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CELL awards new round of grants to start-up high schools

The Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning at the University of Indianapolis has awarded grants totaling \$160,000 to three start-up high schools in the Indianapolis area. The schools will maintain small student populations in order to focus on personal relationships and individualized instruction. One school is already open; two plan to open in Fall 2007.

CELL has awarded a \$40,000 exploration grant to New Tech High School in Perry Township. The school will be the first of its kind in Marion County and will address the declining graduation rate in the two larger Perry Township high schools. School leaders will identify students in middle school for whom traditional instruction methods do not work and offer this nontraditional high school, with a maximum enrollment of 400, as an alternative. The school, scheduled to open in August 2007, will emphasize project-based learning in small learning groups.

A \$20,000 exploration grant was awarded to Key Learning Community High School, part of Indianapolis Public Schools. The grant will be used to help the school restructure the current model to include technology integration in the classroom, a project-based curriculum and support for students and parents to ease the transition into the school.

Ben Davis University High School in Wayne Township received a \$100,000 design and preparation grant for the school district to develop a small high school to increase achievement, graduation rates and college attendance among its students and to address the needs of students seeking a more personalized educational experience. The school will collaborate with Vincennes University and will use the "early college high school" program design. It is scheduled to open in August 2007 with a maximum of 400 students in grades 10 through 12.

The University of Indianapolis established CELL in 2001 to promote professional and civic leadership for the achievement of educational excellence and equity for all students. In 2003, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation awarded \$11.3 million to CELL to spearhead high school transformation in Indianapolis and Marion County. The center has helped transform the five large high schools of Indianapolis Public Schools into 21 small, autonomous high schools and also has supported the development of new high schools in Marion County. More information about CELL is available at <http://cell.uindy.edu>.