



**Board Members Present**

Beth Bray (Chair)  
Gretchen Gutman  
Violet Hawkins  
Michael Jasaitis  
Anna Shults  
Rep. Terri Austin  
Rev. David W. Greene, Sr.

**Board Members Absent**

Jill Robinson Kramer (Vice-Chair)

**Staff**

James Betley  
Bridgett Abston  
Ryan Preston  
Sherie Scott  
Beatriz García

**NOTICE OF MEETING AND AGENDA**

**December 12, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. ET**

**Indiana Government Center South – Conference Room C  
302 W Washington Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46204**

**Meeting Link:**

<https://www.youtube.com/@indianacharterschoolboard6660>  
<https://www.youtube.com/@StateOfIndianaProductions>

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## Meeting Minutes for December 12, 2023

### I. Call to Order/Board Meeting Minutes Approval

- a. Call to Order
  - i. Board Chair Beth Bray called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. ET.
- b. Approval of Board Minutes (September 26, 2023)
  - i. Board Member Michael Jasaitis motioned to accept the September 26, 2023 Board minutes.
  - ii. Board Member Rev. David W. Greene seconded the motion. Board Members Gutman, Hawkins, Jasaitis, Shults, Greene, Austin, and Bray voice voted aye.
  - iii. Board Members Robinson Kramer was absent for this vote.
  - iv. Motion passes with seven ayes and zero nays.

### II. Board Business

- a. **The Excel Center Bloomington – Charter Renewal**
  - i. Presentation of staff recommendation (5-7 minutes)
    1. Executive Director, James Betley, provided a brief overview of the renewal application for the Excel Center Bloomington.
    2. The staff recommended the Excel Center Bloomington for a fifteen-year renewal.
  - ii. Presentation of request by organizer (8-10 minutes)
    1. Ms. Betsy Delgado, Senior Vice President and Chief Mission and Education Officer with Goodwill of Central and Southern Indiana, provided a brief overview of the school. Ms. Twyla Carlson, Director of the Excel Center Bloomington also provided her overview of the school.
  - iii. Question and answer period
    1. Board Member Austin asked the organizer to provide the Board with the school's graduation rate for the last five years and student population per year. Executive Director Betley responded that adult high schools do not have a true graduate rate because most students are not in cohort. He went on to say that the state creates a graduation rate for adult high schools because it is meaningless.
    2. Board Chair Bray asked Executive Director Betley to speak on how completion is measured for adult high schools. He responded that ICSB Staff currently reviews percentage of students earning Core 40 diploma, percentage earning college credits, percentage meeting college and career readiness, and percentage of students earning an industry certification in addition to the graduation to enrollment percentages. ICSB calculated eighty-eight percent of students at the Excel Center Bloomington are meeting those requirements. Ms. Delgado added that ninety to ninety-five percent of students are between the ages of nineteen and thirty-five and therefore are out of cohort.

3. Board Member Austin asked for student enrollment per year over the term of the charter. Executive Director Betley said he would provide that information.
  4. Board Chair Bray asked the organizer about their financial health and how they plan to achieve financial independence from Goodwill Education Initiatives. Lynn Greggs, Senior Director of Financial Operations of Goodwill Education Initiatives, responded that the majority of the school's finances over the initial charter term are relative to startup costs/depreciation. She expects this to no longer be an issue come the subsequent academic year. She believes that if the school maintains steady enrollment they can have a steady financial situation.
  5. Board Member Harris asked what is the school's plan to improve enrollment. Ms. Carlson responded that they are working on student retention of students from term to term and community partnerships.
  6. Board Member Gutman asked the organizer to speak on the increase in English learner enrollment. Ms. Carlson said the school has had an increase in enrollment and they expect this number to increase. Remediation classes are built into the curriculum. Board Member Gutman asked what the organizer believes is attributing to this increase in English learner enrollment. Ms. Delgado said all Indiana Excel Centers are experiencing an influx of English learner students. Some students need the degree to do basic math/reading while others may need to support the use of their internationally issued degrees.
  7. Board Member Hawkins asked the retention rate for immigrants and refugees. Ms. Delgado said their retention rate is included in the ninety-four percent retention rate.
  8. Board Member Hawkins asked Mr. Betley the process for reviewing school competencies. Mr. Betley responded that ICSB schools submit reporting requirements to ICSB Staff on an ongoing basis via a portal. These requirements include quarterly financial metrics. ICBS Staff contacts the schools if they have questions or concerns.
- iv. Board decision
1. Board Member Jasaitis moved to accept the staff recommendation of a fifteen-year renewal. Board Member Gutman seconded the motion.
  2. Board Members Bray, Gutman, Hawkins, Jasaitis, Shults, Austin, and Greene voice voted aye.
  3. Board Member Robinson Kramer was absent.
  4. Motion passed with seven yeases and zero nays.

