



The Excel Center South Bend Application for Charter Renewal October 2024

Presented to the Indiana Charter School Board

By Goodwill LEADS, Inc.

Exhibit A

Application Checklist - Renewal

#	Document	Page Limit	Format	Completed
	Renewal Proposal Overview	Use Template in <u>Exhibit B</u>	PDF	
	Renewal Application	30	MS Word or PDF	
1	Budget and Staffing Workbook	Template	MS Excel	
2	Budget Narrative	5 pages	MS Word or PDF	
3	Statement of Assurances (only one form required)	Use Template in <u>Exhibit C</u>	PDF	
4	Entire Application (including Exhibits)		PDF	

Exhibit B

Renewal Application Overview

The applicant group's **designated representative** will serve as the contact for all communications, interviews, and notices from the ICSB regarding the submitted application.

Charter School Name: _____

Charter School Address: _____

Designated Representative and Contact Information (Phone & Email): _____

Mission Statement: _____

School Leader/Principal: _____

Current Board of Directors	

Grade Levels and Student Enrollment

Complete Tab 1 of either the Enrollment Plan for K-12 Schools or the Enrollment Plan for Adult High Schools, as applicable. Please ensure that you are completing the correct Enrollment Plan.

Identify ESP or partner organization (if applicable): _____

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mission and Vision

The vision of The Excel Center South Bend aligns with the mission of Goodwill Industries of Michiana, Inc.: *to empower individuals to live their most abundant life.*

At The Excel Center South Bend, we bring this mission to life by offering adults the educational opportunities and support services they need to earn the Indiana High School Core 40 diploma. Our focus is on empowering individuals to overcome barriers to education, helping them obtain their diplomas, and encouraging them to pursue further education or career advancement. We strategically identify the best career opportunities for our students through personalized career planning, while also aligning with local industry trends.

The Excel Center model is designed to meet students where they are in their lives, work, and family commitments. We achieve this by providing flexible scheduling and fostering supportive relationships with students, allowing them to effectively manage their responsibilities while achieving their educational goals. This holistic approach paves the way for a more abundant future, supported by the ongoing partnerships between life coaches and students.

The Excel Center South Bend is dedicated to connecting with the many students who drop out of high school each year, providing them with access to accelerated learning and opportunities for post-secondary education. Our goal is to open doors to higher-paying jobs with growth potential and improved career prospects. We aim to help individuals achieve stability and self-sufficiency through certification, empowering them to break the cycle of poverty for themselves, their families, and their communities.

The Excel Center South Bend warmly welcomes every student who enters its doors with an open mind and a judgment-free environment. We encourage students to focus on their future rather than their past, providing them with wraparound services through continuous coaching, supportive instructors, and community resources that utilize the school as a conduit for growth. Each day, students are greeted with smiles and a safe, nurturing learning atmosphere, made possible by the genuine care our staff has for every individual.

At The Excel Center South Bend, we are dedicated to our students' success. We prioritize rigorous instruction and engaging discussions, ensuring that learning materials are relevant to their adult lives. For instance, our economics class goes beyond numbers and statistics; we collaborate with local Lake City Bank to provide real-time data and scenarios that resonate with students personally. This partnership equips them with valuable knowledge about saving, paying down loans, and achieving financial stability.

In science, students benefit from teachers who deliver engaging and thought-provoking lessons that challenge their understanding. Everything we do at The Excel Center South Bend is aimed at enhancing the lives of the students we serve. We expect our diverse population to meet us halfway in their growth and to uphold a standard of mutual respect. Our conversations are genuine and ethical, fostering an atmosphere of trust and collaboration.

Upon graduation, students may leave behind the classroom, but they carry with them friendships and lasting memories of their efforts and the support they received along the way. Our mission of living the most abundant life begins here, in this safe, nonjudgmental, and engaging environment that opens minds and hearts every day. At The Excel Center South Bend, we believe that everyone who walks through our doors should leave better than when they arrived. Whether they stay for a day or a year, our goal is to help them become more confident, positive, and educated, with a renewed outlook on life's possibilities.

History

In 2014, the leadership of Goodwill Industries of Michiana, Inc. (GIM) established Goodwill LEADS, Inc. (GWL), a not-for-profit organization dedicated to operating charter schools. With authorization from the Indiana School Charter Board (ICSB), the first GIM Excel Center opened in South Bend in 2015, marking the beginning of GIM and GWL's journey in educational operation.

The Excel Center South Bend follows a licensed model from Goodwill Education Initiatives Inc. (GEI) and is designed specifically for adults who have struggled in traditional school settings. Our mission is to help these individuals re-engage with their education, earn their high school diplomas, and pursue higher education or fulfilling careers.

The community embraced the concept of GIM creating a pathway for adults to achieve their high school diplomas, thanks to GIM's strong reputation for helping individuals access education and employment. Many prospective students faced barriers such as fear of returning to school, transportation issues, and childcare challenges. To address these, the Excel Centers provide transportation support and onsite childcare, which operates under a High Scope curriculum in a safe environment, allowing student-parents to focus on their education without worry.

Located on the Goodwill Bendix campus, the Excel Center South Bend also houses The Academy, a center for Career and Technical Education (CTE) programming. This collaboration offers additional training opportunities to students and the community, including automotive training and certification, as well as certification in USIC. Future opportunities may include welding and CNC fabrication certifications. The success of the Excel Center South Bend served as a pilot model, leading to the establishment of additional sites in Gary, Hammond, and Elkhart, Indiana.

Chart 1: South Bend graduate numbers since opening of The Excel Center South Bend

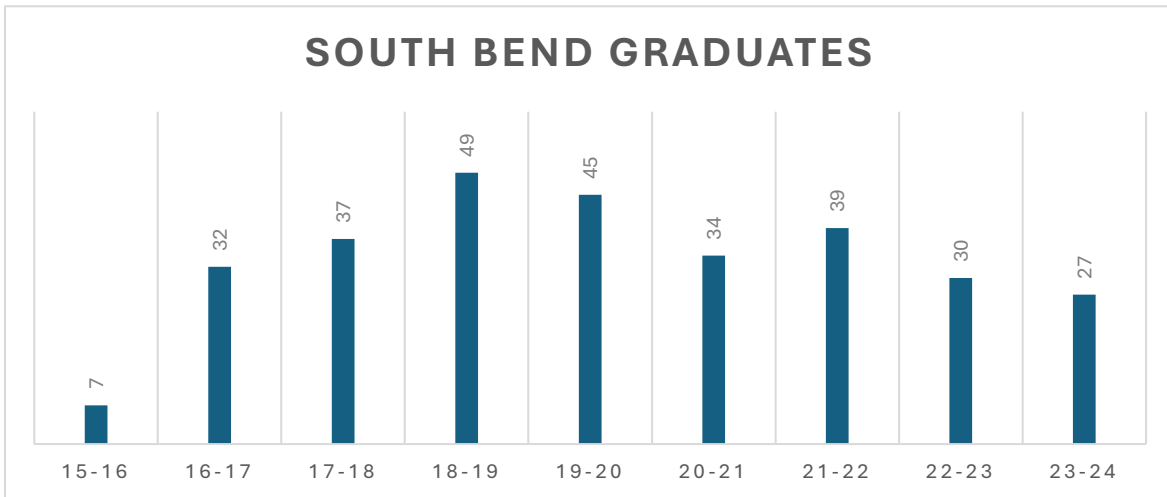
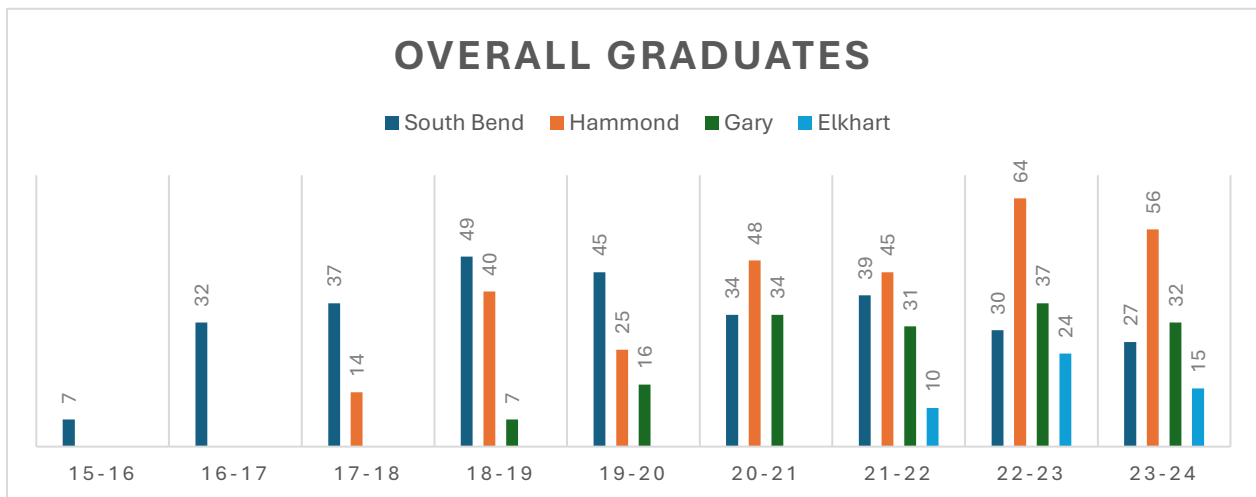


Chart 2: Overall graduate totals in GIM Excel Centers (Overall total: 799)



Community Need

Across the state, there are over 500,000 adult Hoosiers without a high school diploma or equivalency.¹ The Excel Center is filling the need to bring these students back into class and earning the credits required to obtain the Indiana Core 40 diploma. Referencing Stats Indiana, Indiana’s Public Data Utility, sourced by Indiana Department of Education & Indiana Business Research Center, numbers of high school dropouts from 2017 thru 2022 have continued to increase. In St. Joseph County, in 2022, the percentage of high school dropouts reached a rate of 4.1% of the state total.²

¹ U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey, estimates released February 2023.

² STATSINDIANA. Public High School Dropouts, released Sept. 2023.

Students leave school for many reasons, allowing public charter schools like The Excel Center South Bend to step in and support the ongoing learning that is needed. In St. Joseph County there are currently 21,699 (margin of error of $\pm 4,755$) individuals over the age of 18, without a high school diploma or equivalency.³ In St. Joseph County there are 19 adult charter high schools and Excel Center is one of them servicing students in earning their Indiana Core 40 diploma.

