

Renewal Proposal 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: **The Excel Center - Lafayette**
Charter School Address: 615 N 18th Street, Lafayette, IN 47904

Designated Representative and Contact Information (Phone & Email): Betsy Delgado, VP Mission & Education
bdelgado@goodwillindy.org
 317-524-4380

Mission Statement: The mission of The Excel Center is to provide adults the opportunity and support to earn a high school diploma and post-secondary education while developing career paths that offer greater employment and career growth opportunities. Our schools “meet students where they are” in their education by providing a flexible structure and supportive relationships to help students manage work, life, and family concerns as they achieve their educational goals.

School Leader/Principal: Danielle White

Current Board of Directors	
Officers:	Members:
Claudia Cummings, Chairperson	Marianne Glick
C. Perry Griffith, Jr., Vice Chair	Richard Horn
Doris L. Pryor, Secretary	Jill Kramer
Betsy Delgado, Vice President	Rose Mays
Dan Riley, Treasurer	Jay Oliver
	Don Palmer
Ex Oficio:	
Kent Kramer	Honorary:
	Fred C. Tucker III
	Gwen A. Fountain, Ph.D.

Current Grades Served	Future Enrollment	Grade Span for Next Charter Term	Maximum Enrollment for Next Charter Term
9-12	Year 6 (2018-19)	9-12	300
9-12	Year 7 (2019-20)	9-12	300
9-12	Year 8 (2020-21)	9-12	300
9-12	Year 9 (2021-22)	9-12	300
9-12	Year 10 (2022-23)	9-12	300
9-12	At Capacity	9-12	300

Identify ESP or partner organization (if applicable): Not applicable

Section I: Performance Review

The Excel Center, Indiana's first high school designed for adults, opened its doors in 2010 in response to Indiana's 700,000 adults without a high school diploma. Since its initial year of operating an Excel Center, Goodwill of Central and Southern Indiana (GCSI) has expanded to include twelve Indiana Excel Centers and has graduated 2,385 students (as of the end of Term 2 for the 2017-18 school year). GCSI is committed to ensuring the proof of impact of The Excel Center, and for this reason GCSI commissioned The Center for Evaluation and Education Policy (CEEP) to conduct an independent study of The Excel Center outcomes.¹ Results of this 2017 study included:

- Since the opening of the first Excel Center in 2010, The Excel Center graduates have earned an average of 1.5 industry certifications and 2.2 dual credits during their time at the school.
- In a self-reported survey, 80% of The Excel Center graduates indicated they were either employed or enrolled in college one year after graduation.
- 70% of The Excel Center graduates are employed and experienced a 50% increase in wages within six months of graduation.
- Overall, 38% of The Excel Center graduates have enrolled in post-secondary education with 76% demonstrating a two-year persistency rate.

In addition to demonstrating global achievements over time, The Excel Center has demonstrated notable achievement with its SY 2016 graduates as well. Based on data provided by the Indiana Department of Education, every Excel Center operated by Goodwill Education Initiatives (GEI) ranked in the top 20 (top 5%) of high schools statewide for the percentage of graduates demonstrating College & Career Readiness (CCR). Beyond this, an Excel Center held each of the top eight spots statewide for the percentage of graduates earning an industry certification.

¹ Center for Evaluation and Education Policy (2017). *The Excel Center Research Report*.

Successes

The Excel Center – Lafayette has marked a number of successes since first opening its doors for the 2013-14 school year. Since the inception of Indiana’s adult high school accountability model, The Excel Center – Lafayette has earned an “A” each year for its performance. For the 2016-17 school year, The Excel Center – Lafayette demonstrated an adult high school graduation rate of 141% and a College and Career Readiness score of 98%. A table outlining performance related to the number of graduates and the adult high school graduation rate for the past four years is below.

