



Board Members Present

Beth Bray (Chair)
Violet Hawkins
Michael J. Jasaitis
Anna Shults
Rev. David W. Greene, Sr.
Dr. Ryan Donlan

Board Members Absent

Jill Robinson Kramer (Vice-Chair)

Staff

James Betley
Bridgett Abston
Ryan Preston
Sherie Scott
Beatriz García

NOTICE OF MEETING AND AGENDA

December 12, 2024 at 9:30 a.m. ET
Indiana Government Center South – Conference Room 4+5
302 W Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Meeting Link:

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

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Meeting Minutes

i. Call to Order/Board Meeting Minutes Approval

- a. Call to Order
 - i. Board Chair Bray called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m. ET
- b. Approval of Board Minutes (December 12, 2024)
 - i. Board Member Shults motioned to accept the May 21, 2024 Board minutes. Board Member Jasaitis seconded the motion.
 - ii. Board Members Bray, Hawkins, Jasaitis, Shults, and Greene voice voted aye.
 - iii. New Board Member Donlan abstained from this vote.
 - iv. Board Member Robinson Kramer was absent for this vote.
 - v. Board Member Donlan abstained.
 - vi. Motion passes with five ayes and zero nays.

ii. Board Business

a. The Excel Center Noblesville – Charter Renewal

- i. Presentation of staff recommendation (5-7 minutes)
 - 1. Executive Director, James Betley, provided a brief overview of the renewal application for the Excel Center Noblesville.
 - 2. The staff recommended the Excel Center Noblesville for a fifteen-year renewal.
- ii. Presentation of request by organizer (8-10 minutes)
 - 1. Katie Bustamante, Vice President of Education for Goodwill of Central and Southern Indiana, provided a brief overview of the network model.
 - 2. Dr. Steve Dillion, Director of The Excel Center Noblesville, gave a brief overview of the school.
- iii. Question and answer period
 - 1. Board Member Shults asked the progress on the school's attendance goal. Dr. Dillon emphasized that the difficulty of school attendance especially for adult learners. Board Member Shults asked for supporting data. Corey Emery, Senior Director of Goodwill Education Initiatives, Inc., said the school's current attendance rate is 70%.
 - 2. Board Member Donlan asked how childcare informs the decision for a new school facility. Ms. Bustamante answered that they are assuring the next space will have enough square footage and meets the appropriate coding requirements. Board Member Donlan asked if the school is currently meeting demand for childcare. Ms. Bustamante answered yes.
 - 3. Board Member Donlan asked how the school measures good teaching. Dr. Dillon said the lead teacher evaluates current teachers.
 - 4. Board Member Hawkins asked how many people utilize childcare and how is it measured and how does it work. Dr. Dillon responded that the childcare is a drop-in center. Students must be in the building taking a class in order to utilize it. He went on to say that the number

of children in the childcare center depends on the number of students with children each day, but the average number of childcare attendees is twelve to fifteen students. They do not turn children away.

5. Board Member Hawkins asked the capacity of the childcare center. Dr. Dillon responded that he believes the capacity is about fifteen.

iv. Board decision

1. Board Member Shults motioned to accept the staff recommendation of a fifteen-year charter for The Excel Center Noblesville. Board Member Jasaitis seconded the motion.
2. Board Members Bray, Hawkins, Jasaitis, Shults, Greene, and Donlan voice voted aye.
3. Board Member Robinson Kramer was absent for this vote.
4. Motion passes with six ayes and zero nays.

b. **The Excel Center South Bend – Charter Renewal**

i. Presentation of staff recommendation (5-7 minutes)

1. Executive Director, James Betley, provided a brief overview of the renewal application for the Excel Center South Bend.
2. The staff recommended the Excel Center South Bend for a fifteen-year renewal.

ii. Presentation of request by organizer (8-10 minutes)

1. Dr. Chris Alber, Superintendent of the Michiana Excel Centers, provided a brief overview of the school.
2. Melissa LaPlace, Director of The Excel Center South Bend, also provided a brief overview of the school.

