

PROPOSAL OVERVIEW AND ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS

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

IMPORTANT NOTE: *The full application, including this form, will be posted on the ICSB website. Applicants are advised that local community members, including members of the media, may contact the designated representative for questions about the proposed school(s).*

Legal name of group applying for charter(s):

Goodwill Education Initiatives, Inc.

Names, roles, and current employment for all persons on applicant team, including each board member:

Scott Bess, President , Goodwill Education Initiatives, Inc.

C. Perry Griffith, Jr., Chair

Gina DelSanto, Ph.D., Vice Chair

Michael O'Connor, Secretary

Claudia Cummings, Board member

Jeffrey A. Harrison, Board member

Richard Horn, Board member

Don Palmer, Board member

Doris Pryor, Board member

James M. McClelland, Ex-Officio Director

Gwen A. Fountain, Ph.D., Honorary Director

Fred C. Tucker, III, Honorary Director

Designated applicant representative:

Scott Bess

Address:

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Indianapolis, IN 46222

Office and cell phone numbers:

(317) 524-4501

Email address:

sbess@goodwilleducation.org

Provide the requested information for each school included in this proposal.

(You may add lines to the table if needed.)

Proposed School Name	Opening Year	School Model (e.g., college prep, dropout recovery)	Geographic Community *	School District(s) in Proposed Location	Grade Levels at Full Enrollment
The Excel Center – Noblesville	2015	Dropout recovery	300 N. 17 th St. Noblesville, IN 46060	Noblesville Schools	9-12

NOTE: * Please indicate the city/town and, if known, potential address or neighborhood of location. Virtual operators should indicate the relevant geographies the operator intends to serve.

Proposed Grade Levels and Student Enrollment

Provide the following information for each charter school included in this proposal. Specify the planned year of opening for each, the grade levels served, and both the planned and maximum number of enrolled students by grade level for each year. (You may duplicate the table as needed.)

Proposed School Name:	The Excel Center – Noblesville	
Academic Year	Grade Levels	Student Enrollment (Planned/Maximum)
2015	9-12	250 / 300
2016	9-12	260 / 300
2017	9-12	270 / 300
2018	9-12	285 / 300
2019	9-12	300 / 300
At Capacity	9-12	300 / 300

Do any of the proposed schools expect to contract or partner with an Education Service Provider (ESP) or other organization for school management/operation?* Yes No

If yes, identify the ESP or other partner organization: n/a

Will an application for the same charter school(s) be submitted to another authorizer in the near future?

Yes No

If yes, identify the authorizer(s): n/a

Planned submission date(s): n/a

Please list the number of previous submissions for request to authorize this(ese) charter school(s) over the past five years, as required under IC § 20-24-3-4. Include the following information:

Authorizer(s): Indiana Charter School Board (2); Indianapolis Mayor's Office (3)

Submission date(s): ICSB: 10/2011, 8/2012; Mayor's Office: 11/2009, 10/2012, 3/2015

Need for The Excel Center in Hamilton County

There are many dropouts in Hamilton County

In Hamilton County, there are over 10,000 individuals who lack a high school diploma.ⁱ Recent statistics indicate that this number will only grow in the short term as increased development is driving more and more people to Hamilton County seeking new job opportunities in the service industry – many of which do not require a high school diploma. Although high school graduation rates in Hamilton County remain high, according to data provided by the Indiana Department of Education, there are many students who have been removed from their 2013 graduation cohort and it cannot be verified whether they have graduated from a different high school due to transferring out of state, leaving high school to be homeschooled, or for other mobility reasons.ⁱⁱ It is anticipated that the reported dropout rates throughout Indiana artificially deflate the actual number of students who have dropped out of high school.

The Hamilton County community has a significant need for The Excel Center®. Over 5% of the county's population over the age of 18 lacks a high school diploma, and there are few good options for these individuals to become reconnected to their educational goals. As a result, a large portion of Hamilton County is unprepared to participate in the 21st century workforce, one that will require additional skills beyond high school, whether through an industry certification or postsecondary degree. Poor educational attainment severely limits career and income potential.

