

**INDIANA CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD**  
**Fall 2021 Public**  
**Hearings**

<b>Date &amp; Location</b>	<b>Board Members</b>	<b>ICSB Staff</b>	<b>Number of attendees</b>	<b>Schools Discussed</b>	<b>Applicant Representative</b>
October 5, 2021 Virtual - WebEx	0	James Betley; Bridgett Abston; Beatriz Pacheco	42	PLA Genai Academy (2 campuses)	Earl Phalen

**PLA Genai Academy**

**WebEx**

**October 5, 2021**

Comment Type	PLA Genai Academy		
	Support	Oppose	Neutral
Public Hearing	10	3	0
Email	6	0	0
Letters	0	0	0
Phone	4	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>

**Comments from Public Hearing**

*Nicole Bonds – APPROVE*

- I would like to speak on behalf, I support the charter schools because we uh a better variety for our children to have a better opportunity for future and to grasp themselves to learn themselves. We used to have that in public schools. I went to public schools and um one of uh the CEOs of the school, Dr. Brown was my teacher. She installed something in me and this generation and my kid’s generation and the next generations, so I support it.

*Clara Hadley – APPROVE*

- Yes, my name is Clara Hadley and I am here in support of Genai Excellence Academy. I have worked with this school of a program since its inception and I know that it is a school that works for excellence of our students. Not only in meeting the children academically, but also teaching them to be impacts in the community. To learn how to be entrepreneurs and I think this is all well-rounded. It only doesn’t meet just one need, but it meets the total need of the individuals: emotional, spiritual and everything that would impact the community. I am always been and will always be a believer of equal opportunity. There are programs and systems that are in place where individuals can learn and make a choice to choose what they want, where they want to go, and what will be of best interest to them. It has never been to say that another program is not sufficient. Not saying that the Elkhart Community Schools are insufficient. I have worked with them and not saying that Concord is insufficient. It is just saying to give the students or parents, the opportunity to make a choice of what is going to be best for their students because Genai Excellence works with meeting the students where they are and taking them where they need to be so to try to monopolize a program, it would not be fair to the students. If our interest is to make sure that students are educated, that should be the interest. We implied that it would be a disservice to someone. It would be a disservice not to give them an opportunity because if I am providing a service and I know my service is good, you can have a thousand other services. I am not going to be intimidated by another program. Are programs perfect? No. None. No programs are perfect. We are still working through things in every organization, but you look at the best thing that will be the best interest for the student. And that includes in Elkhart, Concord, Phalen, and Genai. But that they will be a program that looks at the interest of the children and make sure that the students have the best interest at heart. And that’s my comments.

*Antoinette Martinez – APPROVE*

- I would like to make comment in support of Genai Academy's partners with PLA. We, I support parent choice and I support student opportunity. Every child's needs should be met. If they are a student, they are in a school that student's needs should be met. That Genai, the academy, the chartership is going to give an opportunities for students who do not fit in the public school setting to be successful. All students for some reason, trauma-based maybe, do not necessarily fit or find their place to succeed in a public school setting. Genai partnered their chartership will allow these students an opportunity to grow academically. They are committed to the growth and the success of the whole child, socially, economically, even financially. There, they believe in generational, doing away with generational poverty. We are looking at a certain demographic basically, but every student's needs should be addressed. And their focus is to address the need of the student. And they should be allowed to charter. It's just that simple. There, Elkhart, any school does not have the market on education cuz we still live in America and this still is the land of opportunity and education still is an opportunity for a lot of students like I said who cannot find their place successfully in a public school. So, a charter school, if that's the opportunity for them, then allow that child and that parent to make that choice and I am in favor of their charter. And I am finished so I am in favor of the charter.