iii. Question and answer period

1. Board Member Donlan asked what happens with students after graduation? Does the school know this information because of intentional programming or through relationships with students? Ms. LaPlace responded that the information is largely collected through relationship building. Deliberate alumni student tracking is an area the school has been continuing to work on.
2. Board Member Hawkins asked if the school does “Work and Learn” (work-based learning, internships) as a part of the curriculum. Ms. LaPlace responded yes. The school has to be intentional for adult student engagement.
3. Board Member Hawkins asked if the school has relationships with external organizations such as employers. Ms. LaPlace said the school does have relationships with local organizations.
4. Board Member Hawkins asked for the local demographics. Ms. LaPlace responded that the student demographics include students that are Swahili, French, Hispanic, Black, and White. There has been an increase in students aged eighteen to twenty-one years, but also an increase in students over the age of thirty-five.
5. Board Member Hawkins asked how the school conducts the jail classes. She went on to ask whether the school selects students that will be at the jail long enough to complete a course. Ms. LaPlace

said that there is a list of inmates waiting to take a course. The school has a night course twice a week offered to nonviolent offenders. Students are generally at the jail for at least a year.

6. Board Member Hawkins asked what key features are necessary for the school's success. Ms. LaPlace responded that the school has been successful because of their staff, reaching students on a personal level, and getting student trust.
7. Board Member Greene asked about the new staff's diversity. Ms. LaPlace responded that the staff includes people who are Hispanic, Black, White, and German. Additionally, she said the school has a good male to female ratio.

iv. Board decision

1. Board Member Donlan motioned to accept the staff recommendation of a fifteen-year charter for The Excel Center South Bend. Board Member Hawkins seconded the motion.
2. Board Members Bray, Hawkins, Jasaitis, Shults, Greene, and Donlan voice voted aye.
3. Board Member Robinson Kramer was absent for this vote.
4. Motion passes with six ayes and zero nays.

c. **Purdue Polytechnic High School South Bend – Charter Renewal**

i. Presentation of staff recommendation (5-7 minutes)

1. Executive Director, James Betley, provided a brief overview of the renewal application for Purdue Polytechnic High School South Bend.
2. The staff recommended the Purdue Polytechnic High School South Bend for a ten-year renewal.

ii. Presentation of request by organizer (8-10 minutes)

1. Dr. Keeanna Warren, Executive Director of Purdue Polytechnic High Schools, provided a brief overview of the school.
2. Justin Zobrosky, School Principal of Purdue Polytechnic High School South Bend, also provided a brief overview of the school.

iii. Question and answer period

1. Board Member Shults asked what the ideal innovation agreement with South Bend Community School Corporation would include. Dr. Warren responded that the school wants to meet students and community needs. The ideal working relationship with the school district would include sharing of school nutrition resources and athletics.
2. Board Member Donlan asked how the school leverages the day chronically absent students return to school. Mr. Zobrosky responded that the school has a morning meeting with staff every day. Sometimes topics include necessary information for the day, but the meetings often include conversations around specific students and how the school can assure each student will have a positive experience for the day. The school has a new “no cell phone” policy. Upon student arrival, students turn in their cell phones and are greeted by school staff.

3. Board Member Hawkins asked what strategies the school is utilizing to address student absenteeism. Mr. Zobrosky responded in August the local county prosecutor meet with all of the districts asking that they be notified when a student reaches 10 unexcused absences. The prosecutor's office will send a letter to that student's home stating that the importance of student attendance and resources to increase attendance. Mr. Zobrosky said that this initiative has been very effective. The school also has put in place attendance student incentives.
4. Board Chair Bray asked how the school will adjust their model to fit the new Indiana Diploma. Dr. Warren responded that the Board's academic committee is chaired by Dr. Jenna Rickus of Purdue University to assure they meet higher education need. The school also partners with the Modern Youth Apprentice Program. She said many of these programs and partnerships meet the new diploma seals requirements. She said it was helpful to have a staff member on the State Board of Education as well. She went on to say that their team has been planning for these changes for a long time already.

iv. Board decision

1. Board Member Shults motioned to accept the staff recommendation of a ten-year charter renewal for Purdue Polytechnic High School South Bend. Board Member Donlan seconded the motion.
2. Board Members Bray, Hawkins, Jasaitis, Shults, Greene, and Donlan voice voted aye.
3. Board Member Robinson Kramer was absent for this vote.
4. Motion passes with six ayes and zero nays.

d. **GEO Next Generation Academy – Charter Renewal**

i. Presentation of staff recommendation (5-7 minutes)

1. Executive Director, James Betley, provided a brief overview of the renewal application for GEO Next Generation Academy.
2. The staff recommended the GEO Next Generation Academy for a seven-year renewal.