The impact of dropping out of high school extends beyond the individual without a high school diploma. There is also an impact on the economic stability of a local community. An individual who drops out of high school also has a number of challenges that affect his or her current well-being and future success. High school dropouts have worse health, lower incomes, and fewer job opportunities than the general population.⁴

GIM has established four Excel Centers and remains committed to serving communities in north central and northwestern Indiana. The Excel Center South Bend is recognized by the city and is a permanent fixture, seen as a stop for public transit as students are literally dropped at the door. The list of local partners has grown since post-covid and continues to expand as St. Joe County Public Library, YWCA, Christ Child Society and more have been added to the list of outreach partners in the local community.

Outcomes

During the 2020 school year, the nation and the world faced the challenges of a pandemic, which significantly impacted the South Bend Excel Center. As a result, the Excel Center South Bend was included on a list of schools deemed "Held Harmless" due to the widespread negative effects of COVID-19 on education. Throughout this challenge and since, The Excel Center remained committed to serving its student population and fulfilling its role as a vital resource for adult learners in the community.

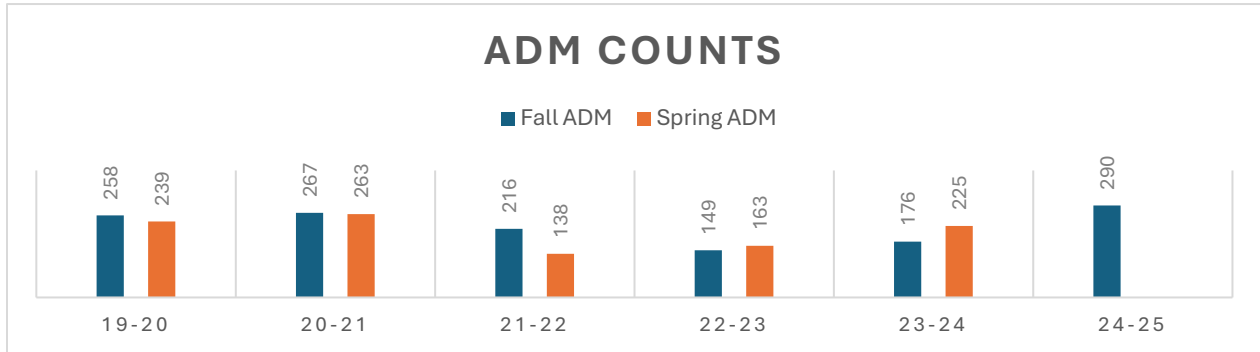
Initially, the Excel Center South Bend saw a slight increase in enrollment due to the school's ability to generate more off-campus and online engagement throughout the 2020-2021 school year. After, the Excel Center began to phase out its COVID related off-campus options to increase in-person student engagement during the 2021-2022 school year. Additionally, the Excel Center also underwent a change in leadership, as Mrs. LaPlace became school director during this time. Both of these contributed to a decrease in enrollment during this school year; however, the Excel Center has since been able to return to pre-2020 engagement numbers through its work and dedication to the community and student outcomes.

³ U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey, estimates released February 2023.

⁴ Gouskova, E. & Strafford, F. (2005). Trends in household wealth dynamics, 2001-2003. Ann Arbor. Institute for Social research, University of Michigan. Retrieved from https://psidonline.isr.umich.edu/Publications/Papers/tsp/2005-03_Trends_in_household_01_03_July_05.pdf

As of October 2024, the Excel Center South Bend has achieved its highest post-pandemic enrollment, with 290 students enrolled.

Chart 3: ADM totals for Excel Center South Bend Fall 2019 – Fall 2024



A third-party review of The Excel Center's impact has shown that students experience significant increases in both employment levels and earnings as a result of attending the school. Through evidenced-based evaluation, The Laboratory of Economic Opportunity (LEO) at the University of Notre Dame has found that graduating from The Excel Center has an overwhelmingly positive effect on both the student and the state. This effect includes: an increase in workplace participation, increased quarterly earnings, transition from retail and hospitality-based employment to healthcare and manufacturing, and that these effects are experienced by all graduates regardless of race, gender, or geography.⁵

A graduate from The Excel Center utilizes significantly less money per year in public spending among public assistance programs, leading to annual savings of \$793.60 per year per student and a total of \$1,898,291 in annual savings yielded by all graduates of The Excel Center in Indiana.⁶

According to the Excel Center – Bloomington, application for charter renewal 2023, GEI engaged in a project with LEO at Notre Dame University to evaluate outcomes of The Excel Center. There were many findings in the report that followed, including:

Excel Center graduates experience 40% increase in employment compared to before they enrolled, and a 20% greater workforce participation than their peers.

⁵ Brough+Phillips+Turner (2023). High Schools tailored to Adults Can Help Them Complete a Traditional Diploma and Excel in the Labor Market. Laboratory for Economic Opportunity, University of Notre Dame.

⁶ Center for Evaluation & Education Policy (March 2017). "The Excel Center Research Report". Indiana University. Bloomington, Indiana.

SECTION I – PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Successes

In 2021 Excel Center South Bend turned a new leaf and hired a new Superintendent. What followed was new staff and a fresh outlook on what the Excel mission is and how best to sustain it. Having a nearly complete staff turnover meant that staff had full buy-in to the vision of the director and belief in the processes being put in place to make Excel Center South Bend an outstanding opportunity for adults and the community. South Bend Excel was able to open the door to a relationship with South Bend Community Schools in 2021 with the addition of Rise Up Academy, Riley High School, Washington High School, and the South Bend Community School Corporation Virtual School. The recent additions to the Excel Center network in South Bend have brought fresh energy as new students filter into the school. With a new director and staff, The Excel Center South Bend united as a team, revitalizing recruitment efforts, enhancing in-class rigor, and improving the overall school climate.

Student enrollment continues to rise, post-pandemic, and staffing has increased to add additional instructors to meet the demands. Introducing a new revitalized curriculum adopted via GEI, proved a smooth transition as instructors embraced the curriculum wholeheartedly. The Excel Center South Bend has completed full implementation of the curriculum and continues to embrace new methodologies that support engaging and highly relevant material for our adult learners.

In 2022 the addition of a collaborative partnership with the Saint Joseph County Police Department (SJCPD) opened a new door to provide the community with more opportunities to those who are sitting in situations of incarceration. Since the pilot of this program, we have awarded 151 credits to those temporarily housed at the SJCPD. The introduction of a new Multi-Lingual Learner (MLL) course twice a week in the evenings has begun to show growth in South Bend. This is only possible as the addition of a bilingual instructor sprouted enthusiasm for the possibility of additional programming. In 2023-2024 we added a social studies instructor, the first in the network and 2024-2025 added a remedial instructor to the team as collectively we are meeting our students' academic needs where they are. In 2024-2025, we began the year with a fully staffed team for the first time in years, a testament to the effort invested in creating a positive work environment and fostering a unified team. As the post-COVID student population continues to evolve at The Excel Center South Bend, the staff has been intentional in preparing to meet the diverse needs of both the students and each other.

Performance Dashboard Summary Measures Not Meeting or Exceeding Standard

The Excel Center South Bend is currently not meeting the expectation for several indicators, including:

- 1.1.a Attendance Rate
- 1.2.a In Cohort
- 1.2.b Grade 12

Financial Accountability Metrics, including:

- Days Cash on Hand
- Annual Enrollment Change
- Change in Net Assets Margin
- Aggregated Three Year Margin
- Cash Flow
- Multi-year Cash Flow
- Debt Service Coverage Ratio

1.1.a Attendance Rate

When describing the typical Excel Center South Bend student, it's evident that our students come from all demographics, ranging from low-income to middle-income, and some with no income at all. We have students who identify as McKinney-Vento (homeless), as well as those facing disabilities, struggles with addiction, incarceration, eviction, and other challenges. Students range in age from 18 to 80 years of age. We have single independent individuals and those living in a two-bedroom house with thirteen family members. Our students are parents, children, adults, and all of them require support. Our diverse student population faces numerous barriers. They often struggle with competing priorities, such as school, family, paying bills, and many other responsibilities. What takes precedence in students' lives is an ongoing battle. As a school, we've addressed transportation and childcare as significant obstacles. We have also established a new partnership with Cultivate Food to provide our students with breakfast and lunch daily. However, many students still choose not to attend school. This is not just an issue in South Bend; it is a chronic problem nationwide.

In the article, "Why School Absences Have 'Exploded' Almost Everywhere" written by Sarah Mervosh and Francesca Paris, March 29, 2024 and printed by the New York Times, there is a correlation between absenteeism and the mindset of the current student. In the years since the pandemic, schools have been trying to get students back into the classrooms. "[...]perhaps no issue has been as stubborn and pervasive as a sharp increase in student absenteeism, a problem that cuts across demographics and has continued long after schools reopened." The problem is nationwide.⁷ According to the article, the definition of chronic absenteeism is a student missing 10% of the school year or about 18 days, for any reason.⁸ A term at The Excel Center South Bend is typically 29-32 days. Using the provided definition of chronic absenteeism, an Excel Center student would

⁷ Mervosh and Paris, "Why School Absences Have 'Exploded' Almost Everywhere."

⁸ Mervosh and Paris, "Why School Absences Have 'Exploded' Almost Everywhere."

not make it through a single term without being withdrawn for poor attendance. “Nationally, an estimated 26 percent of public-school students, up from 15 percent pre-pandemic are considered to fall into the category of students that are demonstrating chronic absenteeism. This is not an issue just for younger students. This is a problem that is reaching the nation and all demographics and age groups. Poorer communities are seeing even higher percentages as the importance of school has taken a back seat to paying the bills, supervising younger siblings, and employment possibilities. St. Joseph County, specifically South Bend, has felt the trend of student absenteeism hard. Attending school was once viewed as a non-negotiable for families with children. Graduating from High School was once a celebrated benchmark and a steppingstone to a young adult’s future. The time is now for changing the mindset back to what it once was.

In addition to daily life and changed mindsets, the dynamic of an Excel Center South Bend student can be complex. Issues with mental health, low skill sets, and lack of outside support keeps many students from finding the success they seek. Every student and potential student want to know how long this will take them. The answer we offer is always the same. “There is no one answer that fits all.” The Excel Center offers an accelerated learning environment, but it is a model that only works when all factors are aligned and working cohesively. Regular attendance is one factor that we push constantly as a key ingredient in being successful and timely.

