i3 Academy Announces Leadership Changes for 2026-2027 School Year

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (May 22, 2026) – A series of leadership changes is taking place at i3 Academy. As of July 1st, founding Head of Schools Dr. Martin Nalls will retire from i3 Academy. The i3 Academy Executive Board is pleased to announce Dr. Tamala Maddox, current i3 Academy High School principal, as the new head of schools. The i3 Academy Board is also pleased to announce that Mrs. Ashley Kean, current dean of students, as the new i3 Academy High School principal. Dr. Maddox's and Mrs. Kean's new roles will be effective July 1st, 2026.

Dr. Nalls is to be congratulated on his almost 30-year tenure in public education. Starting as a classroom teacher and moving through the ranks of school leadership positions, Dr. Nalls has devoted his career to helping students meet their fullest potential. He has served on several state boards and task forces, including the Alabama Association of Secondary School Principals, Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools, Alabama ACT Council, Alabama Association of Middle School Principals. In his next chapter, he plans to work in charter advocacy and build up the next generation of school leaders.

With over 30 years of experience in education, i3 Academy's Executive Board is confident in Dr. Maddox's ability to lead this next endeavor as head of schools. Under her leadership, i3 Middle School students displayed 100% academic growth on ACAP for three years. Among her many accomplishments at i3 High School, she has fostered positive relationships among students and families and broadened the athletic, STEM, and college/career preparation programs. She has proven her skills as a team builder and supporter of her teachers and staff. Dr. Maddox holds a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Secondary Math Education from Auburn University in addition to an Education Specialist Certification and PhD in Educational Leadership from UAB. As an active and well-respected member of the Council for Leaders of Alabama Schools (CLAS), Dr. Maddox is part of an elite group of educators who champion high-quality schools for the children of Alabama.

Upon acceptance of her new position, Dr. Maddox stated, “I am honored and grateful to the Board for entrusting me with the opportunity to serve as the next head of schools for the i3 Academy Network. As I reflect on this moment, I truly believe that all roads in my educational journey have led me here—from my years in the classroom, to school leadership, to serving as the founding principal of i3 Academy Middle School and i3 Academy High School. I look forward to continuing to work alongside our students, staff, families, Board, and community partners as we strengthen instruction, deepen relationships, and expand opportunities for every agent of change.”

Dr. Maddox and her husband, Derrick Maddox, have three daughters, ages 25, 23, and 20. In her free time, she enjoys reading and walking.

Mrs. Kean has served as a classroom teacher at i3 Elementary School, an English teacher at i3 Middle School, and her current role as dean of students is located on the campus of i3 High School. Kean bio

Kean quote

Please join the i3 Family in wishing Dr. Nalls well as he enters retirement and congratulating Dr. Maddox and Mrs. Kean on their new positions.

i3 Academy is a network of tuition-free, public charter schools, serving students in kindergarten through tenth grade on three campuses. The mission of i3 Academy is to empower learners to become agents of change who solve the problems they see in their world. To learn more about student enrollment, employment, and the i3 Academy Network, visit i3Academy.org.

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Contact:
Rachel Phillips, Communications Director
rphillips@i3Academy.org
205-403-5777