The lack of a high school diploma and basic skills impedes an individual's ability to be successful

Leaders in Indiana have recognized that a lack of skills is limiting the productivity of the state and the opportunities that will exist for Hoosiers in the future. In *Indiana's Forgotten Middle Skill Jobs: Meeting the Demands of a 21st-Century Economy*, the Skills2Compete-Indiana Campaign presents the issue clearly:

“Indiana needs a bold and broad vision to address the educational and economic challenges facing the state during these tough economic times and beyond. Those challenges demand a truly transformative vision that allows every worker to be a part of the economic recovery: guaranteed access to two years of postsecondary education or training. Every Hoosier must have the opportunity to earn the equivalent of at least two years of education or training past high school that leads to a vocational credential, industry certification, associate's degree, or one's first two years of college. It must be available at whatever point and pace makes sense for individual workers and industries. Indiana must further ensure that every resident has access to the basic skills needed to pursue such education.

[...]

Over one-half million working age Indiana residents do not have a high school diploma... What is more, only about 8 percent of Indiana adults with less than a high school diploma are enrolled in adult basic education, and less than 12 percent of residents with limited English proficiency are enrolled in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes.

This evidence suggests that Indiana faces challenges in meeting the basic skill attainment levels needed to grow its middle-skill workforce. By better aligning adult basic education with industry-focused training, many more Indiana residents could prepare to enter and succeed in middle-skill jobs and businesses would have a pipeline of workers to help meet immediate demand.^{»iii}

An individual who drops out of high school faces a number of challenges that affect his or her physical, emotional, and financial well-being as well as future success. High school dropouts have worse health, lower incomes, and fewer job opportunities than the general population who have graduated from high

school.^{iv} In addition, high school dropouts are more likely to have lower earnings, be recipients of government welfare, and are eight times more likely to be incarcerated than high school graduates.^v The Excel Center will seek to enroll students over 18 who have not completed high school, and have either dropped out or are severely under-credited compared to their cohort.

The educational options currently available to adults are insufficient to meet the needs of adult learners

A significant number of both youth and adults who have dropped out of school nevertheless show a strong desire to continue their education. Jobs for the Future analyzed the National Educational Longitudinal Survey and discovered that dropouts are persistent in trying to further their education: over the course of their lives, more than 60 percent of dropouts eventually do earn a high school credential – most often a General Education Development (GED) certificate.^{vi} However, many students struggle to complete their education, as skill deficits and life challenges often impede progress. Nationally, only about two percent of all high school dropouts will take a GED test in a given year,^{vii} and only ten percent of the estimated 3.8 million young people ages 18-24 without a diploma receive their GED.^{viii}

Although many dropouts would like to continue their education, they face limited options to achieve their goals. GED tests are the most common avenue for adult education, and studies have challenged the long-term benefits of earning a GED. Economists have argued that the wage benefits earned by GED recipients are largely explained by GED earners' higher initial skills.^{ix} However, other reports have shown strong psychological and social benefits of earning a GED, especially when a GED is used to prepare students for post-secondary education. Unfortunately, most people who earn a GED struggle at the post-secondary level: although 65% of GED test takers plan on attending college, between 30 and 35 percent are able to attend. Ultimately, only five to ten percent of GED recipients are able to finish their first year of college, never earning a degree or industry-recognized credential.

Many adult educational programs focus on remediating skill deficits, but do not strategically work to address the many barriers that keep the vast majority of adults from reengaging in school as well as the issues that led to them dropping out of school in the first place. Adult learners often face additional non-academic barriers to their educational success, many of which were prominent reasons that students dropped out of school in the first place. Several of these barriers remain, so effective educational programming for adults must provide support and flexibility to promote student achievement while deliberately helping students overcome the various challenges to their continued education.

The following section describes how The Excel Center will help students to overcome these barriers.

The Excel Center will meet the needs of adult learners in Hamilton County

Below are a number of barriers students face – many which impact their success in earning a high school diploma – as well as an overview of the ways The Excel Center will work to address and overcome those barriers.

Barrier 1: Low credit attainment and academic skill gaps

The Goodwill Excel Center's student body will be diverse, including students of various ages with a variety of motivations. Some may want to set a good example for their children, others may seek a diploma to become more employable; and still others may try to gain a foothold in the educational system after previously making a decision to drop out of high school. Additionally, students will arrive at a variety of academic levels: students will have different levels of *credit attainment*, and they will arrive at different skill levels. In some cases, students may have a transcript that shows they earned particular course credits but, when tested for skill levels, the scores may indicate that the student does not have mastery over the material.