Strategy: The Excel Center South Bend looks at attendance as an ongoing struggle. We have put strategies in place that are relevant to our population, such as offering free transportation, flexible scheduling, and an easy return policy. Three additional facets we address are: dealing with basic needs, rewarding good behavior, and continuing to track the outreach for students when addressing attendance concerns. The Excel Center continues to offer resources to students that are seeking outside support for mental health, medical assistance, housing assistance, childcare and more. Every student is looked at with eyes wide open and provided the same resources as any other student. Concerns of housing instability, food insecurity and basic needs, are addressed through community outreach, Goodwill services, and donations. We strive to offer a safe learning environment that offers more to each student than if they stay at home. When students take advantage of the services we can offer, it is much easier to keep them in class. In addition, the school has implemented an award system for students who are achieving in classes. Awards are based not only on grades but also on attendance. For some students, this is the first time they have received such an award, and it makes them feel proud. We have received positive feedback, including comments like, “I haven’t gotten an award like this since middle school,” from Perry Wingard, and “I am going to hang this up on my wall when I get home,” remarked Kimberly Herron. By publicly acknowledging achievements, other students can see what success and recognition look like. This demonstrates that when students attend school and receive support from teachers, coaches, and staff, rewards are attainable. It also provides an opportunity for individuals to recognize potential in themselves and others. The Excel Center actively tracks outreach efforts from teachers, coaches, and staff, which include

phone calls, text messages, mailers, and even home visits for students who are not attending class. This demonstration of care and commitment to students makes a significant difference. “I never had anyone come to my house when I missed school. It means a lot,” stated Angel Agnew.

1.2.a In Cohort

The Excel Center South Bend is located on the west side of the city, surrounded by neighborhoods and a nearby high school. However, students enroll from all over, typically within a 10-15 mile radius of the school. While the primary reason students choose to enroll is to earn a high school diploma, there are various reasons why they did not finish under the traditional model. Students come to the Excel Center South Bend as parents, having experienced incarceration, recovering from illness, facing separation, lacking confidence, dealing with bullying, coping with the death of a loved one, or being new to the country, or many of a multitude of reasons. When students enroll, most have attended a high school for at least a short time prior. Some may have spent four years in a traditional high school but then lack the required credits needed to earn an Indiana Core 40 diploma. This means graduating with their projected cohort is not a possibility. A student enrolling with 30 or more credits is atypical. At the Excel Center, students can take four courses during an 8-week term. Even with 30 credits, a student would need to complete a minimum of three terms to reach the point of earning a certification and graduating. This requires meeting all requirements for boxes 1-2-3, which include 40 required credits, a college and career readiness course, and an earned dual credit or industry-recognized certification. Additionally, the level of transiency within the student population at the Excel Center South Bend is significantly higher than in traditional high schools, as there are no compulsory attendance laws to follow. Adult students often face additional barriers that typical high school students do not encounter. These challenges can include the need to work, caring for sick children, personal illness, legal issues, lack of family support, low motivation, lack of confidence, housing concerns, and more. Any of these factors can prevent a student from achieving their projected goal of graduating with their cohort.

At Excel Center South Bend, we do not impose a time limit on when a student must graduate; our focus is on ensuring they do graduate. When students know that we care about them as individuals, they are more likely to return when life allows. While graduating is crucial, we recognize that mental health and a strong foundation are essential for success. Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs applies to individuals of all ages.

Furthermore, Excel Center South Bend has experienced an increase in the number of students enrolling with limited or no foundational skills, which would typically prepare them for at least a freshman-level English or math course. Many students have to be placed in remedial courses to support their learning just to prepare them to be at a level of understanding that meets the most basic levels of instructional awareness. What is tailored as an accelerated curriculum becomes a much slower pace to meet the needs of

every student. The Excel Center South Bend is always in competition with outside factors for students' time and focus. This is why we keep our doors open for students to return when life allows. This means that cohort or not the opportunity to get a high school diploma is still a viable possibility.

Strategy: The Excel Center South Bend will continue to enroll students regardless of their position within a cohort. The school does not discriminate based on traditional cohort definitions; instead, we meet students where they are and help facilitate a personalized path that fits their needs and timeline. Our goal is to support every student in reaching the finish line when they are ready. If a student withdraws and later decides to re-enroll, we welcome them back with open arms. The Excel Center will continue to offer a rigorous curriculum that meets the demands of the world, positioning students for success in higher education or careers, so that every student can lead a more abundant life.

Additionally, the Excel Center South Bend will continue to collaborate with local school corporations, including South Bend Community School Corporation, Goshen High School, Purdue Polytechnic High School, Penn Harris Madison Schools, and LaVille High School, to identify students who are not meeting the requirements necessary to graduate within their projected cohorts. This proactive approach allows The Excel Center to support these students earlier and ideally help them progress more quickly toward graduation.

However, this effort can be a hard sell for other school corporations. The typical response is that enrollment referrals tend to spike shortly after the state count is completed each year. Changing the mindsets of local high schools will be challenging, but it presents an opportunity for significant enrollment growth at the Excel Center South Bend. While others may never fully move beyond viewing each student solely through a financial lens, we hope to foster a broader understanding of individual growth, community development, and the importance of education.

During the 2023-24 school year, The Excel Center of Michiana collaborated with ICSB and the other adult high schools to establish equal and fair metrics for adult high schools, providing a more accurate alternative to the current IDOE GPS measures. This collaboration is known as "A Game." The key areas under consideration are:

1. **Course Completion:** A trial run will be conducted to measure course completion by comparing the number of students enrolled in a class (denominator) to those who complete the course (numerator). Only students who complete the term and have attended at least 90% of the term will be included.
2. **EL Subgroup:** This will be a subset of course completion data, tracking how English Learners (EL) students, regardless of age, perform in course completions compared to the overall population.

3. 1-Year Graduation Rate: The metric will measure students who are on grade level but have fewer than 10 credits on count day, comparing them to the total graduates within the school year. This measure also requires a trial run to refine it.
4. CCR Readiness: The College and Career Readiness (CCR) metric will include more options allowed under adult accountability, and it will be calculated using the same methods.

These trial metrics aim to ensure a comprehensive and fair evaluation of adult high school performance.

1.2.b Grade 12

The identification of 12th-grade students has been a topic of discussion among leadership. When a student enrolls at The Excel Center South Bend, they may be assigned to a cohort from a previous school, have been out of school for an extended period, or may have never attended high school. As The Excel Center serves students classified within grades 9-12, many enroll with a designation of 11th or 12th grade. However, because the label of 12th grade is tied to a student's proximity to graduation, The Excel Center now assesses their current academic standing—specifically their course progress and credits—before classifying them as a 12th grader.

Students are now considered 12th graders and potential graduates if they are enrolled in the Senior Seminar (CCR) course and are within 2-3 terms of completing their graduation requirements. Typically, this means they need 10 or fewer credits to graduate. Recognizing the differences between adult learners entering The Excel Center and traditional high school freshmen, we had to redefine how we identify 12th-grade students based on the Indiana Core 40 diploma requirements.

Unlike traditional high schools, adult education does not have fixed cohorts. In the past, The Excel Center South Bend reclassified students when they transferred between life coaches, but this practice faded after staff turnover. Students preferred having the same life coach throughout their time at the school, leading to a gradual shift in the process. However, this change also caused some students to be incorrectly identified as 11th-grade graduates instead of 12th graders.

Strategy: The Excel Center South Bend will classify any student who has earned 30 or more Core 40 credits as a grade 12 student. This approach ensures life coaches can maintain a direct focus on helping potential graduates meet their requirements in a timely manner. By using credits as the sole indicator for grade 12 classification, the process eliminates the risk of misidentification.

It is important to note that grade identification does not impact overall student performance. While accurate identification may positively influence graduation rates, it

does not determine individual student success. The Excel Center South Bend remains committed to transparent and ethical data practices, adhering to the prescribed method for identifying grade 12 students. This practice has had a noticeable effect on the Adult High School Accountability Metrics from the IDOE. For example, the Grade 12 indicator 1.2.b increased from 45.45% in 2020 to 53.97% in 2021, and reached 162.50% in 2022.

SECTION II- SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

(1) Sustain and build academic, organizational, and operational success over the next charter term.

- a. Governing board**
- b. Leadership team**
- c. Teaching staff**
- d. Academic achievement**

A. Governing Board

The Excel Center South Bend will reassess its procedures and protocols to better identify and address students' non-academic needs, while also focusing on literacy deficiencies that many students face. It is crucial to first meet students' basic needs, in line with Maslow's Hierarchy, and support their mental health in order to help them succeed both in school and in life. By partnering with community organizations and utilizing available resources, the school can enhance student retention and support pathways to higher education or careers. Current support services, though adequate, must be elevated to exceptional standards. While the community is rich in external resources, there is a gap in effectively identifying and leveraging these services for the population we serve. Life coaches, instructors, and staff are limited by their capacity, making professional development critical in areas such as poverty and education, understanding adult learners, and empowering students to become strong self-advocates. However, professional development alone will not meet all student needs. As the school grows, there may be a need to introduce a social worker to provide additional support.

Furthermore, the Excel Center South Bend aims to enhance learning opportunities for students who enter the program with literacy levels below that of a typical ninth grader (with a Lexile score of 1000). Introducing a course focused on bridging the adult literacy gap will better prepare underprepared students for academic success.

Looking ahead, the school aims to increase enrollment beyond its current building capacity of 350 by the 2026-2027 school year. With this growth, additional staffing can be procured to meet students' expanding needs. To truly fulfill the mission of helping individuals live their most abundant lives and support each student in earning a Core 40 diploma and industry certification, these essential elements must be addressed.

The governing body of The Excel Centers of Michiana is the Goodwill L.E.A.D.S. (GWL) Board of Directors, which is dedicated to the success and continuous growth of The Excel Center South Bend and the positive impact its graduates have on the surrounding communities. Since the school's opening, The Excel Center South Bend has achieved significant success, leading to the establishment of three additional centers: The Excel Center Gary, The Excel Center Hammond, and The Excel Center Elkhart. In collaboration with Goodwill Education Initiatives, Inc. (GEI) in southern Indiana, GWL has expanded educational opportunities across Northern Indiana. GWL serves as the governing authority for all four Northern Excel Centers, with a strong commitment to maintaining high operational and performance standards.

The GWL board comprises individuals with diverse expertise in areas such as industry, public policy, finance, and workforce development. Board members bring a wealth of experience from not-for-profit organizations and possess deep knowledge of the local community, industry, and education sectors.

Board members choose to serve for various reasons, including a desire to improve educational opportunities in their communities, a belief in the mission of Goodwill Industries of Michiana (GIM), and a dedication to serving others. Their work is guided by five key principles: Learn, Educate, Advance, Develop, and Students (LEADS). Their focus is not only on creating meaningful, engaging learning opportunities for adult students but also on ensuring their post-graduation success. This commitment drives GWL and GIM to expand Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and form partnerships with organizations like the Center for Workforce Innovation (CWI). With support from GWL and GIM, students receive the training necessary to move beyond merely "getting by" and into a path of "abundant living."