The Excel Center – Lafayette Graduates and Adult High School Graduation Rate				
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Number Graduates per Year	24	86	85	106
Adult High School Graduation Rate	32%	114%	111%	141%

For SY 2016-17, The Excel Center – Lafayette graduated 106 students, with graduates requiring the completion of 4.3 terms on average to graduate. Of these 106 graduates, 57% earned dual credit as well as 57% earned an industry-approved certification. In terms of post-graduation outcomes, 50% of the SY 2016-17 graduates pursued a career, while 50% pursued college, evidencing The Excel Center’s ability to prepare students for both post-secondary education and the workforce.

Beyond the school-specific achievements for SY 2016-17, The Excel Center – Lafayette was one of five Excel Centers to have the distinction of earning the highest College & Career Readiness rate (CCR) of any school in its county. The Excel Center – Lafayette was also one of four Excel Centers (among the eight high schools statewide) to have 100% of minority graduates earning CCR credit.

Performance Dashboard Summary Measures Not Meeting or Exceeding Standard

Based on the Indiana Charter School Board (ICSB) Accountability System, The Excel Center – Lafayette has two areas identified as “Does Not Meet” within its current dashboard. These metrics are:

- 1.2.a. Students graduate from high school in four years (as defined by the state’s four-year graduation rate).
- 3.2.a. The school met attendance goals.

While both of these subcategories are metrics currently identified within the ICSB’s 2016-17 Accountability System Dashboard, The Excel Centers are exempt in terms of traditional school-age structures due to their status as an adult high school as outlined in the Indiana State Board of Education’s (SBOE) Adult Accountability Rule (511 IAC 6.3). The SBOE approved this rule in October 2015 and it went into effect January 2016. Although the ICSB Accountability System was revised and approved by its Board in May of 2017, the performance dashboard still reflects the prior metrics.

While The Excel Centers, as adult high schools, are not accountable to these metrics in the same way as high schools for traditional-age students, it is still noteworthy that The Excel Center – Lafayette has improved annually in its 4-year and 5-year cohort graduation rates based on data available on the Indiana Department of Education’s (IDOE) Compass website.

The table below outlines the 4-year and 5-year cohort graduation rate improvements at The Excel Center - Lafayette since SY 2013-14:

The Excel Center – Lafayette 4-Year and 5-Year Cohort Graduation Rate Trends			
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate	10.4%	19.8%	26.8%
5-Year Cohort Graduation Rate	29.2%	26.4%	--

In just three years, The Excel Center – Lafayette has almost tripled its 4-year cohort graduation rate. For the two years in which the 5-year cohort graduation rate data is available on IDOE’s Compass site, the addition of the 5-year cohort demonstrates The Excel Center-Lafayette’s ability to help its students graduate, even if beyond the students’ traditional cohort. The adult high school graduation rate for The Excel Center – Lafayette is exceptionally high (141% for SY 2016-17), as is its CCR rate (98%), and the percentage of students earning dual credit or industry certifications (57% for each category). This data demonstrates The Excel Center – Lafayette’s commitment to providing its students with a robust educational experience, resulting in a high quality Indiana diploma for graduates.

In terms of attendance, The Excel Center understands that students who previously left high school before graduating often did so because some type of barrier (or more likely, barriers) interfered with the student’s ability to complete their education. We also understand that when these students return to high school as adults, the same barriers (or potentially new barriers) may impede the student’s ability to attend regularly. These barriers may include the need to work to support themselves and their family, caring for a child or relative, taking care of a health-related issue, or other similar issues. As a result, The Excel Center supports its students with Coaches. Each student is assigned a Coach, who works closely with the student. The Coach assists the student with creating and monitoring the student’s graduation plan, reaching out to the student when attendance is a problem, and supporting each student in removing or addressing any barriers that may be interfering with the student’s ability to attend regularly. While adult students may still need to miss class more frequently in order to address their responsibilities outside of the classroom as compared to traditionally-aged high school students, additional tutoring sessions and opportunities for weekly support are an embedded components of The Excel Center model. These supports can help a student to maintain their academic work and continue to make progress towards graduation in spite of the pressure of outside obligations.