Solution: Meet students where they come. The Excel Center works with students in each of these profiles, designing an educational program that meets adult students' needs. To ensure that the school is

fulfilling its top two priorities – provide students with an opportunity to earn a regular high school diploma and prepare them for “what comes next”– The Excel Center will dedicate considerable resources to ensure that students are prepared and successful. The Excel Center has dedicated remedial efforts for students who are not ready for high school-level coursework, evaluating progress through regular testing.

Barrier 2: Traditional school hours interfering with the real demands of adult life

Adults must often prioritize child care needs, family situations, or the need to work for an income over being in a classroom during traditional school hours. The real demands of life may be the reason that some students dropped out of school in the first place and are often barriers to students re-entering school to earn a high school diploma.

Solution: A school schedule that meets the needs of adults. The Excel Center will operate year-round, with five terms taking place in each calendar year. Students can earn credits at the end of each eight-week term. By condensing a semester’s worth of content and skills into each term, students can rapidly progress towards graduation. The Excel Center curriculum integrates material across disciplines so that one course combines academic standards, allowing students to earn credit in multiple areas while attending one class. The school is open for students who prefer to attend classes in the morning, afternoon, and evening.

Barrier 3: Balancing work and family life

Some of The Excel Center’s students will have to take care of their children while also trying to continue their education. Many parents put off returning to school because they lack the financial resources to pay for quality childcare.

Solution: Free and reliable child care for students. To help students continue their education, The Excel Center operates a child drop-in center. This center allows for children of students to be cared for while his/her parent is in school. The primary focus of the drop-in center is to give parents the opportunity to focus on their education knowing that their children are in a safe and secure environment.

Barrier 4: Lack of focus

Students entering The Excel Center will be able to focus on school at variable levels as some students balance school work with the needs of work and family. Having previously dropped out of high school, students may also struggle to reengage in their education.

Solution: Addressing challenges outside of the classroom. Life Coaching in The Excel Center Model is an attempt to address the life barriers and issues that prevent students from being successful. The Excel Center coaches are responsible for keeping students engaged in school and motivated to be successful. The relationship that coaches create with each student is a critical factor in student success; that relationship will provide security, confidence and encouragement for students to continue when the work becomes difficult and life barriers become difficult to manage. Coaches will work with students to identify potential barriers to students’ continued education, whether short-term barriers (such as housing and childcare) or long-term challenges (including student self-efficacy and self-confidence).

Barrier 5: Identifying a career path and setting goals

For most of The Excel Center’s students, earning a high school diploma was the primary reason for them to go to school, but few students have thought about which career to enter after graduating.

Solution: Preparing students for “what comes next.” The Excel Center spends a significant amount of time introducing students to industries and high growth, high demand fields where there are good prospects of finding stable employment and finding a career in an industry with growth potential. The goal of The Excel Center is to prepare individuals for self-sufficiency. A high school diploma is an essential start, but a credential above a high school diploma is essential for ensuring long-term employability in the modern job market.

The Excel Center model provides adults the opportunity and support to earn a high school diploma and begin post-secondary education while developing career paths in sectors of the local economy that offer better-than-average employment and growth opportunities. The Excel Center will “meet students where they are” in their education by providing a flexible structure and supportive relationships to help them manage work, life and family concerns as they achieve their educational goals.

The Excel Center provides a structured environment that meets the particular needs of adult students as they work towards a high school diploma. Adult learners often face additional non-academic barriers to their educational success, many of which were prominent reasons that students dropped out of school in the first place. Several of these other reasons remain significant barriers to their educational progress; effective educational opportunities for adults must provide supports and flexibility to promote student achievement while maintaining a supportive learning environment that helps students overcome the various challenges to their continued education. Students will enter The Excel Center at a variety of skill and credit levels, so the school environment will be flexible enough to give each student a realistic path for their educational success and a possible career.

Community Engagement

Efforts that have taken place

Community partners will be critical to The Excel Center's success. To date, The Excel Center has garnered significant community support for the school and will continue to engage with the community. In preparation for opening The Excel Center – Noblesville, GEI staff have started the process of leading community engagement efforts throughout the Hamilton County community. For its initial community engagement efforts, GEI staff have focused on meeting and working with Ivy Tech Community College's Hamilton County Campus at Noblesville, leadership at local schools, and employers in the community.