The GWL board plays a vital role in overseeing the success of The Excel Centers, with responsibilities that include:

- Establishing policies
- Approving annual plans
- Budget approval
- Monitoring key performance indicators (KPIs)
- Ensuring financial stability
- Overseeing compliance with laws, regulations, contracts, and charters

GWL's commitment to continuous improvement drives its evaluative approach, ensuring that all services provided to the school meet quality expectations, add value, and align with the goal of being responsible stewards of state and federal resources. This oversight helps students reach their full potential.

Communication between the GWL board and The Excel Center administration is essential. The superintendent provides weekly updates on successes, curriculum practices, safety, and community engagement. Additionally, the board meets quarterly with the four local directors to review data, make informed decisions, and implement best practices across the network. This collaborative approach ensures that the board remains fully engaged in the ongoing success and growth of The Excel Centers.

B. Leadership Team

A strong leadership team is crucial to maintaining the success of The Excel Center South Bend. The leadership team, along with the entire staff, works with a high level of collegiality and collaboration. Transparency and shared decision-making are key factors in our effectiveness.

The South Bend leadership team includes:

- **School Director:** Melissa LaPlace
- **Office Manager:** Rachel Schrock
- **Lead Coach:** Joe Arredondo
- **College & Career Readiness Coach:** Nick Pittman
- **Lead Teacher:** Jeff Suttor
- **Special Education Coordinator:** Robert Guerrero

The school-based leadership team meets weekly to review performance, analyze data, and address current events, and trends at the school. We take a collaborative approach to problem-solving and continually seeks growth and improvement. This team is deeply committed to the mission of serving others and takes pride in the school's potential. As stakeholders in our students' success, we work together to provide the best support for each individual.

Our leadership is further strengthened by the ongoing support of Superintendent Dr. Christopher Alber, who visits the school weekly to answer questions, offer guidance, and recognize the positive efforts of the South Bend team.

C. Teaching Staff

At The Excel Center South Bend, the teaching staff is supported by Lead Teacher Jeff Suttor, who plays a vital role as a professional instructional coach, testing coordinator, safety specialist, and more. Jeff facilitates weekly teacher meetings and provides assistance to both teachers and staff whenever needed. Our open-door policy fosters a collaborative environment, ensuring that any staff member can seek support from another on any issue. The teaching staff also share meals daily, where they discuss challenges and develop solutions together as a cohesive team. Additionally, they collaborate with

colleagues from other locations, exchanging insights on effective strategies, what hasn't worked, and exploring new approaches.

Leadership and teachers work closely to identify student needs and deliver personalized instruction. This approach goes beyond current educational trends, taking into account the whole student, by understanding their lives both inside and outside the classroom. Our goal is to achieve the best possible outcomes for students, both before and after graduation.

D. Academic Achievement

The Excel Center model concentrates on College and Career Readiness and coaching support designed to lift students above barriers that can hold them back from achieving academic success. Students enroll at Excel Centers with varying skill sets and commitments. Excel offers flexible programming that allows students to work around their schedules and needs. This is why there is no one schedule that fits all. Each student has an education plan that fits their unique needs, which begins with a simple credit tracking form and transcript evaluation from the beginning of their enrollment. (See Artefact 1.)

Students are encouraged to be empowered and advocate for their learning, and to see the relevance of an education as a means to higher paying and more fulfilling careers and/or higher education. At The Excel Center South Bend, students are provided opportunities in a mature, adult-focused learning environment tailored to meet their unique needs. Classes run for 90 minutes each, with four periods a day, supporting an accelerated pace through shorter terms. With five 8-week terms each school year and minimal time between terms, students can progress quickly. The streamlined registration process includes enrollment, orientation, paperwork, and testing, all completed in a single session lasting about three hours. From there, coaches design individualized graduation plans that guide each student toward earning their Indiana Core 40 diploma, along with industry-recognized certifications or college credits.

The smaller school setting fosters strong relationships between students, coaches, teachers, and staff, who provide personalized encouragement and support. To address learning gaps, remedial courses offer elective credits and essential preparation for grade-level coursework, helping students build confidence and progress at their own pace toward graduation.

The Excel Center South Bend aligns with Indiana Academic Standards and the evolving needs of Michiana's industries. Employability skills are woven into the curriculum, ensuring that students recognize how mastery of core subjects can enhance their future careers. The academic environment equips students with self-advocacy, organizational skills, time management, and a sense of responsibility—key elements in achieving post-secondary success and living a more fulfilling life.

Continuous Improvement

The Excel Center model allows the opportunity for people to re-engage with education and take advantage of wrap around services so they can earn a high school diploma and industry certification. Many individuals struggle to step back into the educational arena for many reasons.⁹ In the article “Common Barriers for Adult Learners and How They Overcome Them,” several key obstacles are highlighted: family and work obligations can make it difficult for adults to balance their responsibilities with education, such as finding affordable childcare. Financial constraints often limit access to training, and a lack of time can make it hard to commit to a program. Additionally, adults may doubt their academic ability, fearing they won't succeed. At The Excel Center South Bend, we actively work to remove these barriers for our students. For those with low credit attainment due to skill gaps, we offer remediation to help them succeed in core courses. We also provide flexibility in scheduling, allowing students to take one class or multiple per term, and even offer childcare for parents who need it.

Life's challenges can sometimes derail students' progress, but our coaches and teachers work diligently to build strong, supportive relationships. These connections help students manage frustrations, regain confidence, and stay focused on both school and personal life. These bonds are crucial when students face setbacks or feel overwhelmed, as they ensure that students remain motivated and supported.

While most students return to The Excel Center South Bend to earn their diploma, many haven't yet considered their career or educational paths after graduation. That's why we emphasize helping students design their own future goals. We introduce them to high-growth, in-demand industries where stable employment and career advancement are possible. Our ultimate goal is to prepare individuals for self-sufficiency. A diploma is the first step, but we also stress the importance of earning additional credentials for long-term employability in today's job market.

At The Excel Center South Bend, data-driven decision-making is at the heart of our approach. We review weekly reports on attendance, retention, productivity, and credits earned vs. attempted. Leadership meetings ensure that teachers and staff stay informed and aligned with the school's pulse. During staff meetings, we discuss potential graduates, retention rates, and productivity, addressing at-risk students and determining the best support strategies. We also celebrate student achievements and reinforce best practices. Coaches' meetings focus on graduate needs, certifications, one-on-one support, scheduling, retention, and community outreach, ensuring a holistic approach to student success.

⁹ Trest, “Common Barriers for Adult Learners and How to Overcome Them.”

Strengths, Weaknesses, and Challenges

The Excel Center South Bend continues to grow both in staff experience and student diversity. The partnership with the St. Joseph County Probation Department (SJCPD) has proven successful each term, providing opportunities for individuals who may not have had the chance to earn high school credits before enrolling at The Excel Center. The expansion of our social media presence reflects a growing awareness of who Excel is and what it has to offer. We've also established new partnerships, including collaborations with seven local high schools, allowing us to better serve the needs of area students.

Starting the school year fully staffed has been a major strength, enabling us to effectively meet students where they are and provide the support they need from day one. A new partnership with Cultivate Food now provides free meals for students and their families, addressing one of the basic needs from Maslow's Hierarchy. Additionally, the Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs through The Academy continue to show growth, with multiple students earning certifications through this Goodwill initiative. The Excel Center South Bend has now returned to pre-pandemic enrollment numbers and continues to grow.

Despite many strengths, The Excel Center South Bend still faces challenges. Student retention and the ratio of credits earned versus attempted remain areas of concern. Addressing the various aspects of students' lives is complex, and maintaining motivation continues to be a barrier to growth. Staff turnover has also been an issue as the school underwent a rebuilding phase. The departure of a strong bilingual coach coincided with a decline in bilingual student enrollment, and the school faced a difficult climate transition that affected the entire community.

Tackling these challenges has required a step-by-step approach. Securing a strong, unified staff became a top priority. With the potential for more turnover as staff near retirement, leadership is proactively planning for the future, preparing to fill key roles like the Special Education Teacher of Record (TOR) and network coordinator well in advance. For students enrolling below the freshman level, supportive elective courses are now being offered to help build confidence and prepare them for success. This keeps students engaged and encourages them to return. As part of our ongoing effort to support students where they are, we are also focusing on professional development to equip educators with best practices for working with at-risk adult learners.

Our partnership with Cultivate Food is crucial in addressing one of the most basic needs—nutrition. By providing free meals, we help students stay focused in the classroom, and we will maintain this partnership as long as it serves student needs. To sustain our evening English Immersion course, we plan to conduct a needs assessment in the community to identify potential students and bring them in. Furthermore, we are seeking new partnerships to address students' mental health needs, a critical area that has grown since

the pandemic. Despite the shortage of resources in the community, we are committed to finding solutions to support students' emotional well-being.

The Excel Center South Bend, which opened in 2015, showed consistent success before the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2021. Since then, it has been steadily regaining its footing. Although the road has been challenging, the future is bright. The school now has a safe, welcoming atmosphere that was missing for a time, along with a cohesive, dedicated staff who believe in the mission of Goodwill and The Excel Center model. We've earned the respect of local school corporations and built lasting partnerships. The name "Excel Center" is starting to resonate in the community, with word of mouth and ongoing marketing efforts taking root.

The Excel Center South Bend provides a safe, judgment-free space for adults to pursue their education. Here, students are embraced and supported by every stakeholder. They also support one another's learning and share their positive experiences outside of school. It's the stories of past graduates and current students that keep our doors swinging, and it's the dedication of the people behind the mission that keeps students open-minded and strong. South Bend has always had great things happening, and The Excel Center is now finding its place on the map of this remarkable city.

SECTION III: PROPOSED CHANGES

There are no proposed changes to the charter agreement at this time.

BUDGET NARRATIVE

State Funding:

State funding through the Adult Learners appropriation is assumed to remain at \$6,750 per student during the following years. Based on the growth our school has shown over the past 3 years, we anticipate occupied seats to rise to 350 in the upcoming years.

Other Funding:

We periodically receive outside donations that we include as other funding sources for the South Bend - Excel Center. For example, we have received \$25,000 this year from a donor for our Box 3 certifications.

Financial Accountability Metrics

During the application process we identified a couple of irregularities with regards to the balance sheet metrics. In particular, assets are showing a large decrease of assets from 2023 through 2024; however, we believe, as part of our audit, adjustments will be made to the internal balance sheet. Overall, the four schools are in their best financial position in their history.

Salaries/Wages

Salaries and wages were budgeted to assume a 10% increase annually with the number of students rising each year. As of June, we had budgeted 210 seats, however, when the ADM count was done in October we are currently at 270 seats.

Instructional Supplies and Resources

The current year budget was used to develop the projected figures, assuming a 5% increase for years 1-3, dropping to 4% in years 4 and 5. This assumes an above average inflation rate for the next 3 years and then reducing to a more historical, albeit elevated, inflation rate.