Section II: Improvement

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

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

(a) Governing Board

With GCSI's Excel Center network now encompassing twelve schools, The Excel Center board of directors identified the need for an advisory board to be created at each Excel Center. As a result, the Community Advisory Team (CAT) was developed. The purpose of the CAT is three-fold: to strengthen partnerships between the local Excel Center and its community members, focus on enrollment and student retention rates, and foster student opportunities such as internships, job training, and pathways to employment. Each Excel Center's CAT will meet on a regular basis and each Excel Center director will provide updates to the Senior Director of The Excel Center Network and Operations as a means of ensuring key updates and information are shared with The Excel Center board of directors. Since the inception of the CATs, each Excel Center's CAT has been established and met at least once, with a summary provided to The Excel Center board of directors as a means of maintaining communication and ensuring the governing board stays abreast of each Excel Center's activities and issues.

(b) Leadership Team

Since the start of the 2016-17 school year, GEI has undertaken a comprehensive review of its various school leadership development offerings. An audit of these programs was conducted to ensure leadership development trainings move beyond solely focusing on straightforward skill development, and broaden to focus on development of leadership

capacity as well. This review of leadership development initiatives resulted in a revision in content for the Technical Leadership Series, a development opportunity offered to new and aspiring Excel Center directors. As a result of the revisions, the training series is now more aptly named the Leadership Series in order to reflect the intentional focus on leadership development. Additionally, GEI's other key leadership development series has now been separated into two distinct tracks. This division will allow the development activities to best align with the specific needs of the participants as it relates to the various roles within GEI. The process of revising these professional development tracks has been a collaborative effort of GEI leadership, GCSI Human Resources, and The Excel Center directors. In addition to these leadership development opportunities, The Excel Center directors participate in monthly Directors' Meetings. These meetings provide ongoing training, development, and information as a means of educating and strengthening the knowledge base of Excel Center directors.

Beyond these activities, the leadership team at The Excel Center – Lafayette has engaged in a number of professional development activities to continuously hone their professional skillset. These activities include the school Director attending the Indiana Association of School Principals (IASP) annual conference as well as the Advanced School Safety Specialist training. The school Lead Teacher is currently participating in the Leadership Series – Director, has recently completed a Master of Arts degree in Teaching, and is finishing the licensure requirements for becoming a school principal. The Assistant Lead Teacher recently completed a Master of Science degree in Math Education and has obtained a school principal license. The school's Lead Coach participated in last year's Leadership Series and this year attended a conference for guidance counselors.

(c) Teaching staff

At each Excel Center the teaching staff is supported by Lead Teachers, who serve as

professional instructional coaches. Lead Teachers play an active role in the development of the teachers' craft by providing feedback and guidance. Additionally, Lead Teachers participate in The Excel Center network-wide monthly Lead Teacher meetings. At these meetings, Lead Teachers share strategies and techniques for supporting teachers, as well as share best practice for what works in their own Excel Center to elicit the best educational outcomes from students. In addition to the Lead Teacher position, The Excel Center – Lafayette also has an Assistant Lead Teacher who provides support to the instructional staff. The teaching staff participates in outside professional development as well, in order to strengthen and develop additional skills to best serve students' needs. Most recently, one of the school's Humanities teachers attended a conference for writing teachers and a Special Education teacher attended an autism conference.