Ivy Tech has been an essential partnership to The Excel Center. First, The Excel Center's educational model helps students build skills and knowledge towards post-secondary certificates and/or advanced degrees that lead to career pathways with better-than-average growth potential in the local economy, which includes taking courses that offer tangible skills training to equip students for future careers at Ivy Tech Community College. Ivy Tech has been critical in helping GEI make connections with local community agencies and organizations and also connect with individuals who are unemployed or working in service jobs and are most likely to want to enroll in The Excel Center. Additionally, The Excel Center – Noblesville intends to co-locate with Ivy Tech at Ivy Tech's Noblesville campus.

To date, GEI leadership have also had meetings with local high school principals and superintendents to gain support for bringing The Excel Center to Hamilton County. These meetings have been well-received and GEI has received positive support from the local schools which see The Excel Center as an asset to the community in raising the educational attainment of the whole family instead of just the school-aged children and youth being served by the local schools.

Lastly, GEI has a strong network of Central Indiana employers who inform The Excel Center's CTE curriculum regarding the skills and qualities they are looking for in job candidates and provide students with career pathways and job placement opportunities after graduation. To expand GEI's network of employers in Hamilton County, GEI staff have met with local employers, including Gaylor Electric and Stratosphere Quality, to begin exploring additional career pathways and possible job placement opportunities for students who graduate from The Excel Center – Noblesville.

Plan for additional and continued community engagement

Upon approval to open The Excel Center – Noblesville, GEI staff will increase its community engagement efforts to meet the following goals::

1. Raise community awareness of The Excel Center and engage community partners;
2. Ensure The Excel Center is seen as a valuable resource for self-sufficiency and that it will have an impact on the local economy;
3. Meet enrollment goals at the start of the school year; and
4. Maintain a waitlist of prospective students to continue to meet enrollment goals throughout the year.

To that end, GEI staff plans to continue to meet with public school districts and community employers. GEI staff will also meet with elected city and county officials, administration, and staff, as well as social service agencies and other organizations that will act as referral sources for potential students. A list of approximately sixty organizations has been identified to reach out to upon approval to activate The Excel Center's charter.

The strategies that GEI staff will use to engage the community include the following:

- **Public information sessions** – Host public information sessions to give prospective students and the public a firsthand look at The Excel Center. Sessions will include small-group presentations and one-on-one meetings.
- **Partnerships with adult education programs providers and high school registrars** – Contact adult education programs and registrars at local high schools to educate them about The Excel Center, encouraging them to identify dropouts and families who would benefit from the school.
- **Presentations to community groups and social service organizations** – Present to organizations to educate them about The Excel Center, encouraging them to refer prospective students to the school and to identify individuals and families who would benefit from the school.
- **Outreach to service industry employers** – Initiate contact with service industry employers such as employment placement services, retailers, human resources departments and others to be identified for material distribution, on-site information sessions and other available avenues to inform employees about The Excel Center.
- **Collaborate with Goodwill programs (retail, employment services)** – Collaborate with Goodwill community workplace initiatives to identify opportunities to talk about The Excel Center with targeted adults already receiving Goodwill services.

School Model Differences

The school model implemented at The Excel Center – Noblesville will be the same school model being implemented at all other Excel Center locations. There will be no differences to the school model.

Academic Data

Performance under the proposed A-F accountability system

Basic Explanation of the Proposed A-F Model for Adult High Schools	
Grad Rate	Calculated by taking the # of graduates in a given school year divided by the average ADM count for that year. The rate is then <i>multiplied</i> by 4. This represents 40% of final score.
ECA	If a school has a non-waiver grad rate <90.0%, then the school shall have their 'Grad Rate' multiplied by the non-waiver rate
CCR	This is the percentage of graduates in a given school year that earned AP, IB or Dual Credit or earned an Industry Certification. The rate is then <i>multiplied</i> by 1.33. This represents 60% of final score.