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- Mervosh, Sarah, and Francesca Paris. "Why School Absences Have 'Exploded' Almost Everywhere." *The New York Times*, March 29, 2024. Accessed October 3, 2024. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2024/03/29/us/chronic-absences.html>
- STATSINDIANA. Public High School Dropouts, released September 2023.
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- U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey, estimates released February 2023.

Core 40 Requirement Tracking Sheet

Student Name:	<input type="text"/>	Which site:	South Bend
Date Evaluated:	<input type="text"/>	Evaluated By:	<input type="text"/>
Last Update:	<input type="text"/>	Grad Audit By:	<input type="text"/>

	English/Reading	Algebra/Math	Biology
DATE OF TEST	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
PLACEMENT	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Additional Grad Reqs:	CCR <input type="text"/>	Senior Seminar	<input type="text"/>

English:

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
				<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> / 8

Math:

Algebra I	<input type="text"/>	Geometry	<input type="text"/>	Algebra II	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Algebra I	<input type="text"/>	Geometry	<input type="text"/>	Algebra II	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
						<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> / 6

Science:

ICP/Chemistry/Physics	<input type="text"/>	BIOLOGY	<input type="text"/>	EAS SCI I	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
ICP/Chemistry/Physics	<input type="text"/>	BIOLOGY	<input type="text"/>	EAS SCI I	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
						<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> / 6

Social Studies:

U.S. History	<input type="text"/>	Government	<input type="text"/>	WLD HIST CVL/GEO HST WLD	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
U.S. History	<input type="text"/>	Economics	<input type="text"/>	WLD HIST CVL/GEO HST WLD	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
						<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> / 6

Physical Education/ Health:

Physical ed	<input type="text"/>	Physical Ed	<input type="text"/>	Health/Wellness	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
						<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> / 3

Directed Electives (World Languages, Fine Arts, Career-Technical):

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
						<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> / 5

Electives:

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
						<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> / 6

Extra Electives:

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
						<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> / 40

Credits Needed 40

Graduation Plan

Term 4	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Night/Other

Term 5					Night/Other

Term 1					Night/Other

Term 2					Night/Other

Term 3					Night/Other

Term 4					Night/Other

Term 5					Night/Other

Term 1					Night/Other

Term					Night/Other

Term					Night/Other

Term					Night/Other

This plan is subject to change due to not earning credits, availability, and classes available.

PLATO Class List				

Exhibit C

Statement of Assurances

The charter school agrees to comply with the following provisions: *(Read and check)*

- 1. A resolution or motion has been adopted by the charter school applicant's governing body that authorizes the submission of this application, including all understanding and assurances contained herein, directing and authorizing the applicant's designated representative to act in connection with the application and to provide such additional information as required.
- 2. Recipients operate (or will operate if not yet open) a charter school in compliance with all federal and state laws, including Indiana Charter Schools Law as described in all relevant sections of Indiana Code ("IC") § 20-24.
- 3. Recipients will, for the life of the charter, participate in all data reporting and evaluation activities as required by the Indiana Charter School Board ("ICSB") and the Indiana Department of Education. See in particular IC § 20-20-8-3 and relevant sections of IC § 20-24.
- 4. Recipients will comply with all relevant federal laws including, but not limited to, the *Age Discrimination in Employment Act* of 1975, Title VI of the *Civil Rights Act* of 1964, Title IX of the *Education Amendments of 1972*, section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act* of 1973, Part B of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, and section 427 of the *General Education Provision Act*.
- 5. Recipients receiving federal Charter School Program Grant funds will comply with all provisions of the Non regulatory Guidance—Public Charter Schools Program of the U.S. Department of Education, which includes the use of a lottery for enrollment if the charter school is oversubscribed, as well as with applicable Indiana law. See also relevant sections of IC § 20-24.
- 6. Recipients shall ensure that a student's records, and, if applicable, a student's individualized education program as defined at 20 U.S.C. § 1401(14) of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, will follow the student, in accordance with applicable federal and state law.
- 7. Recipients will comply with all provisions of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015*, including but not limited to, provisions on school prayer, the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act, the Armed Forces Recruiter Access to Students and Student Recruiting Information, the Unsafe School Choice Option, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and assessments.
- 8. Recipients will operate with the organizer serving in the capacity of fiscal agent for the charter school and in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles.

- 9. Recipients will at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.
- 10. Recipients will indemnify and hold harmless the ICSB, the State of Indiana, all school corporations providing funds to the charter school (if applicable), and their officers, directors, agents and employees, and any successors and assigns from any and all liability, cause of action, or other injury or damage in any way relating to the charter school or its operation.
- 11. Recipients understand that the ICSB may revoke the charter if the ICSB deems that the recipient is not fulfilling the academic goals, fiscal management, or legal and operational responsibilities outlined in the charter.

Signature from Authorized Representative of the Charter School Applicant

I, the undersigned, am an authorized representative of the charter school applicant and do hereby certify that the information submitted in this application is accurate and true to the best of my knowledge and belief. In addition, I do hereby certify to the assurances contained above.

Name

Dr. Christopher Alber

Signature

Title

Date



South Bend Community School Corporation
747 W. Beale Street
South Bend, IN 46616

October 12, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of Rise Up Academy, an alternative high school within the South Bend Community School Corporation, I would like to extend our full support for The Excel Center South Bend as they seek renewal of their charter. Our schools have developed a unique collaborative partnership that has greatly benefited both our students and the broader South Bend community.

Working with The Excel Center South Bend has opened doors for our transitioning students who may otherwise have had limited opportunities even in an alternative high school setting. Many of the students who come through Rise Up Academy have faced significant challenges in traditional educational environments. Through our shared efforts, students who have struggled in our alternative high school setting now have access to personalized educational pathways that meet more of their individual needs.

This partnership exemplifies the positive impact of having a school like The Excel Center South Bend in our community. Their tailored approach to face-to-face instruction and their commitment to academic and personal success offer students a lifeline when they need it most. We value the shared understanding and expectations between our two entities, and the results speak for themselves—students who might otherwise have been left behind are now thriving.

We are proud to stand alongside The Excel Center South Bend in its mission to provide high-quality education to those who need it most, and we are confident that our continued collaboration will yield even greater success in the future.

Thank you for considering this letter of support. I look forward to continuing our collaborative work in the years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph Somers".

Joseph Somers

Administrator

South Bend Community School Corporation



Polytechnic High School

Indiana Charter School Board
143 West Market Street, Suite 300
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Members of the Indiana Charter School Board,

I am writing to express my strong support for the renewal of the charter for the Excel Center in South Bend. The Excel Center provides a crucial service to our community, offering adults the opportunity to earn their Indiana Core 40 high school diploma, a significant step toward career advancement and personal growth. The flexible scheduling, supportive staff, and resources such as free child care and transportation assistance make it possible for students to overcome life barriers and succeed academically.

The Excel Center's mission—to meet students where they are—has had a transformative impact on individuals who previously struggled to complete their education due to personal, professional, or financial challenges. The Excel Center's tailored approach, which includes access to industry-recognized certifications and dual credit opportunities, equips its graduates with the tools needed to pursue post-secondary education and career pathways.

Since opening in 2015, the Excel Center in South Bend has supported hundreds of adults annually, helping them achieve their academic and career goals in a nurturing, flexible environment. The school's emphasis on building relationships, addressing diverse needs, and offering practical resources has been invaluable to our community.

Renewing the Excel Center's charter will allow it to continue this essential work, fostering education and workforce development in South Bend. I strongly urge you to approve the renewal of its charter and support its ongoing mission of empowerment through education.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Justin Zobrosky". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Justin Zobrosky, Principal
Purdue Polytechnic High School South Bend

Melissa LaPlace

From: Justin Neilson <justinwilliamneilson@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 14, 2024 9:55 AM
To: Melissa LaPlace
Subject: [External] Letter for Excel

[WARNING] This message originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content to be safe.

When I first started excel I didn't care much about school. The individual help from staff and the life coaches showed me the better person I could become. I discovered a love of learning and teaching and I even gave the speech at my graduation. I am currently a student at iusb in honors program with a 4.0 gpa. Every year I become a more valuable part of this community and I wouldn't have made it anywhere without the excel center.

Melissa LaPlace

From: Natasha Stoner <natashastoner28@icloud.com>
Sent: Friday, October 11, 2024 1:16 PM
To: Melissa LaPlace
Subject: [External] Positive letter

[WARNING] This message originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content to be safe.

Where to start.... When I started going to the excel center I was in a really rough place. The excel center and all the staff really had my back and never gave up on me. Mrs.Laplace and my Life coach Jeff who is not there anymore always encouraged me! I didn't start getting my act together until the year 2021 when everything hit me, all the caring they had and even all the words of encouragement. I was able to get out of the bad situation I was in because of this school they helped changed my life for the better! Now I'm working as a mental health tech at Indiana center For Recovery helping other people through their bad times. This school is the best thing that ever happened to me!! If there is ever a time you need someone to come talk to the students I will be there! I really appreciate everything they have done for me!
Sent from my iPhone

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you as a proud former graduate of the South Bend Excel Center. My experience at this institution has profoundly impacted my life, and I firmly believe that keeping the Excel Center open is crucial for our community.

The Excel Center provides a unique opportunity for individuals who, for various reasons, were unable to complete their high school education. It offers a supportive and flexible learning environment that caters to the needs of adult learners. The staff and educators are dedicated to helping each student succeed, providing not only academic support but also life skills and career guidance.

Moreover, the Excel Center plays a vital role in strengthening our community. By helping individuals earn their high school diplomas, it opens doors to better job opportunities, higher wages, and further education. This, in turn, leads to a more skilled and educated workforce, which benefits local businesses and the economy. It also fosters a sense of pride and accomplishment among graduates, encouraging them to become active, contributing members of society.

In conclusion, the South Bend Excel Center is more than just a school; it is a beacon of hope and a catalyst for positive change in our community. Keeping it open will continue to provide invaluable opportunities for individuals to improve their lives and, by extension, the well-being of our entire community.

Thank you for considering my perspective.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Alshawi

10/10/2024

Hello Indiana Charter Board,

My name is Ashley Vincek. I recently graduated from The Excel Center South Bend. I would like to tell you about my experience. I started at the Excel Center February 2018. I was excited to go back to school and further my education. When I started the staff was so welcoming and helpful. Anytime I had a question or suggestion, they always listened and gave me the possible solution. I had three surgeries while at school and I had to take a few days off. I was still able to take my classwork home and still be caught up. If I had any questions I would be able to email my teachers and ask for help.