Lead Teachers also receive support from GEI's Curriculum Services Director, who can work with schools on specific initiatives. Over the course of the last year, the Curriculum Services Director facilitated curriculum teams for the core content areas. These curriculum teams provided the structure for teachers to conduct a comprehensive review of all Excel Center curriculum maps. The project ensured curriculum maps aligned to the current Indiana Academic Standards, and also revised unit and final assessments. While work surrounding curriculum alignment and review should be ongoing, this project provided a much needed refocusing effort on the interrelatedness of curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

(d) Academic achievement

As mentioned in the section above, a significant part of last year was spent with curriculum teams reviewing the curriculum maps for each course to ensure each course's curriculum aligned to the most recent Indiana Academic Standards, and developing

consistent unit and final assessments for courses. With Indiana's shift from the ECA to the ISTEP, The Excel Center has experienced the same change in performance as other Indiana high schools. The work completed last year during The Excel Center's curriculum review project will help us compare student performance in their Excel Center courses to their performance on state assessments. This will allow The Excel Center to ensure there is consistency between state expectations, performance on state assessments, and what students are experiencing in their Excel Center courses.

The Curriculum Services Director has begun visiting each Excel Center at least once per Term this year in order to meet with Lead Teachers, observe classrooms, and support teachers with fidelity of implementation of the curriculum. Additionally, the Curriculum Services Director is available to provide school-specific trainings and professional development as requested by individual Excel Centers.

(2) Identify any particular weaknesses, challenges, areas for improvement, and detail school's plan for addressing these needs.

The Excel Center – Lafayette has experienced an interesting challenge, in that due to staff member opportunities for promotion within The Excel Center network, The Excel Center – Lafayette staff has gone through an almost complete turnover in the past few years. A few examples of this turnover include the school's prior director becoming a Senior Director for GEI, one of the school's English teachers moving to the GCSI Marketing & Communications team, and the school's Lead Coach becoming a Project Manager for The Excel Center network. While these promotions were positive changes for The Excel Center network overall, The Excel Center – Lafayette was left with a significant shift in staffing and wanted to ensure that the school maintained its level of success while adapting to the change in staff. In order to address this challenge and ensure the school was maintaining a focus on

academic outcomes as well as the overall culture of the school, two initiatives were implemented.

The first initiative was the School Culture Committee. This committee has a focus similar to that of social work, and the purpose is to ensure that students are supported. The focus of the School Culture Committee is to celebrate both students and staff in terms of their achievements and milestones, and develop relationships within the school as a means of providing a positive culture. While the school is currently strong in celebrating staff, The Excel Center – Lafayette realizes there is opportunity to strengthen how students are celebrated and is seeking input from both students and staff for additional ideas.

In addition to the School Culture Committee, The Excel Center - Lafayette is also implementing a School Improvement Council. Members of this group will review data to identify trends in the school so that responses can be timely and appropriate. One of the first areas the School Improvement Council will investigate is student persistence. The group will look at student persistence rates by subject, teacher, and period of the day. Changes will be made based on the lessons learned by the School Improvement Council through the data review, and ongoing monitoring for continuous improvement will take place.

(3) Any additional evidence, beyond data in dashboard, that supports school's case for renewal.

All evidence and explanation is provided throughout the other sections of this renewal application.

Section III: Proposed Changes to Charter Agreement

No proposed changes to the charter agreement are requested at this time.

Budget Narrative: The Excel Center - Lafayette

REVENUE

Revenue Assumptions

The Excel Center - Lafayette is expecting to operate with 300 students during Years 6 through 10.

State Revenue

Adult Learner: State funding through the Adult Learners appropriation is assumed to remain at \$6,750 per student during Years 6-10.

Federal Revenue

Public Law 101-476 (IDEA): Federal funding includes funding through the Part B Federal Special Education grants. Funding within the five-year budget is projected to remain flat.

EXPENDITURES

Inflation

Certain expenses are projected to increase annually due to inflation. The budget model assumes an average 2.5% increase per annum.

Personnel Expenses

Wages, Benefits, and Payroll Taxes: Our salaries/wages (before taxes and benefits) will have a ceiling of 39% of Adult Learners funding across The Excel Center network. The attrition of staff each year has historically created savings which are used to provide adjustments to continuing staff.

Professional Development: Includes ongoing education at local conferences and trainings, tuition reimbursement for college classes taken by staff, and for curriculum development.