*Rhonda Davis – APPROVE*

- Alright, thank you for very much. Again, my name is Rhonda Coleman-Davis and I am very much for the partnership of Genai Excellence Academy with Phalen. I also too am a former board member of a charter school. And my heart goes out to anyone and to all who take out the time to work with children, develop a curriculum, stay in the forefront of making sure that children are being educated, making sure that they are not slipping through the cracks. Also being parent of children who are very different. I had some that did attend the public school and then there was others that had to be able to attend school with a smaller setting to where their needs were met. And in doing that, they were able to excel. They were able to get caught back up. And then, because that choice was there, they do then decided whether or not they wanted to remain in that smaller setting which was more comfortable and more suitable for them or to go back into the school system. And so, to have a choice and to have a place where the needs of the child is being met, is so vitally important. It's not about the count that takes place, I believe it's in January. It's not about all of the other things, the politics and everything that that becomes so involved with charter school schools. Money, children, counts, and all. It's not about that. It's about the child and I know for fact that there are still so many, many children that are slipping through the cracks. And dealing now with this season and this space and place that we're in regarding COVID, I know so many more children that have just fallen by the wayside and so again to have a charter school in place that can come along and build these children up and get them where they are supposed to be, educationally, is just priceless. So again, I am, I am very much for the partnering of Genai Excellence Academy with Phalen and I am just looking with expectation that this will happen and that this will be another vital component to the whole Elkhart, Concord, the whole area. And that it not be looked as an entity that is coming in and taking children out. And but more so looked as being a positive source for parents as well as children to be able to choose from. And I am finished.

*Abigail Annan – APPROVE*

- So, my name is Dr. Abigail Annan and I am calling in support of Genai Excellence Academy Charter and their partner with Phalen. I am an Assistant Professor with Western Michigan University and I also own my own practice in the Elkhart community. I don't originate from this town. I don't have family in this town. We relocated to this town because that was what God intended for us. My husband and I are both physicians. We have been rendering care and supporting this community for the past almost a decade. So, we have adopted this town as a home. Our children are older and I just want to speak from the viewpoint of both an educator and also as a business owner. Ultimately, the most important factor is the child and a child's needs. One cup doesn't fit all. We are all very different. What works for one person may not work for another. Everywhere we lived, and I have lived and trained in five different states, we always had the opportunity of having taken our children either to private school, to public school, or to homeschooling. We also had the opportunity to take them to a charter school. Elkhart was the first town we lived in that we didn't have that opportunity. We had the option of either, homeschooling is obviously out for two physicians, but we had the opportunity of either a public school or a private school. And so we were forced to do what was most comfortable and familiar to us. The charter school system is very beneficial for most children. It doesn't work for everyone. And personally, I feel it complements the public school system. Obviously, the Elkhart and the Concord school systems are struggling to obtain more governmental support and have been resorting to referendums, but the presence and existence of a charter school, and not just any charter, but Genai Excellence Academy, provides a legitimate avenue to obtain government funding to support the educational system in a noncompetitive way. I don't understand why everyone is perceiving it as more of a competition or as though they are rivals, but instead of considering it as a support to the educational system which seems to be crashing right now. The struggle for teachers, we are struggling to be able to take care of all the children, it's a good avenue to have. It provides parents the opportunities, alternatives, options. It allows certain children who need that level of attention, who need that avenue to be training properly to exposed to that opportunity without which it seems to be this, they are stuck. They don't have much of a choice. It's either you are with the public school or you're in private school. There should be a middle point and it's good for commerce for this economy. Thank you.