PROPOSED ADULT HIGH SCHOOL MODEL (2013-14 School Year)

	Yrs Open	Grads	ADM Ratio	Multiplier (x4)	Weight	CCR Rate	Multiplier (x1.33)	Weight	Final Score	Final Grade
Michigan	4	57	15.3%	61%	40%	74%	98%	60%	84%	B
Meadows	3	71	19.2%	77%	40%	80%	100%	60%	91%	A
Decatur	3	34	16.4%	66%	40%	76%	100%	60%	86%	B
Anderson	2	78	22.9%	92%	40%	90%	100%	60%	97%	A
Franklin	2	60	16.6%	66%	40%	82%	100%	60%	87%	B
Kokomo	1	13	school did not meet the required n'size of 30 graduates							
Lafayette	1	23	school did not meet the required n'size of 30 graduates							
Richmond	1	17	school did not meet the required n'size of 30 graduates							
West	1	23	school did not meet the required n'size of 30 graduates							

Graduate Data

To date, The Excel Center has graduated a total of 1,004 graduates. Approximately 82% of all graduates have earned an industry certification and 26% have earned college credit prior to graduating.

	School Year Totals					All Years
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	
Anderson	---	---	55	78	25	158
Decatur	---	21	29	34	12	96
Franklin	---	---	28	60	38	126
Kokomo	---	---	---	13	41	54
Lafayette	---	---	---	23	35	58
Meadows	---	34	59	71	51	215
Michigan	4	60	55	57	25	201
Richmond	---	---	---	17	26	43
West	---	---	---	23	30	53
TEC Total	4	115	226	376	283	1004

Economic Impact

After its second year of operation, an independent fiscal impact study conducted by Dr. Michael Hicks, Professor and Director for Business and Economic Research at Ball State University,^x found that:

- On average, graduates increased their annual income by \$9,330;
- Even students who did not graduate increased their annual income by over \$2,800; and
- A higher employment rate of new graduates led to an average of \$4.3 million per year in additional earned income.

ⁱU.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2012 5-Year Estimates, Table B15001. Retrieved from <http://factfinder2.census.org>.

ⁱⁱ Indiana Department of Education (2014). Data received from the Indiana Department of Education via a data request.

ⁱⁱⁱSkills2Complete-Indiana Campaign (2011). *Indiana's Forgotten Middle Skill Jobs: Meeting the Demands of a 21st-Century Economy*. Washington, DC: National Skills Coalition. Retrieved from <http://www.nationalskillscoalition.org/assets/reports/in-forgotten-ms-jobs.pdf>

^{iv}Wong, M., Shapiro, M., Boscardin, J. & Ettner, S. (2002). Contribution of major diseases to disparities in mortality. *The New England Journal of Medicine*, 347(20), 1585-1592. Retrieved August 20, 2008, from <http://content.nejm.org/cgi/content/full/347/20/1585>, Guskova, E., & Stafford, F. (2005). *Trends in household wealth dynamics, 2001-2003*. Ann Arbor: Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan. Retrieved August 28, 2008, from *Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan* Web site, http://psidonline.isr.umich.edu/Publications/Papers/tsp/2005-03_Trends_in_Household_01_03_July_05.pdf

^vBridgeland, J.M., DiIulio, J.J., & Morison, K.B. (2006). *The silent epidemic: perspectives of high school dropouts*. Washington, DC: Civic Enterprises. Retrieved on August 20, 2008, from <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/nr/downloads/ed/TheSilentEpidemic3-06FINAL.pdf>

^{vi}Harris, L., & Ganzglass, E. (2008). *Creating Postsecondary Pathways to Good Jobs for Young High School Dropouts: The Possibilities and the Challenges* Washington, DC: Center for American Progress. Retrieved from <http://www.clasp.org/admin/site/publications/files/0438.pdf>

^{vii}Harris, L., & Ganzglass, E. (2008). *Creating Postsecondary Pathways to Good Jobs for Young High School Dropouts: The Possibilities and the Challenges* Washington, DC: Center for American Progress. Retrieved from <http://www.clasp.org/admin/site/publications/files/0438.pdf>

^{viii}Harris, L., & Ganzglass, E. (2008). *Creating Postsecondary Pathways to Good Jobs for Young High School Dropouts: The Possibilities and the Challenges* Washington, DC: Center for American Progress. Retrieved from <http://www.clasp.org/admin/site/publications/files/0438.pdf>

^{ix}Heckman, J. and LaFontaine (2005). Bias Corrected Estimates of GED Returns. Retrieved from http://jenni.uchicago.edu/ged_umputation

^xHicks, Michael J. (2014). "Preliminary Fiscal and Earnings Assessment of the Excel Charter Academy". Center for Business and Economic Research, Ball State University.