**b. The Excel Center of Southeast Evansville – New Charter**

- i. Presentation of staff recommendation (5-7 minutes)
  1. Executive Director, James Betley, provided a brief overview of the new charter application for the Excel Center Southeast Evansville.
  2. The staff recommended the Excel Center Southeast Evansville for a seven-year charter.

- ii. Presentation of request by organizer (8-10 minutes)
    - 1. Connie Ralph, President and CEO of Evansville Goodwill Industries Inc. and Goodwill Educates, Inc., provided a brief overview of the school.
  - iii. Question and answer period
    - 1. Board Member Gutman asked how close is the facility to the existing campus in Evansville. Ms. Ralph responded that it is about 15 – 20 minutes away. Board Member Gutman asked if the school will be located on a bus route. Ms. Ralph said yes.
    - 2. Board Member Shults asked what financial viability would look like over the course of the charter. Ms. Ralph said they are starting a fundraising campaign, working with the contractor to bring costs down and keep them down, strongly recruiting students, meeting with the local superintendent, and building community partnerships. Board Member Shults said she was also going to ask about enrollment initiatives and Ms. Ralph answered her question.
    - 3. Board Chair Bray asked the applicant to provide insight on the local employer partnerships. Ms. Ralph responded that they have been providing employment assistance in the area since 1935. They have partnerships with Toyota, Barry Plastics, small business/employers, trade associations, and working with Ivy Tech.
    - 4. Board Chair Bray asked Mr. Betley if adult high schools were eligible for the new federally awarded CPS grant. ICSB Staff responded yes.
  - iv. Board decision
    - 1. Board Member Shults moved to accept the staff recommendation of a fifteen-year renewal. Board Member Jasaitis seconded the motion.
    - 2. Board Members Bray, Gutman, Hawkins, Jasaitis, Shults, Austin, and Greene voice voted aye.
    - 3. Board Member Robinson Kramer was absent.
    - 4. Motion passed with seven yeases and zero nays.
- c. The Excel Center of West Central Indiana – New Charter**
- i. Presentation of staff recommendation (5-7 minutes)
    - 1. Executive Director, James Betley, provided a brief overview of the new charter application for the Excel Center West Central Indiana.
    - 2. The staff recommended the Excel Center West Central Indiana for a seven-year charter.
  - ii. Presentation of request by organizer (8-10 minutes)
    - 1. Meredith Osburn, President and CEO of Wabash Valley Goodwill, Inc. provided a brief overview of the school.
  - iii. Question and answer period
    - 1. Board Member Shults asked the organizer to clarify their first year target enrollment. Ms. Osburn said 150 students.
  - iv. Board decision
    - 1. Board Member Shults moved to accept the staff recommendation of a fifteen-year renewal. Board Member Greene seconded the motion.
    - 2. Board Members Bray, Gutman, Hawkins, Jasaitis, Shults, Austin, and Greene voice voted aye.