*Kristy Robb – APPROVE*

- My name is Kristy Robb. I am calling in support of the charter. Just like a lot of people have said previously, it's about the child as a whole. It's about the parents having a choice to where they send their child. I grew up in a public school. I am actually the kindergarten/first grade teacher for at Genai which is. I have been here for about five months now so not very long. Prior to that I worked at a Boys and Girls Club in the area as well for Elkhart County in Nappanee, so I worked very close with the public school system in this area. And I don't think that there is anything wrong with public school like I said, I grew up in one. I fully support public school, but I also fully support the fact that parents should have the choice to where they send their child. I currently have a student who if they were to go anywhere else they would have had to repeat kindergarten and this child excels in every area. And if he had to repeat kindergarten, he would fall behind and further behind because he would be bored. And with this charter, it would give us an opportunity to continue to pour into him as much as possible as well as so many others because we would have the opportunity to have more children come through the doors, more children to learn, more parents to learn about us and to be able to make that choice on whether they want to go to charter school, a different

private school, or a public school. And when it comes down to it, it's about the child and what they need. And some need to be in public school settings, but some do not need at all and then there's others where they can have that in between. Some need a very small, intimate classroom setting where there's only three or four students in the class. Some can do with twelve to fifteen and some are completely fine with thirty and more which is how some public schools have to be and that's not saying that there's anything wrong with that other than the fact that I've taught when I have had thirty plus children in a room before when I was working at the boys and girls club and let me tell you that [inaudible] easy [breaks out] that many kids all in the same room. You no matter [inaudible] few adults in the room, you can't, giving them the toys [inaudible] My time is up sorry.

*Dorlita Blakely – APPROVE*

- I am here in agreement with Genai Excellence Academy and the PLA partnership. And one of the things as I am listening, even to all of the comments that have been made. A question, not asking you the specific question, but the question comes to mind, "Where have we lost sight of equal opportunity when it comes to the education of our children?" It's, my children. I grew up in public school and my children have been raised up in public schools so I am not against public schools. That was all that was made available for myself and also for my children when they were going to school, but it seems now that we have these opportunities toward charter schools. It's amazing that one parent can have the success of their children, their child in public school, but that does not make it a perfect fit for every child or every parent whose child is in public school so we can't say that just because one thrives in it that all children are thriving. I would, I would be remised to ask the question, "Show me where every child that is in public school is thriving and they are being successful." You cannot. That is a fact. You cannot say that every child that is in public school is thriving and that they are hitting the top mark. But there are, there's a fit when it comes to our children. And for us to think that because a charter school wants to open that this has become a competition. What, what where have we lost sight? Where, where have we lost sight for our children? Where have we lost sight of giving them the opportunity to have the best education possible in the setting that is fit for them? It seems to me that it becomes more about the politics and the people rather than our focus on our children. So, I think that it should be made available. There are parents who are in need of this charter school and their children will thrive there outside of the public school. And we should have that choice. Just like we don't want someone to take our freedom of speech, we should not be taking the freedom of choice or where our children will get the best education for them. We want to, this is our next generation. This is the generation that is going to run this country when we are too old to run it. And so, with that being said, where do we want to have our children? We want to have them where they are getting the best education that is possible for them at whatever school would be best for them. Not saying that they should only go into these public schools because this is a competition. That's for the business world and retail and consumer goods. That's what they do. We should not be doing that when it comes to the education of our children. It's, what are we showing them as well? Because many times we think that children don't understand what's happening, but they do. We think that they may not be aware of this meeting or this charter school that is happening, but children are smarter than we think that they are. And so, we are an example to them of how they're going to run the future. So, in closing, I will say that I am for the charter school. I am for giving the equal opportunity for parents to take their children wherever it would be for the best education for them. Thank you.