One thing I absolutely loved was that the teachers, coaches, and director all had an open door policy. So, if you had questions about your classes or classwork or just needed to talk, they were always there. They also knew that life happens and that if you have to take time off they understand. When you come back, you are welcomed with open arms just like you never left. I recommend The Excel Center to anyone who wants to go back and get their high school diploma and certification.

Now that I have graduated, I still stay in touch with some of the teachers and the director.

We have a bond now and I have some great memories.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ashley Vincek". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

It was hard being a single mother at sixteen and living on my own. It was even harder at 21 and I had three children, no high school diploma, and no job. I imagine if there was a school like The Excel Center for me back then, I would have a diploma with my name on it from high school. That milestone never happened for me. I did receive my GED when I was 18 years old and from there I did go to college and earn multiple degrees.

Knowing how far I have come still does not remove the stigma of the GED vs a diploma. I was ashamed and embarrassed when people asked about where I went to high school, and I could not give a straight answer. I see that look on many of the faces that come through the door at The Excel Center South Bend. That is why I share my story with them, and I assure them that there is no shame in where we come from. I tell them that we aren't looking back, because that is not the direction, they're moving in now.

The Excel Center South Bend is a place that provides shelter and support for those who could not find it the traditional way. That does not make anyone any less of a person. In fact, some of the experiences I had made me a better person. The Excel Center South Bend provides a place to take risks in an environment that supports it, encourages it, and then picks you up if you need it. I have witnessed lives changed because of the relationships built here. I have seen lives change for the better and then go on and keep changing because of the boost Excel provided them.

I went to college. I became a teacher. I was a principal. Now, I am the director of the Excel Center South Bend. I am also a student who is earning credits towards a high school diploma through the Excel Center programming. If I can do it, so can they.

Melissa LaPlace 10/11/2024



Melissa LaPlace
Director, Excel Center South Bend

MLaPlace@ExcelCenterHS.org
Diploma4Me.com

574-314-5570
Cell 574-217-5029

Locations in Elkhart, Gary, Hammond and South Bend

In 2019 when my daughter was 18 and a senior in high school, we were living 20 miles away from her school. She was having a hard time getting motivated to go and was struggling with the teachers and the way the school was structured. Then in October of that year our car broke down so I was not able to get her to school. Our neighbor suggested that since she was 18 we should look into enrolling her in The Excel Center, and I am so glad that we did. She was treated like an adult and she was in control of her education, because the staff knew that she was there because she wanted to be and not because she had to be. She had to walk to school in the snow and cold, but she did it because she was determined to graduate. The staff was on her side and truly wanted her to succeed, and this made all the difference in her motivation. The Excel Center also brought out her confidence by helping her to believe in herself, and letting her be who she was meant to be. I truly believe that The Excel Center changed her life. Not only did they give her the opportunity to acquire her high school diploma, which she would have otherwise not received, but they helped her grow into the person that she is today. The Excel Center absolutely changed her life, and we are both very grateful.

Stacey Lawton

(On behalf of Shelby Lawton)

5-Year Projected Annual Operating Budget (Fiscal Year July 1-June 30)

School Name: **THE EXCEL CENTER SOUTH BEND**
 Renewal Year: **2025 - 26 5Y**

Special Instructions for Schools Contracting with a Management Company:

Please include a note in the assumptions column and budget narrative if any of the listed amounts include additional service, consulting, facility, or licensing fees paid to a management company or affiliate of a management company that are not included in Line 97 (CMO/EMO fee). For example, you should note any additional fees for instructional or support supplies and resources; license fees for materials, software, or educational programming; or fees related to the management, sale, or lease of real estate. Please also state whether your facility is leased or purchased from a management company or affiliate of a management company.

If a line item is completed that includes the words "(please describe)" a specific description of the item must be provided in the appropriate box in Column L. Failure to provide a description as requested will result in rejection of the submission.

REVENUES	Current Year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Additional Information
State Revenue - See Footnotes							Other State Grants (Row 29)
Basic Tuition Support / Adult Learners Grant - From Tab 2	\$ 1,957,500.00	\$ 2,247,750.00	\$ 2,362,500.00	\$ 2,362,500.00	\$ 2,362,500.00	\$ 2,362,500.00	
Special Education Grant - From Tab 2	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Honors Diploma/Academic Performance Grant	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Career and Technical Education	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Non-English Speaking Program	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Charter and Innovation Network School Grant (\$1,400 per student)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Formative (Interim) Assessment Grant	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
State Matching Funds for School Lunch Program	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
High Ability (Gifted and Talented) Program	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Curricular Material Reimbursement Program (\$150 per student)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Remediation Testing Grant	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Teacher Appreciation Grant	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Other State Grants (please describe) (1)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Total State Revenue:	\$ 1,957,500.00	\$ 2,247,750.00	\$ 2,362,500.00	\$ 2,362,500.00	\$ 2,362,500.00	\$ 2,362,500.00	
Federal Revenue - See Footnotes							Other Federal Revenue (Row 41)
Public Charter School Program Grant	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Charter Facilities Assistance Program Grant (2011)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
IDEA - Part B Grant (Special Education)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Title I	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Title II	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Federal Lunch Program	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Federal Breakfast Reimbursement	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Other Federal Revenue (please describe)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Total Federal Revenue:	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Other Revenue							Other Revenue (Row 50)
Contributions and Donations from Private Sources	\$ 25,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Student Fees	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Other Fees	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Interest Income	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Charter School Capital Grants Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Common School Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Property Tax Sharing (2)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Operating/Safety Referendum Sharing (2)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Indiana Bond Bank	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Other Revenue (please describe)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Total Other Revenue:	\$ 25,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
TOTAL REVENUE:	\$ 1,982,500.00	\$ 2,247,750.00	\$ 2,362,500.00	\$ 2,362,500.00	\$ 2,362,500.00	\$ 2,362,500.00	
EXPENSES							
Administrative Staff - See Footnote (3)							
Executive Administration: Office of Superintendent	\$ 31,096.00	\$ 34,205.60	\$ 37,626.16	\$ 41,388.78	\$ 45,527.65	\$ 50,080.42	
School Administration: Office of the Principal	\$ 77,234.00	\$ 84,957.40	\$ 93,453.14	\$ 102,798.45	\$ 113,078.30	\$ 124,386.13	
Other School Administration	\$ 39,520.00	\$ 43,472.00	\$ 47,819.20	\$ 52,601.12	\$ 57,861.23	\$ 63,647.36	
Business Manager/Director of Finance	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Total Administrative Staff:	\$ 147,850.00	\$ 162,635.00	\$ 178,898.50	\$ 196,788.35	\$ 216,467.18	\$ 238,113.91	
Instructional Staff							
Teachers - Regular	\$ 273,982.00	\$ 301,380.20	\$ 331,518.24	\$ 364,670.04	\$ 401,137.04	\$ 441,250.76	
Teachers - Special Education	\$ 55,702.00	\$ 61,272.20	\$ 67,399.42	\$ 74,139.36	\$ 81,553.30	\$ 89,708.63	
Substitutes, Assistants, Paraprofessionals, Aides	\$ 119,006.00	\$ 130,906.60	\$ 143,997.27	\$ 158,396.99	\$ 174,236.68	\$ 191,660.35	
Summer School Staff	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Total Instructional Staff:	\$ 448,690.00	\$ 493,559.00	\$ 542,914.93	\$ 597,206.39	\$ 656,927.02	\$ 722,619.74	
Non-Instructional/Support Staff - See Footnotes							Other Support Staff (Row 78)