3. Board Member Robinson Kramer was absent.
4. Motion passed with seven yeses and zero nays.

d. **PLA@ Promise Prep – Change in Authorizer**

- i. Presentation of staff recommendation (5-7 minutes)
  1. Executive Director, James Betley, provided a brief overview of the change in authorizer charter application for PLA@ Promise Prep.
  2. The staff recommended PLA@ Promise Prep for a seven-year charter.
- ii. Presentation of request by organizer (8-10 minutes)
- iii. Nicole Fama, Executive Director of Phalen Leadership Academies (“PLA”) Indianapolis, provided a brief overview of the school.
- iv. Question and answer period
  1. Board Member Shults ask the organizer to share formative and summative measures used to determine student performance. Ms. Fama said that when PLA first began working with Promise Prep, they did not have any data and immediately administered NWEA. Based on the initial baseline assessment to now, they are seeing a little over a year’s growth. DIBELS scores were also low, but increasing.
  2. Board Member Gutman asked what the organizer is doing to address student academic deficiencies. Ms. Fama responded that for reading, they have Title I push in/push out support, Reading Advantage teacher, monitoring their progress weekly to adjust their level if needed. For math, they have Math Advantage. Board Member Gutman said she doesn’t quite understand still and would like to hear what the school is actually doing. Ms. Fama responded that they are doing phonics, word recognition, and students are grouped outside grade levels if needed. Board Member Gutman asked the applications the school is using to assist English learner students. Ms. Fama answered that teachers receive monthly PLA SIOP training, resources/materials, and PLC time to work directly with the instructional coaches.
  3. Board Chair Bray asked if they plan to increase enrollment beyond ninety-one students. Ms. Fama said yes. Yet, due to their building capacity, one hundred students was their goal.
- v. Board decision
  1. Board Member Jasaitis moved to accept the staff recommendation of a seven-year renewal. Board Member Shults seconded the motion.
  2. Board Members Bray, Gutman, Hawkins, Jasaitis, Shults, Austin, and Greene voice voted aye.
  3. Board Member Robinson Kramer was absent.
  4. Motion passed with seven yeses and zero nays.

e. **PLA@93 – Charter Renewal**

- i. Presentation of staff recommendation (5-7 minutes)
  1. Executive Director, James Betley, provided a brief overview of the renewal charter application for the PLA@93.
  2. The staff recommended the PLA@93 for a fifteen-year renewal.

- ii. Presentation of request by organizer (8-10 minutes)
    1. Nicole Fama, Executive Director of Phalen Leadership Academies (“PLA”) Indianapolis, provided a brief overview of the school.
  - iii. Question and answer period
    1. Board Member Hawkins asked for information about the Summer Advantage program. Ms. Fama responded that it is a very rigorous version of summer school focused on all academic subjects and providing students with meals.
    2. Board Chair Bray asked the organizer to speak on the innovation contract with IPS (Indianapolis Public Schools). Ms. Fama said PLA@ 93 was one of the first innovation schools and has a great relationship with IPS. It is one of the highest performing innovation schools. Mr. Betley said the current contract is through 2027.
  - iv. Board decision
    1. Board Member Shults moved to accept the staff recommendation of a fifteen-year renewal. Board Member Jasaitis seconded the motion.
    2. Board Members Bray, Gutman, Hawkins, Jasaitis, Austin, and Greene voice voted aye.
    3. Board Member Shults voted no.
    4. Board Member Robinson Kramer was absent.
    5. Motion passed with six yeses and one nays.
- f. Charter School of the Dunes – Change in Authorizer**
- i. Presentation of staff recommendation (5-7 minutes)
    1. Executive Director, James Betley, provided a brief overview of the change in authorizer charter application for Charter School of the Dunes.
    2. The staff recommended Charter School of the Dunes for a fifteen-year charter.
  - ii. Presentation of request by organizer (8-10 minutes)
    1. Thomas Cera, Board President of Charter School of the Dunes provided a brief overview of the school. Justin Stok, Superintendent of Charter School of the Dunes added to the school overview provided by Mr. Cera. Mahdee Iqbal, CFO/COO, shared the financial overview of the school and financial rationale for the change in authorizer request.
  - iii. Question and answer period
    1. Board Member Shults asked the organizer to speak on the recent curricular change. Mr. Stok said the curricular change will occur in grades K-3 upon IDOE Science of Reading curriculum approval.
    2. Board Member Austin asked the organizer to provide background on their recent renewal application from 2022 submitted to Calumet College of Saint Joseph, the current authorizer. Mr. Stok responded that the school is in good standing with their current authorizer, but given the financial benefit, believed it would be best to change authorizers.
    3. Board Member Hawkins asked the organizer to speak on the challenges they are facing with student and how they are addressing