*Edwin Newsome – APPROVE*

- I am definitely here because I would like to make statement in support of Genai Excellence Academy along with the partnership with PLA and even with the partnership if they were allowed with Elkhart Community Schools. I agree with most of the statements that have already gone on before concerning our view as having this monopoly that is in Elkhart ought to be diversified out to give another opportunity, another approach for someone to come into the educational system and bring a different glance and a different view. I am very connected with the Elkhart Community Schools. I know Steve Thalheimer and Sarita. They've all been at our church. Spoken at some of their events and things of that nature. And we look forward to doing more partnership. However, even with the Genai Excellence Academy and the PLA, we find out that many people are trying to tear apart a program based upon logistics, based upon applications, based upon names and things. Our opportunities to partner with other people in the community. I believe that what we were trying to attempt and what we are trying to attempt is to simply say that we are invested in our community and we would like to partner with our community, if we were allowed. We are not seeing that type of cooperation in Elkhart, tragically. So, it's forcing us to actually go into a charter-type system so that we can become just as robust and just as powerful as an entity as the Elkhart Community Schools to actually bring our approach into the schools. And so, I think that if we would just be given the opportunity as Genai Excellence Academy, we will see that people are actually signing up and the people who are teaching are people who are teaching with passion, who want to see a change, want to see a shift in our children. And that's what this is all about once again. This is not about where our monies are going, who's doing what, but it's about us literally being here for the child, for the holistic development of that child. And there are some of us who are able to do that more than others because it takes this village to actually raise a child. And so, we cannot act like Elkhart Community Schools being the savior of all the children. No, we need more partnership. And Genai Excellence Academy is offering that hand up. Not a hand down, but we are offering that hand up to actually be a support in this community. So, I thank the board for listening and for the board for adhering to what we are trying to present and we pray that God will be able to give us a breakthrough in our community as amongst with our children.

*Sean Hooker – APPROVE*

- Yes, thank you very much. I just, and we are also here in favor of Genai Excellence Academy and Phalen. I wanted to speak to two things. One was purpose and the other is foundation. We at Genai Phalen, find that one of the greatest things that you can build in a child, building a business, building any kind of entity that you desire to be progressive in today's society, is a foundation. And at Genai Excellence and what we deal with children today, the most important thing that you can give a child is solid foundation. And if you do deal with statistics and you deal with the educational system today, a lot of what is not dealt with is simple moral foundation. The moral foundation and moral compass for a child, is more important today at the age that Genai is dealing with children than a higher education. We do not take what we have and put it on the basis of money. Do not put it on the basis of social standings. What we build is the heart and the promotion of children in our society today that if we deal with statistics are dropping out of school at alarming rates. So, what we desire to do is take the benefits that we have as educators, as teachers, as pastors, as parents, and say, "Look, we have to get these children at the earliest stages of their lives and put within them a foundation on which everything else in their lives will be erected from. Now once we take that point and look at the foundation, after that we have to instill a purpose. And we are not

instilling a purpose if you have to be an individual that comes here or we have the monopoly on this. Our purpose is to instill in children today that you can be what you desire to be. We're going to help you be that. You are important to this situation. And we are going to instill a purpose in you that we find beneficial not just for you, but for the generation that you're living in. We here at Genai, we desire foundation and desire purpose. We do not desire to be an entity that is at large or at fault or at fight with anyone because that's not our situation. Our sole desire is to take a legacy from a woman's whose life was taken in a tragic way, take what she desired more than anything, and that was that children would have an opportunity to accomplish every dream, every desire, everything that they want to be. I am in full, full back for Genai and Phalen and I believe that the most important thing that we really need to look at here outside of what Apostle Newsome said, was purpose and foundation. And this is what we thrive to instill in Genai Excellence Phalen Academy. Thank you so very much.