Social Workers, Guidance Counselors, Therapists	\$ 127,347.00	\$ 140,081.70	\$ 154,089.88	\$ 169,498.86	\$ 186,448.74	\$ 205,093.62
Instructional Support Staff (4)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Other Support Staff (please describe) (5)	\$ 26,699.00	\$ 29,368.90	\$ 32,305.79	\$ 35,536.37	\$ 39,090.01	\$ 42,999.01
Nurse	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Librarian	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Information Technology	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Maintenance of Buildings, Grounds, Equipment (including Custodial Staff)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Security Personnel	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Athletic Coaches	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Non-Instructional/Support Staff:	\$ 154,046.00	\$ 169,450.60	\$ 186,395.67	\$ 205,035.23	\$ 225,538.75	\$ 248,092.63
Subtotal Wages and Salaries:	\$ 750,586.00	\$ 825,644.60	\$ 908,209.10	\$ 999,029.97	\$ 1,098,932.95	\$ 1,208,826.28
Payroll Taxes and Benefits - From Tab 3						
Social Security/Medicare/Unemployment	\$ 76,184.48	\$ 83,802.93	\$ 92,183.22	\$ 101,401.54	\$ 111,541.69	\$ 122,695.87
Health Insurance	\$ 90,070.35	\$ 99,077.40	\$ 108,985.05	\$ 131,871.90	\$ 145,059.15	\$ 163,211.80
Retirement Contributions	\$ 37,529.25	\$ 41,282.25	\$ 45,410.40	\$ 88,286.70	\$ 97,115.40	\$ 106,827.00
Other Compensation (please describe)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Payroll Taxes and Benefits:	\$ 203,784.08	\$ 224,162.58	\$ 246,578.67	\$ 321,560.14	\$ 353,716.24	\$ 592,734.67
Total Personnel Expenses:	\$ 954,370.08	\$ 1,049,807.18	\$ 1,154,787.77	\$ 1,320,590.11	\$ 1,452,649.19	\$ 1,801,560.95
Instructional Supplies and Resources - See Footnotes						
Textbooks	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Library/Media Services (Other than Staff)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Technology Supporting Instruction (computers, tablets, etc.)	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,250.00	\$ 5,512.50	\$ 5,788.13	\$ 6,019.65	\$ 6,260.44
Student Assessment	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,750.00	\$ 16,537.50	\$ 17,364.38	\$ 18,058.95	\$ 18,781.31
Instructional Software	\$ 13,000.00	\$ 13,650.00	\$ 14,332.50	\$ 15,049.13	\$ 15,651.09	\$ 16,277.13
Professional Development	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,150.00	\$ 3,307.50	\$ 3,472.88	\$ 3,611.79	\$ 3,756.26
Enrichment Programs (athletics or extra-curricular activities)	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,050.00	\$ 1,102.50	\$ 1,157.63	\$ 1,203.93	\$ 1,252.09
Other Instructional Supplies (please describe)	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,150.00	\$ 3,307.50	\$ 3,472.88	\$ 3,611.79	\$ 3,756.26
Total Instructional Supplies and Resources:	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 42,000.00	\$ 44,100.00	\$ 46,305.00	\$ 48,157.20	\$ 50,083.49
Administrative Resources						
Administrative Technology - Computers & Software (not SIS)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Other Administrative Expenses (please describe)	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 7,350.00	\$ 7,717.50	\$ 8,103.38	\$ 8,427.51	\$ 8,764.61
Total Administrative Resources:	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 7,350.00	\$ 7,717.50	\$ 8,103.38	\$ 8,427.51	\$ 8,764.61
Governing Board Expenses						
Legal Services	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Other Governing Board Expenses (please describe)	\$ 19,632.00	\$ 20,613.60	\$ 21,644.28	\$ 22,726.49	\$ 23,635.55	\$ 24,580.98
Total Governing Board Expenses:	\$ 19,632.00	\$ 20,613.60	\$ 21,644.28	\$ 22,726.49	\$ 23,635.55	\$ 24,580.98
Purchased or Other Services (do not include staff expenses)						
Audit Services	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Payroll Services	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,450.00	\$ 9,922.50	\$ 10,418.63	\$ 10,835.37	\$ 11,268.78
Financial Accounting	\$ 18,150.00	\$ 19,057.50	\$ 20,010.38	\$ 21,010.89	\$ 21,851.33	\$ 22,725.38
Printing, Publishing, Duplicating Services	\$ 8,380.00	\$ 8,799.00	\$ 9,238.95	\$ 9,700.90	\$ 10,088.93	\$ 10,492.49
Telecommunication & IT Services	\$ 7,300.00	\$ 7,665.00	\$ 8,048.25	\$ 8,450.66	\$ 8,788.69	\$ 9,140.24
Insurance (non-facility)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Travel	\$ 5,500.00	\$ 5,775.00	\$ 6,063.75	\$ 6,366.94	\$ 6,621.62	\$ 6,886.48
Mail Services	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Special Education Administration	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Student Information Services or Systems	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Food Services	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,150.00	\$ 3,307.50	\$ 3,472.88	\$ 3,611.79	\$ 3,756.26
Transportation Services	\$ 4,700.00	\$ 4,935.00	\$ 5,181.75	\$ 5,440.84	\$ 5,658.47	\$ 5,884.81
Marketing Expenses	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 52,500.00	\$ 55,125.00	\$ 57,881.25	\$ 60,196.50	\$ 62,604.36
Other Services (please describe)	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,200.00	\$ 4,410.00	\$ 4,630.50	\$ 4,815.72	\$ 5,008.35
Total Professional Purchased or Other Services:	\$ 110,030.00	\$ 115,531.50	\$ 121,308.08	\$ 127,373.48	\$ 132,468.42	\$ 137,767.15
Facilities Expenses (do not include staff expenses, e.g. custodian)						
Facility Lease/Mortgage Payments (please describe)	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00
Capital Improvements	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Other Principal Payments	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Operating Leases	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Interest Expense (as accrued)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Depreciation Expense	\$ 138,200.00	\$ 145,110.00	\$ 152,365.50	\$ 159,983.78	\$ 166,383.13	\$ 173,038.45
Insurance (Facility)	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 36,750.00	\$ 38,587.50	\$ 40,516.88	\$ 42,137.55	\$ 43,823.05
Purchase of Furniture, Fixtures, & Equipment	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Electric & Gas	\$ 13,000.00	\$ 13,650.00	\$ 14,332.50	\$ 15,049.13	\$ 15,651.09	\$ 16,277.13
Water & Sewage	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,150.00	\$ 3,307.50	\$ 3,472.88	\$ 3,611.79	\$ 3,756.26
Repair and Maintenance Services (include supply costs)	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 7,875.00	\$ 8,268.75	\$ 8,682.19	\$ 9,029.48	\$ 9,390.65
Custodial Services (include supply costs)	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,200.00	\$ 4,410.00	\$ 4,630.50	\$ 4,815.72	\$ 5,008.35
Waste Disposal	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,200.00	\$ 4,410.00	\$ 4,630.50	\$ 4,815.72	\$ 5,008.35
Security Services	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Other Facility Expenses (please describe)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

Other Support Staff (Row 83) Student Record Data Reporting and Scheduling/Support Coordinator

Other Compensation (Row 94)

Other Instructional Supplies and Resources (Row 108)

Other Instructional Supplies (Row 113) Classroom Supplies

Other Administrative Expenses (Row 114)

Office supplies

Other Governing Board Expenses (Row 120)

Licensing (GEI) and Authorizer (ICSB)

Other Services (Row 138)

Lease, Mortgage, & Other Facilities (Rows 143, 158)

Total Facilities Expenses:	\$ 264,700.00	\$ 274,935.00	\$ 285,681.75	\$ 296,965.84	\$ 306,444.47	\$ 316,302.25	
Other Expenses - See Footnotes							Other Expenses (Row 167)
Indiana Charter School Board Administrative Fee (6)	\$ -	\$ 14,681.25	\$ 16,858.13	\$ 17,718.75	\$ 17,718.75	\$ 17,718.75	
Management Fee (7)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Bank Fees	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Escrow	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Other Expenses (please describe)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Total Other Expenses:	\$ -	\$ 14,681.25	\$ 16,858.13	\$ 17,718.75	\$ 17,718.75	\$ 17,718.75	
TOTAL EXPENSES:	\$ 1,395,732.08	\$ 1,524,918.53	\$ 1,652,097.50	\$ 1,839,783.05	\$ 1,989,501.10	\$ 2,356,778.18	
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS:	\$ 586,767.92	\$ 722,831.47	\$ 710,402.50	\$ 522,716.95	\$ 372,998.90	\$ 5,721.82	

Footnotes:

- (1) Including, but not limited to: alternative education program grants (IC 20-30-8); educational technology plan grants (IC 20-20-13); school safety plan grants (IC 5-2-10.1-6); secured school fund grants (IC 10-21-1-2); dual language pilot program grants (IC 20-20-41-2); teacher and student achievement fund grants (IC 20-20-43-3); student and parent support services grants (IC 20-34-9); etc.
- (2) Marion, Lake, St. Joseph, and Vanderburgh counties only.
- (3) Office of Superintendent includes the Head of School, School Leader, Executive Director, Chief Executive Officer, as well as associate or assistant executive positions; Office of the Principal includes Vice- and Assistant Principals; Other School Administration includes Chief Academic Officers; Directors, Deans, and Coordinators of: Curriculum, Instruction, Faculty, Students, Assessment, Student Affairs, Student Achievement, and similar positions.
- (4) Includes Staffing for Instruction and Curriculum Development, Instructional Staff Training, etc.
- (5) Secretary, Receptionist, Attendance Clerk; Office Manager, Cafeteria Worker, and other full or part-time employees not specifically described.
- (6) Three quarters of one percent (0.75%) of the basic tuition support or adult learner grant amount received by the school.
- (7) Include only those fees (per-pupil, contingent, or fixed) paid to a management company for educational or management services and describe how the fee is calculated in the budget narrative. All amounts separate from a specific "management fee" paid to a management company or an affiliate of the management company must be included elsewhere in the worksheet (e.g., lease payments, instructional supplies, software, technology, etc.) and described in the "Other Expenses" Column and/or in the Budget Narrative.

School Enrollment Projections
(must align with Renewal Application Enrollment Plan)

School Name: THE EXCEL CENTER SOUTH BEND
 Location: South Bend Community Sch Corp
 Renewal Year: 2025 - 26 SY

Is the school an Adult High School (please see instructions): Adult High School?

Complete Rows 32 and 37-40 only.

Enrollment	Current Year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Notes & Instructions
	2024 - 25 SY	2025 - 26 SY	2026 - 27 SY	2027 - 28 SY	2028 - 29 SY	2029 - 30 SY	
Kindergarten							<p>Please complete the enrollment table for the school's current year, and provide enrollment projections for the next five (5) years beginning with the Renewal Year.</p> <p>1) An "adult high school" is a charter school that has a majority of enrolled students that: (1) belong to a graduation cohort that has already graduated; or (2) are over the age of eighteen (18) years of age; at the time the student was first enrolled at the school. ICSB is prohibited from authorizing an adult high school unless the general assembly has made a specific appropriation for the high school pursuant to Indiana Code 20-24-7-13.5. If your proposal is for an adult high school, complete Row 31 only.</p> <p>2) A "virtual student" is defined as a student for whom at least fifty percent (50%) of the instructional services received from the school is virtual instruction. Virtual instruction means instruction that is provided in an interactive learning environment created through technology in which students are separated from their teacher by time or space, or both. Students receiving more than 50% of their instruction virtually generate eighty-five percent (85%) of the foundation formula amount rather than 100%. The analysis is applicable on a per student basis.</p> <p>3) The "basic" tuition support grant for K-12 schools is equal to the following formula: (Foundation Amount X ADM) + ((Complexity Multiplier X Complexity Index) X ADM)</p> <p>The Distribution calculations are an estimate based on projected enrollment multiplied by basic tuition support in the amounts as set forth in the most recently passed (2024-25 FY) budget- Foundation = \$6,590 for the 2023-24 SY and \$6,681 for the 2024-25 SY (and beyond) and Complexity Multiplier = \$3,983 for the 2023-24 SY and \$4,024 for the 2024-25 SY. The school's actual distribution will be based on the school's ADM count of eligible pupils enrolled in the school on two count dates (in October and February) multiplied by the basic tuition support calculation. The calculation uses the Complexity Index for the school corporation in which the proposed charter school will be located- the school's actual Complexity Index amount will likely differ. The Special Education Grant amount is calculated on Tab 4 and uses the grant amount for moderate disabilities (\$2,930 for the 2024-25 SY). The grant amount for severe disabilities is \$11,695 for the 2024-25 SY).</p> <p>4) The Adult Learner Grant amount for adult high schools is \$6,750. The Adult Distribution is calculated by multiplying Total Enrollment by the Adult Grant.</p>
Grade 1							
Grade 2							
Grade 3							
Grade 4							
Grade 5							
Grade 6							
Grade 7							
Grade 8							
Grade 9							
Grade 10							
Grade 11							
Grade 12							
Total K-12 Enrollment:	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Adult Learners (1)	290	333	350	350	350	350	
Total Adult Enrollment:	290	333	350	350	350	350	
Estimated % of Students:							
Special Education							
English Learners							
Free/Reduced Priced Lunch							
Virtual Students (2)							
K-12 Distribution (3)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Adult Distribution (4)	\$ 1,957,500.00	\$ 2,247,750.00	\$ 2,362,500.00	\$ 2,362,500.00	\$ 2,362,500.00	\$ 2,362,500.00	

5-Year Projected Staffing Plan

School Name: THE EXCEL CENTER SOUTH BEND
 Renewal Year: 2025 - 26 5Y

The information provided herein does not, and is not intended to, constitute legal advice. Schools should consult an attorney and/or accountant for any questions about employment and employment tax matters before completing this worksheet.

