate an Intent to Return process each March, the form is not binding, but it helps us understand family intentions and supports greater student recruitment planning for the upcoming school year.
- **Excitement:** Initiating engagement, and continuing to engage, prospective families through a variety of communications and other touch points is crucial towards nurturing

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interest and building an affinity between prospective families and the school. This phase includes Open Houses and targeted email outreach to interested families.

- **Enrollment Support:** We want to remove barriers to student registration and plan on doing that through onsite family registration days, a dedicated Enrollment Specialist for guidance and enrollment support, and virtual open house options to support enrollment among diverse populations and address barriers including lack of internet access or technology.
- **Application:** Students complete the application process and are notified of their acceptance. If there are more applicants than available slots, the lottery process is complete. For rising 9th graders, application is handled through the GoCPS process.
- **Registration:** Once families have received their notice of acceptance, our school teams work to ensure strong and continuous communication to families that provide clear information and consistent next steps. This includes personal outreach, onsite registration days, accepted family events and more.
- **Welcome and Orientation:** Campus leaders, campus based, and network enrollment teams welcome new students and families to our schools with regular communications, welcome and back to school events, parent gatherings, and student orientation events.
- **Continued Engagement/Retention:** Distinctive Schools builds out a variety of meeting and communication venues over the course of the year as a means of ensuring full and consistent understanding, engagement and alignment among our families, school leaders and the network Engagement Team throughout the year.

Strong student and family retention is the result of creating and nurturing strong family partnerships and a robust educational experience through the course of the full school year. It is

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built upon, among other things, personalized instruction, consistent communication, and strong family engagement within the community of the school. Our campus teams work with returning families to ensure that their child achieves maximum growth and success. Communications are robust, and families are supported in the enrollment process. We desire for each of our families to be committed to the mission of our campuses, and we hope that they will continue to be an active part of the school community for years to come.

Engaging prospective families through a variety of communications and other touch points is crucial to build interest and strong connections between prospective families and the school. Participation and presence at organized community and citywide events is also key to our recruitment strategy in addition to creating opportunities to tour schools to allow prospective families to “see and feel” the school community and culture.

Closing

Art in Motion opened its doors just six months before the onset of a pandemic that deeply impacted education. Through resilience, strength and sound management we have built an arts-centered community among our students, staff, parents, and community members in less than optimal circumstances. We successfully stewarded the CSP start-up grant we were awarded in 2018, dutifully reporting on key milestones and outcomes as enrollment grew 267% in just four years. AIM’s leadership and community, supported by the award-winning management team at Distinctive Schools, is poised to complete its journey to a full 7-12 middle and high school and become a beacon for school choice and career pathways on Chicago’s south side.