*Kevin Davis Jr – APPROVE*

- And I would like to say again, just going off of what has already been said. At the end of the day, this is about the children. This is about the future and I think by hearing all of the previous comments, that the misunderstanding that this is about money, this is about status, this is about trying to take some other people. Me personally, I came up through the public school system and I also had the opportunity of to be in a charter-like school. And I learned more when I had a smaller classroom and a teacher who cared about me. And I just wasn't pushed through in a herd-like way. We all know that the public school system, is like hurting. There's a bunch of kids, there's not enough teachers, and it's under people who care. It's just about let's get these kids through, on to the next year, onto the next amount of kids. And let's just be honest, cuz we've all been to schools, it works with some, and it doesn't work for all. So now that there's another opportunity, where children can get the attention that they need and get the support that they need. To say that it doesn't need to happen, or we shouldn't do this, it's against and it's a violation of children's rights and our own future. Like, it's about the kids. It's about the future. And also, being that I am an educator, especially now with this whole COVID thing and the kids went to the e-learning and how they are coming back into the schools. We have to double-up even more because it's almost as if all the children know are at least two years behind. So, to have an opportunity where children can come and they can be in the Godly environment where it's not just about learning, but they giving us as far as the curriculum is concerned, but we also care about their livelihood or emotional state or spiritual state. And at this school of Genai Excellence, they also teach them about wealth and they give them a solid foundation. That is what we want to see. We always complained about how the upcoming kids are, they've lost their way and all of this different stuff. We here is an opportunity for us now to write that wrong and to have an effect, a positive effect on the history of not just Elkhart, but of the world that we live in. Opportunity is the American way. So, let's give an opportunity to something positive. We aren't talking about building a mall, or building a strip club, or building a liquor store. We are talking about a school. A school, an opportunity to educate. So, I am all in favor of Genai Excellence Academy and I pray that we all come together and that we do for the right of the kids to learn. That's all I have to say, thank you.

*Betson Coleman – APPROVE*

- Good evening, my name is Betson Coleman. I am in total favor of the Genai Excellence Academy and PLA. It's not about what's going on, it's about our future. And about giving

our students more choices to go to a school where they will excel. And it's about this country and about this world. That we give the students a choice about to bring out the \_\_\_ bring out what God brought them into this world to be. Then we are serving our purpose. It's not about money. It's about the students so let's keep our student's self in mind. About how we are going about doing this because our students are first. I grew up with Elkhart Community Schools since my mother Dr. Jordan Brawls graduating class of 1970. I went to another school in St. Louis Missouri. So, it's about the children. That's the, let's get our future. Let's build them up. And by having this, by having the choice for the parents, or the parents that put their kids at where they will exceed. That's the best thing we could ever do for our children. And remember it's not about us, it's about our future. What this country is going to be, what this world is going to be. And because of that let's make this choice for the children not about us. That's all I have to say.

*Michelle Guidance – APPROVE*

- Hello, my name is Michelle Guidance and I have worked in South Bend Community Schools. I have also worked with Niles Community Schools. I have worked with Youth Service Bureau, and also with, with Oaklawn. And now I am serving as a co-teacher and an assistant role at Genai Excellence Academy. And one of the things that I would just like to say that I am in support of Phalen and Genai Excellence Academy because working with these individuals, the teachers, the parents, but most importantly being able to serve our students, I have noticed from all the places that I have been able to serve other students, that this place specifically deals with the purpose and the individuality that each student not only are they gaining the skills and the academics that they need at whatever level they are at. I also had a great opportunity of being able to work with the other teachers in the "Yes I Can" Program and one of the greatest things that Ms. Newsome's curriculum really emphasized is the students being able to build their community with whatever gifts and talent they have been given. Now as an educator, to me that stuck out the most because as has been stated before, children have different learning levels. They have different growth, anything, but especially we are taking the academics, the building with the entrepreneurs and saying that you can go out into your community and not just be a citizen, but you are going to be a productive citizen. That's the thing that I absolutely enjoy the most about Genai. Is that we are creating students, but we are creating productive citizens. We are teaching them how to give back to their community, how to partner with their community in whatever they might be, whatever choices they would like to go. Whatever they would like to do. That we are building individuals, building good morals, building academics, but we are also just as a whole building them to be very productive citizens wherever they go and I'm finished.

