



Indiana Charter School Board
Replication Request Recommendation

February 23, 2016 Board Meeting

EXCEL CENTERS, LLC REPLICATION REQUEST

PROPOSED NEW CHARTER SCHOOL OVERVIEW					
Charter Organizer	School Name	Opening Date	Location/ School District	ESP* Partner (If Any)	Grade Levels and Enrollment (At Capacity)
Excel Centers, LLC	The Excel Center – Shelbyville	Fall 2016	Shelbyville/ Shelbyville Central Schools; Shelby Eastern Schools Corporation	N/A	Grades: 9-12 Enrollment: 115

STAFF RECOMMENDATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve Excel Centers, LLC’s request to open an additional Excel Center in Shelbyville in Fall 2016.
ADDITIONAL PRE-OPENING CRITERIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICSB staff recommends that the following criteria be added to the standard Prior Action checklist utilized during the Pre-Opening period, and culminating with the Pre-Opening Site Visit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excel Centers, LLC Board green-lights the opening of the Shelbyville campus at its February 22nd Board Meeting.
STRENGTHS	<p>QUALIFIED AND COMMITTED BOARD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Excel Centers, LLC Board consists of nine highly qualified, committed and capable individuals with experience overseeing charter schools in Indiana over multiple years. The Board has demonstrated its qualifications and capabilities as a high-functioning governing entity. <p>DEMONSTRATED SCHOOL START-UP CAPACITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school will be operated by Goodwill Education Initiatives, Inc. (“GEI”), a non-profit organization formed by Goodwill Industries of Central Indiana. GEI staff have consistently demonstrated their capability to successfully open Excel Center schools. GEI was able to open Excel Centers in Richmond, Kokomo and Lafayette in a single year (SY2013-14), and subsequently opened one more Excel Center, Noblesville, in SY2015-16. Based upon this experience and track record of success, ICSB staff feels that GEI would be able to successfully open The Excel Center – Shelbyville. GEI has a thorough and proven school launching protocol which

	<p>has been refined through multiple school launches throughout Indiana.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of larger economic development initiatives, the City of Shelbyville has fully supported the opening of an Excel Center. The school will be located in a new building located at 111 N. Harrison Street, Shelbyville, IN 46176, near the town center. • Through-out its previous start-up processes, GEI staff exhibited a high degree of professionalism and preparedness. This has extended throughout the schools' first academic year. • As part of its replication conditions in any new location, GEI meets with local mayors, superintendents and other community stakeholders to gain support. GEI has consistently demonstrated its relationship building capabilities with its previous schools and has done so again in Shelbyville, as evidenced by the Mayor of the City of Shelbyville expressing an interest in bringing an Excel Center to Shelby County specifically to address the need in the city and county for a pipeline of individuals with the ability to fill middle-skill jobs. <p>EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM REPLICATED WITH FIDELITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of The Excel Centers have successfully replicated the core educational elements of their model. There is some customization by school site, including certification offerings, employer relationships, and coaching models. • GEI has created systems designed to share best practices and has a talent pipeline for employees. • GEI has demonstrated that its Excel Center model can be successfully replicated outside of Indianapolis, where there is lower per-pupil funding. • GEI has developed a systematic approach to Site Director recruitment, training and development. Training for Site Directors includes on-site training at other Excel Center campuses. <p>STRONG ACADEMIC PEFORMANCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the first year that the alternative accountability rule for Adult High Schools has been applied to the Excel Centers. Three of the Excel Centers authorized by the ICSB received "A" grades under the new model (Richmond, Lafayette, and Kokomo). One received a "B" grade (Anderson). The other two Excel Centers authorized by ICSB (Noblesville and South Bend) have not been open long enough to receive a grade. Further, the four Excel
--	---

	<p>Centers authorized to operate in Indianapolis (by the Mayor’s Office) all received “A” grades.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excel Centers in the ICSB portfolio show large numbers of Excel Center graduates accomplish at least one College and Career Readiness (“CCR”) Indicator. Metrics for graduates in ICSB authorized schools indicate the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the 2013-14 school year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Anderson: 78 graduates, 77% CCR attainment ○ Kokomo: 13 graduates, 69% CCR attainment ○ Lafayette: 23 graduates, 87% CCR attainment ○ Richmond: 17 graduates, 76% CCR attainment • For the 2014-15 school year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Anderson: 47 graduates, 92% CCR attainment ○ Kokomo: 82 graduates, 95% CCR attainment ○ Lafayette: 85 graduates, 98% CCR attainment ○ Richmond: 79 graduates, 92% CCR attainment <p>GOOD FINANCIAL HEALTH AND SYSTEMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GEI’s controller effectively manages the network as well as providing oversight to each individual site. As GEI continues to grow, it has added additional capacity in financial operations and oversight. • As of July 2015 (with the passage of HEA 1438-2015), the Excel Centers may operate as a financial network (e.g., funds are distributed to the organizer rather than to each individual school). This network level funding will be utilized by Excel Centers during the pre-opening and Year 1 activities of its new schools. Funds will be provided to each school from the Excel Center’s cash reserves. Funding will be provided to cover staff salaries during the pre-opening period and to purchase all necessary technology, capital purchases, and curriculum materials for the school. Each school will be staffed and budgeted such that it will be self-sustaining from Year 2 and beyond. Network funding will be monitored from Year 1 and thereafter based upon any needs due to student count variances and any significant capital purchases. • The proposed budget for The Excel Center - Shelbyville is conservative and shows positive operating income in their first years. <p>GOOD ORGANIZATIONAL COMPLIANCE AND SYSTEMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excel Centers, LCC has demonstrated its ability to comply with the charter agreement, and with state and federal laws.
--	---

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GEI is strengthening its network-wide systems and processes and uses data dashboard for use across sites. • GEI will be using INISchools to ensure appropriate compliance and reporting. This organization has extensive experience across all of the Excel Centers <p>APPROPRIATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under the HEA 1001-2015 (the budget bill), for the 2016-17 state fiscal year, the Excel Centers were approved to increase its maximum enrollment to 5,005 students (from 3,865 students in FY2015-16). Current total projected enrollment for all Excel Centers for SY2016-17 is 3,610. Of this 115 would be attributed to The Excel Center - Shelbyville. The current appropriation for Adult High Schools would support the opening of the school at its projected enrollment level.
AREAS OF CONCERN	<p>STUDENT RECRUITMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Though the Excel Centers have traditionally been very successful at attracting students, Shelby County represent new areas for this model.
ASSESSMENT OF AREAS OF CONCERN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lowered enrollment targets and resulting budget are appropriate risk mitigating factors. Additionally, it is estimated that over 4,500 people in Shelby County lack a high school diploma, providing for a strong target base. • The conservative approach that Excel Centers, LLC taken with its proposed school's budget and enrollment as well as the ongoing efforts to engage this new community provides the ICSB staff with the confidence that the areas of concern can be appropriately managed.