those challenges. Mr. Stok said he could speak on the last seven year during his tenure. He said students are coming in several years behind academically. Therefore, they have decided to focus more attention on the early grade levels by expanding into preschool.

4. Board Member Gutman asked the organizer what they will do to address reading deficiencies. Mr. Stok answered that they are now Indiana Learns tutoring partners and robust MTSS support. Board Member Gutman asked the focus for older students as well. Mr. Stok said paraprofessionals provide individualized or small group support based on ILEARN results. Charter School of the Dunes also offers four weeks of summer school support. Board Member Gutman asked how long the school has been providing additional individualized, small group support. Mr. Stok said for the last two years. Board Member Gutman said there has not been improvement. Mr. Stok said there is growth. Students on IREAD increased by seven percent and approaching proficiency. Board Member Gutman said IREAD is only for certain grade levels. Board Member Gutman sought clarification on student's not meeting proficiency. Mr. Stok responded that students are approaching the proficiency level in LEARN. Proficiency on the Indiana Academic Standards and in the classroom are also targeted.
  5. Board Chair Bray asked the annual student retention grade. Mr. Stok said the student retention is eighty-seven percent for the year and it is steadily between eighty and ninety percent during his time at school.
  6. Board Chair Bray asked the organizer to speak on the demographics of their staff and whether the staff reflects the community served. Mr. Stok said the school conducted a study and about forty percent of staff is Black/African American.
  7. Board Chair Bray asked if the school conducts a parent satisfaction survey. Mr. Stok said yes. Board Chair Bray asked for the general parent satisfaction survey results. Mr. Stok said families are generally happy with the school.
  8. Board Member Hawkins asked what the school does with families to support student academic performance. Mr. Stok said the school has a family and community liaison that leads literacy night, parents come in and read to students, math night. Initially, the school tries to get parents into the school as much as possible.
  9. Board Member Hawkins asked how the school is attracting and retaining highly qualified teachers. Mr. Stok said the school is doing sign on bonuses, referral bonuses, paying for licensure, and partnering with local universities to grow staff from within.
- iv. Board decision
1. Board Member Jasaitis moved to accept the staff recommendation of a fifteen-year renewal. Board Member Gutman seconded the motion.
  2. Board Members Hawkins and Jasaitis voice voted aye.
  3. Board Member Austin, Greene, Bray, and Gutman voiced voted nay.
  4. Board Member Robinson Kramer and Shults were absent.
  5. Motion fails with two yeses and four nays.

6. Board Member Hawkins moved to accept the staff recommendation of a seven-year renewal. Board Member Gutman seconded the motion.
7. Board Members Bray, Gutman, Hawkins, Jasaitis, Austin, and Greene voice voted aye.
8. Board Member Robinson Kramer and Shults were absent.
9. Motion passed with six yeses and zero nays.

**III. Staff Updates**

- a. Board Ethics Training: Notification of biennial board ethics training is forthcoming for board members needing to complete the training in 2024.

**IV. Closing Remarks and Adjournment**

- a. Board Member Gutman motioned to adjourn. Board Member Greene seconded the motion.
- b. Board Members Bray, Gutman, Hawkins, Jasaitis, Austin, and Greene voice voted aye.
- c. Board Member Robinson Kramer and Board Member Shults were absent.
- d. Motion passes with six ayes and zero nays.
- e. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote at 12:58 p.m. ET.