Bonuses: Bonuses include teacher incentive pay for high performance. This amount was less than \$10,000 and is included within benefits percentage.

Tuition Reimbursement: Includes reimbursement for staff participating in the Goodwill Tuition Reimbursement program. This amount was less than \$10,000 and is included within benefits percentage.

Stipends: Includes \$5,000 annual stipends for the Lead Teacher and Lead Coach. Also included is a \$1,500 stipend for the school's "Tech Champion".

Instructional Supplies and Resources

Textbooks: Projects \$500 for textbooks each year.

Technology: Technology expenses include projectors and other miscellaneous media/classroom equipment.

Computers: Projected cost of \$50,000 during Year 8 for a technology refresh.

Software: Software includes installed office software, instructional software, remediation software, and assessment software.

Other Classroom Supplies: Costs include binders, printing expenses and other materials used for classroom instruction.

Other (Dual Credit and Student Certification courses): Costs for students to attend dual credit courses and to receive certifications to assist with career readiness.

Board Expenses

Board expenses for training, development, and supplies are included in the fees listed on line 132 at the bottom of each budget.

Professional Purchased or Contracted Services

Average expenditures across each charter were used to develop the 5-year projection. Expenses, such as internet, were budgeted at full cost rather than the discounted e-rate expense.

Legal: This includes miscellaneous legal fees for contract review and/or ad hoc needs. Legal Fees are higher every two-years in relation to additional lobbying expenditures.

Printing/Newsletter/Annual Report Services: Estimate includes costs for materials.

Internet Services and Telephone/Telecommunication Services: Costs for internet and telephone usage calculated based upon current non-discounted billing rates.

Insurance: Includes all required coverage. The budget was determined using current rates.

Travel: Travel allows staff to visit The Excel Center schools across the state and to attend trainings and conferences.

Postage: Postage rate based on current Excel Center postage usage.

Special Education Services: Costs incurred include testing and other special services required to meet the individual needs of special education students. This line item does not include staff expense.

Transportation: The budget was determined using historical transportation expenditures to assist students with a transportation barrier.

Student Information System: The Student Information System cost is included in the amount listed for software subscriptions.

Security Services: Includes fees to Securitas for on-site security. The budget was determined using historical expenditures.

Facilities Expense

Facility: The lease renewals with 5% rent escalations, upon renewal, are factored into the rental expense budget. In addition, the new sites were budgeted with rents comparable to similar sized schools.

Property taxes: Two of our facilities incur real estate property taxes. We have assumed 5% increases on the assessed values each year.

Depreciation: Depreciation averages \$100k per month currently. With some upcoming capital purchases, we have assumed that depreciation, per site, will average \$130k each year.

Utilities: The budget was determine using the current historical expenditures.

Custodial: The budget was determined using the monthly rate of the current service provider.

Other Costs:

Indiana Charter School Board Administrative Fee: Fee is set at 1% of Adult Learner funds.

CMO/EMO Fees: Includes Board Expenses and all administrative functions of the school (Superintendent, Curriculum, Registrar, Student Data, State Reporting, Accounting/Payroll, Technology Services, etc.).

Exhibit C

Statement of Assurances

This form must be signed by a duly authorized representative of the applicant for renewal and submitted with the Renewal Application. An application will be considered incomplete if it is not accompanied by the Assurances Form signed by an authorized individual.

As the authorized representative of the applicant, I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application for charter renewal for The Excel Center (name of school) to be located at Lafayette, Indiana (location of school) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and further I understand that, if awarded a renewal, the school:

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 will operate the charter school in compliance with all federal and state laws, including Indiana Charter Schools Law as described in all relevant sections of IC §20-24.
3. Recipients will, for the life of the charter, participate in all data reporting and evaluation activities as required by the 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 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* ("ESSA"), 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 ("FERPA") 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.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 9. Recipients will at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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.	
<u>Print Name and Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Betsy Delgado VP, Mission & Education	12/20/17
<u>Sign Name</u>	
	