ii. Presentation of request by organizer (8-10 minutes)

1. Dana Teasley, Superintendent of Schools for GEO Academies and President of GEO Foundation, provided a brief overview of the school.
2. Tiffany Evans, School Principal of GEO Next Generation Academy, also provided a brief overview of the school.
3. Dr. Anita Silverman, Executive Director of the Indianapolis Region, also provided a brief overview.

iii. Question and answer period

1. Board Member Donlan mentioned the negative student comments submitted during the public comment period. He asked how the leadership would address or learn student perspective at their school. Dr. Silverman responded that school culture K-12 is very

important. Additionally, over the summer the school discussed how to address their high multilingual learner population. She went on to say that the school has staff members that speak student languages and look like their students. Ms. Teasley added that the school did not see the negative comments submitted by the students and she is heard that there were more positive comments than negative comments. She also shared that she was excited students advocated. Ms. Evans said she feels the school has relationships with scholars and that she wants to understand what students want or need.

2. Board Member Donlan asked how they define college to elementary students and how do they prepare them for transition into the secondary school. Elementary Principal, Ms. Lee Ann Koekenberg spoke on how high school students often go to the elementary school to support students. During College Go Week, elementary students learned about Indiana universities. Professionals (doctors) come in and discuss with students how they became a doctor. KLR also supports their students in pharmacy tech work. There is also a career fair in the elementary school building. Students were able to go to different booths and see the career opportunities.
3. Board Chair Bray asked how the elementary school is meeting the needs of students from the previous school, Indy STEAM Academy. Ms. Koekenberg said the school received an Ignite Grant through The Mind Trust used for intensive tutoring. The school also has “Success Time” at the end of the day for remediation and reteaching. The school opted to participate in the ILEARN checkpoints so they use that data and exit tickets to monitor students.
4. Board Member Hawkins asked how the school is supporting native language maintenance for multilingual students. Dr. Silverman said the school has hired a new English Learner Director. Students at the high school level also support students in the elementary school. Board Member Hawkins said her question was more about native language maintenance. Dr. Silverman said several students get college credit in their native language.
5. Board Member Hawkins asked how the high school is preparing their students for marketplace changes due to AI. Dr. Silverman said the school is working with Project Lead the Way and now computer science is a graduation requirement. Ms. Evans said at the high school level they lean into AI technologies that support student learning.
6. Board Chair Bray asked if the high school students also use Khanmigo. Ms. Evans said the high school students will begin using Khanmigo next semester.

iv. Board decision

1. Board Member Donlan motioned to accept the staff recommendation of a seven-year charter for GEO Next Generation Academy. Board Chair Bray seconded the motion.
2. Board Members Bray, Hawkins, Jasaitis, Greene, and Donlan voice

voted aye.

3. Board Member Shults recused for this vote.
4. Board Member Robinson Kramer was absent for this vote.
5. Motion passes with five ayes and zero nays.

e. PLA@103 – Charter Renewal

- i. Presentation of staff recommendation (5-7 minutes)
 1. Executive Director, James Betley, provided a brief overview of the renewal application for PLA@103.
 2. The staff recommended the PLA@103 for a ten-year renewal.
- ii. Presentation of request by organizer (8-10 minutes)
 1. Nicole Fama, Executive Director of Phalen Leadership Academies Indianapolis, provided a brief overview of the school.
 2. Matt Rimer, School Principal of PLA@103, provided a brief overview of the school.
- iii. Question and answer period
 1. Board Member Donlan asked for the teacher retention rate, turnover and percentage of certified teachers in the classroom. Mr. Rimer said for the last school year, their teacher retention was about ninety percent. The school has about seventy-seven percent licensed teachers. Ms. Fama added that often unlicensed staffing is bilingual so the school helps them become certified.
 2. Board Member Hawkins asked the rate of licensed teachers in the state. Board Chair Bray said ICSB staff will help find that information. Mr. Betley later shared that sixty-eight percent of Marion County teachers are licensed and the state average is eighty percent.
 3. Board Member Hawkins asked how the school is supporting teachers with the students they serve. Mr. Rimer responded that the school has been focusing on providing and implementing SIOP training strategies.
 4. Board Member Hawkins asked how the school helps students from different places feel welcome. Mr. Rimer said the school helps students feel welcome through schoolwide initiatives like skating parties, staffing/leadership get on the bus, pin the wheel incentive, and the falcon family reading program. Several activities are in place to build up the culture. Ms. Fama added that the Phalen network hosts multicultural events and celebrations.
- iv. Board decision
 1. Board Member Shults motioned to accept the staff recommendation of a ten-year charter for PLA@103. Board Member Jasaitis seconded the motion.
 2. Board Members Bray, Hawkins, Jasaitis, Shults, Greene, and Donlan voice voted aye.
 3. Board Member Robinson Kramer was absent for this vote.
 4. Motion passes with six ayes and zero nays.