- Complete all relevant Grey Shaded areas -> Name of Position, Number of Positions, Average Salary, Health Insurance, Retirement Contribution, and Other Benefits.
- Projected salary and benefits should align with Year 0 and 5-Year budgets.
- Please see footnotes below for additional information before completing the worksheet.

	Current Year			Year 1			Year 2			Year 3			Year 4			Year 5		
	Number	Average Salary (\$)	Total Expense	Number	Average Salary	Total Expense	Number	Average Salary	Total Expense	Number	Average Salary	Total Expense	Number	Average Salary	Total Expense	Number	Average Salary	Total Expense
INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF																		
Instructors	4.0	\$ 68,495.50	\$ 273,982.00	4.0	\$ 75,345.05	\$ 301,380.20	4.0	\$ 82,879.56	\$ 331,518.24	4.0	\$ 91,167.51	\$ 364,670.04	4.0	\$ 100,284.26	\$ 401,137.04	4.0	\$ 110,312.69	\$ 441,250.76
SPED	1.0	\$ 55,702.00	\$ 55,702.00	1.0	\$ 61,272.20	\$ 61,272.20	1.0	\$ 67,399.42	\$ 67,399.42	1.0	\$ 74,139.36	\$ 74,139.36	1.0	\$ 81,553.30	\$ 81,553.30	1.0	\$ 89,708.63	\$ 89,708.63
Coaches	2.0	\$ 63,673.50	\$ 127,347.00	2.0	\$ 70,040.85	\$ 140,081.70	2.0	\$ 77,044.94	\$ 154,089.88	2.0	\$ 84,749.43	\$ 169,498.86	2.0	\$ 93,234.37	\$ 186,468.74	2.0	\$ 102,546.81	\$ 205,093.62
Para	1.0	\$ 30,517.00	\$ 30,517.00	1.0	\$ 33,568.70	\$ 33,568.70	1.0	\$ 36,925.57	\$ 36,925.57	1.0	\$ 40,618.13	\$ 40,618.13	1.0	\$ 44,679.94	\$ 44,679.94	1.0	\$ 49,147.93	\$ 49,147.93
Kid's Excel	2.0	\$ 44,244.50	\$ 88,489.00	2.0	\$ 48,666.95	\$ 97,333.90	2.0	\$ 53,535.85	\$ 107,071.70	2.0	\$ 58,889.43	\$ 117,778.86	2.0	\$ 64,778.37	\$ 129,556.74	2.0	\$ 71,256.21	\$ 142,512.42
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	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Instructional Staff:	10.0		\$ 576,037.00	10.0		\$ 633,640.70	10.0		\$ 697,004.81	10.0		\$ 766,705.25	10.0		\$ 843,375.76	10.0		\$ 927,713.36
ADMIN & SUPPORT																		
Superintendent	1.0	\$ 31,096.00	\$ 31,096.00	1.0	\$ 34,205.60	\$ 34,205.60	1.0	\$ 37,626.16	\$ 37,626.16	1.0	\$ 41,388.78	\$ 41,388.78	1.0	\$ 45,527.65	\$ 45,527.65	1.0	\$ 50,080.42	\$ 50,080.42
Director	1.0	\$ 77,234.00	\$ 77,234.00	1.0	\$ 84,957.40	\$ 84,957.40	1.0	\$ 93,453.14	\$ 93,453.14	1.0	\$ 102,798.45	\$ 102,798.45	1.0	\$ 113,078.30	\$ 113,078.30	1.0	\$ 124,386.13	\$ 124,386.13
Office Manager	1.0	\$ 39,520.00	\$ 39,520.00	1.0	\$ 43,472.00	\$ 43,472.00	1.0	\$ 47,819.20	\$ 47,819.20	1.0	\$ 52,601.12	\$ 52,601.12	1.0	\$ 57,861.23	\$ 57,861.23	1.0	\$ 63,647.36	\$ 63,647.36
Student Record Data Reporting	1.0	\$ 14,700.00	\$ 14,700.00	1.0	\$ 16,170.00	\$ 16,170.00	1.0	\$ 17,787.00	\$ 17,787.00	1.0	\$ 19,565.70	\$ 19,565.70	1.0	\$ 21,522.27	\$ 21,522.27	1.0	\$ 23,674.50	\$ 23,674.50
Scheduling & Support Coordinator	1.0	\$ 11,999.00	\$ 11,999.00	1.0	\$ 13,198.90	\$ 13,198.90	1.0	\$ 14,518.79	\$ 14,518.79	1.0	\$ 15,970.67	\$ 15,970.67	1.0	\$ 17,567.74	\$ 17,567.74	1.0	\$ 19,324.51	\$ 19,324.51
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Total Admin & Support Staff:	5.0		\$ 174,549.00	5.0		\$ 192,003.90	5.0		\$ 211,204.29	5.0		\$ 232,324.72	5.0		\$ 255,557.19	5.0		\$ 281,112.92
		Rate/Per Employee Expense	Total Expense		Rate/Per Employee Expense	Total Expense		Rate/Per Employee Expense	Total Expense		Rate/Per Employee Expense	Total Expense		Rate/Per Employee Expense	Total Expense		Rate/Per Employee Expense	Total Expense
BENEFITS																		
Health Insurance (2)		\$ 6,004.69	\$ 90,070.35		\$ 6,605.16	\$ 99,077.40		\$ 7,265.67	\$ 108,985.05		\$ 8,791.46	\$ 131,871.90		\$ 9,670.61	\$ 145,059.15		\$ 24,214.12	\$ 363,211.80
Retirement Contributions (3)		\$ 2,501.95	\$ 37,529.25		\$ 2,752.15	\$ 41,282.25		\$ 3,027.36	\$ 45,410.40		\$ 3,585.78	\$ 53,786.70		\$ 4,674.36	\$ 69,115.40		\$ 7,121.80	\$ 106,827.00
Social Security		6.2%	\$ 46,536.33		6.2%	\$ 51,189.97		6.2%	\$ 56,308.56		6.2%	\$ 61,393.86		6.2%	\$ 68,133.84		6.2%	\$ 74,947.27
Medicare		1.45%	\$ 10,883.50		1.45%	\$ 11,971.85		1.45%	\$ 13,169.03		1.45%	\$ 14,485.93		1.45%	\$ 15,934.53		1.45%	\$ 17,527.98
Unemployment		2.5%	\$ 18,764.65		2.5%	\$ 20,641.12		2.5%	\$ 22,705.23		2.5%	\$ 24,975.75		2.5%	\$ 27,473.32		2.5%	\$ 30,220.66
Other Compensation (4)		\$ -	\$ -		\$ -	\$ -		\$ -	\$ -		\$ -	\$ -		\$ -	\$ -		\$ -	\$ -

	Current Year		Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5	
	Total Staff	15.0	Total Staff	15.0	Total Staff	15.0	Total Staff	15.0	Total Staff	15.0	Total Staff	15.0
Total Salaries:	\$ 750,586.00	\$ 825,644.60	\$ 908,209.10	\$ 999,029.97	\$ 1,098,932.95	\$ 1,208,826.28						
Total Benefits:	\$ 203,784.08	\$ 224,162.58	\$ 246,578.67	\$ 321,560.14	\$ 353,716.24	\$ 392,734.67						
Total Salaries + Benefits:	\$ 954,370.08	\$ 1,049,807.18	\$ 1,154,787.77	\$ 1,320,590.11	\$ 1,452,649.19	\$ 1,601,560.95						
Student/teacher ratio	29:1	33:1	35:1	35:1	35:1	35:1						
Student/staff ratio	58:1	67:1	70:1	70:1	70:1	70:1						

Footnotes:

A note about classifying workers:

Generally, an individual who performs services for you is your "employee" if you have the right to control what work will be done and how it will be done. An individual who performs services for you is an "independent contractor" if the you have the right to control or direct only the result of the work, but not what will be done and how it will be done. This is an important distinction because an employee's wages are subject to employment tax withholding while an independent contractor's earnings are subject to self-employment tax. However, there are many factors used by the IRS to determine whether an individual is an employee or independent contractor. See: <https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/independent-contractor-self-employed-or-employee>. Please note that the IRS has issued a number of rulings and advisory opinions holding, based on the specific facts, that an individual rendering services as a substitute teacher should be considered to be an employee and not an independent contractor. Misclassification of an employee as an independent contractor may result in additional payroll taxes due, as well as possible interest and penalties. **Please consult your attorney before classifying an employee.** Payments made to "independent contractors" should be listed as "Other Compensation" on Row 58, and explained in the budget narrative. Do not include payments made to independent contractors on Rows 15-47.

- (1) Amounts paid to "Employees" regardless of whether they are full-time, part-time, or limited-time should be listed in the Average Salary column (Rows 15-47) for each year. All pay provided to an employee for services performed should be included, including salaries, vacation allowances, bonuses, stipends, commissions, and taxable fringe benefits. For more information, see <https://www.irs.gov/publications/p15>.
- (2) **Health Insurance** includes Group Life Insurance, Group Health Insurance, Group Accident Insurance, Other Authorized Group Insurance, and Workers Compensation Insurance.
- (3) **Retirement Contributions** includes Severance/Early Retirement Pay, Public Employees Retirement Fund, Teachers Retirement Fund, Public Employees Retirement Fund (Optional Contribution), Teacher Retirement Fund (Optional Contribution).
- (4) **Other Compensation** - Includes any other benefits not otherwise classified above, including payments made to independent contractors. This cell should reflect the sum total of all Other Compensation for the year.

Enrollment Plan for Adult High Schools Authorized by the Indiana Charter School Board

1. Please complete all appropriate grey cells. The first seven (7) lines are required.
2. The Enrollment Plan Approval Date on line 13 is the date the initial Enrollment Plan was approved as part of a Charter Application.
3. Enrollment Plan Amendments list the amendments, effective year, and approval date of those amendments to the school's Enrollment Plan that are approved pursuant to ICSB's Enrollment Plan Amendment Policy.

Charter School Network: Goodwill LEADS

Name of Charter School: The Excel Center - South Bend

Designated Representative: Dr. Christopher Alber

Contact Information: calber@excelcenterhs.org

Grade Span (Format: "X-X"): AHS

Maximum Enrollment: 350

Year 1 (Format: "YYYY"): 2024

Initial Approval Date:

Yearly Enrollment By Grade Level

Grade Level	<u>Year 1</u> 2024-25	<u>Year 2</u> 2025-26	<u>Year 3</u> 2026-27	<u>Year 4</u> 2027-28	<u>Year 5</u> 2028-29	<u>Maximum</u>
9						
10						
11						
12						
AHS	290	333	350	350	350	350
Total Enrollment (School):	290	333	350	350	350	350

Approved Amendments
(Completed by ICSB)

Approval Date:

Amended Enrollment

Amended Enrollment			
0	0	0	0

Amendment Notes