f. PLA@48 – Charter Renewal

- i. Presentation of staff recommendation (5-7 minutes)
 - 1. Executive Director, James Betley, provided a brief overview of the renewal application for PLA@48.
 - 2. The staff recommended the PLA@48 for a ten-year renewal.
- ii. Presentation of request by organizer (8-10 minutes)
 - 1. Nicole Fama, Executive Director of Phalen Leadership Academies Indianapolis, provided a brief overview of the school.
 - 2. Lawrence Courtney, School Principal of PLA@48, provided a brief overview of the school.
 - 3. Megan Smith, Assistant Principal of PLA@48, also provided a brief overview of the school.
 - 4. Holly Clark, Instructional Coach of PLA@48, provided an overview of the school's academic programming.
- iii. Question and answer period
 - 1. Board Member Shults said she was drawn to the possible staffing reduction and student to teacher ratio of 12:1. She asked whether this was the model's intention. If so, how will it be sustainable? Ms. Fama shared that the school does not intend to reduce staffing. She said many positions were added due to a recent school improvement grant (SIG). She said the student to teacher ratio is no longer 12:1. The average classroom size is closer to twenty students. However, there is specialized staffing for STEM, multilingual learners, and special education. Mr. Betley shared that the way student to teacher ratio is calculated is the number of instructional staff to average daily membership (ADM).
 - 2. Board Member Donlan asked the school leadership team to describe the difference between turnaround leadership and what they intend "stay-around leadership" to be if granted the renewal. Mr. Courtney responded that they will learn from the past to keep improving.
- iv. Board decision
 - 1. Board Member Shults motioned to accept the staff recommendation of a ten-year charter for PLA@48. Board Member Greene seconded the motion.
 - 2. Board Members Bray, Hawkins, Jasaitis, Shults, Greene, and Donlan voice voted aye.
 - 3. Board Member Robinson Kramer was absent for this vote.
 - 4. Motion passes with six ayes and zero nays.

g. James and Rosemary Phalen High School – Charter Renewal

- i. Presentation of staff recommendation (5-7 minutes)
 - 1. Executive Director, James Betley, provided a brief overview of the renewal application for James and Rosemary Phalen High School.
 - 2. The staff recommended the James and Rosemary Phalen High School for a ten-year renewal.
- ii. Presentation of request by organizer (8-10 minutes)
 - 1. Nicole Fama, School Principal of James and Rosemary Phalen High School, provided a brief overview of the school.
 - 2. Mr. Troy Lane, Assistant Principal of James and Rosemary Phalen

High School, also provided a brief overview of the school.

iii. Question and answer period

1. Board Member Donlan asked if the math scores were a matter of student skills, efficacy, or willingness. He went on to ask if scores do not improve quickly is that due to adult skills, efficacy, and willingness. He asked the school to think about and answer the questions on their own.

iv. Board decision

1. Board Member Donlan motioned to accept the staff recommendation of a ten-year charter for James and Rosemary Phalen High School. Board Member Jasaitis seconded the motion.
2. Board Members Bray, Hawkins, Jasaitis, Shults, Greene, and Donlan voice voted aye.
3. Board Member Robinson Kramer was absent for this vote.
4. Motion passes with six ayes and zero nays.

iii. **Staff Updates**

- a. The staff did not have updates.

iv. **Closing Remarks and Adjournment**

- a. Board Member Shults motioned to adjourn. Board Chair Bray seconded the motion.
- b. Board Members Bray, Hawkins, Jasaitis, Shults, Greene, and Donlan voice voted aye.
- c. Board Members Robinson Kramer was absent for this vote.
- d. Motion passes with six ayes and zero nays.
- e. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote at 12:56 p.m. ET.