*Beverly Maroney – APPROVE*

- Um I am in favor of Genai Excellence Academy PLA. My daughter went there all the way up until preschool and I really wish she could have continued. Her, her test scores now, she goes to West Goshen, and her test scores are above average. She's got, she is ranked the highest in every grade pretty much. She is in fourth grade so when she got to kindergarten, they tested her grade level and skill through state, so they put her in the Purdue program which is called the STEM program for kids that are a little smarter. She is, I guess scored this year, well this past year, two hundred points above every kid that was there with in all pretty much math, English. So, with that being said they won't push her up a grade and that's the thing that I wish. With charter schools that they continue to focus on the child. They don't do that pretty much in Elkhart Community or like where she is at. She is at West Goshen. They don't do



that. They just continue to keep giving her extra work and that's kind of not fair because she looks at me like okay why do I have to keep continuing to do a little more than what the other kids are doing. So, with that being said, I am for them just because they got her on her way. When she was in preschool, she knew her address. She knew her phone number. She knew how to spell her name. That's not pretty much normal at any other school. So, with that being said, I feel that Elkhart community should make room for another school to come just like in the business world. If we are going to compare to that. My daughter, I just knew she would get the best education. Now if you guys open the charter school, she will go to this school. No doubt about it. But I don't like the treatment. Sometimes I think it's a thing of racism. She is a Black girl. She is very intelligent. I feel that there she was not discriminated against any, on her skin, the way she looked when she went to Genai Excellence Academy. She was very confident. Putting her here makes her feel like, yes, she is the smartest one in the room, but she continues to focus on her skin color. And that's the thing that we are not talking about. There are a lot of racism that goes on in the Elkhart Community Schools and I went to Elkhart Community Schools. I was turned against. So, I am all for this school.

*Jackie Gaynard – APPROVE*

- My name is Jackie Gaynard and I am calling, I am in favor of Genai Excellence Academy. I had two granddaughters who excelled. The lady that just got off the phone was my daughter, and she is so right. My granddaughter really excelled. I also too, I would like to say something about Dr. Geraldine Brown. I was having a lot of trouble with my children at the Elkhart Community Schools so I am not in favor of them because of all the bad things that have happened to my children. In that school, in the public school. I am not against any school, but when racism or being neglected have a play in my child's life, then I would like to say something about it. I hate that there is favoritism. My son is now thirty years old and thanks to Dr. Brown, and her daughter Janine Genai Coleman, who put my son on because he was held back from one point away from passing the ISTEP test. And I will never forget this. He was in second grade. Yes, second grade and they swept it under the rug. The teacher left them and even one teacher smacked him in the face and they swept it under the rug. They did nothing. And I said to my son well what did he do to be slapped in the face with her hand? And um they said he was laughing and he didn't hear what the teacher said and to get his attention, she slapped him in the face. And so, they held him back when he got to sixth grade. And they said he was one point away from passing the ISTEP test. I mean no, fifth grade. I'm sorry. It was fifth grade, so they held him back because he didn't pass the ISTEP test. He was one point away from passing. And that teacher that slapped him in the face did not let him go on to the next grade level. And I went in, at the time I was pregnant, and I went in to see what was going on. And this is what I saw, I saw that she left every day at a certain time, this teacher. And I also saw that the kids that excelled a little bit better, they got to go to the next teacher's room so that teacher could teach them. So, these kids were left unattended, by themselves and my son was one of them. And I stayed there all day with them. Big pregnant eight months old, an eight months carrying lady of a baby. Shouldn't of probably even been there, but the kids were so needy. They didn't understand math, but Dr. Geraldine Brown the next year said if the principal would allow me and my daughter to take care of your son for the next year, we will see to him passing. And that is exactly what they did. My son now works for a company and he is almost a chemist. He mixes formulas. He makes formulas. He's making over thirty dollars an hour. And he gives all thanks and gratitude to God for Dr. Brown and her daughter Geraldine Brown for putting my son on. And I am so emotional about this because this means so much to me because these people,

you do not know how loving and caring they are for your children and how much they push them so your son or daughter can achieve and get the things that they need to make it in this world. And that is so important to me and for every mother. I speak for this school to become successful and to become a charter school. So, I am for Genai, Genai Excellence Academy because they are excellent and they are exactly what the name says. They are excellent. And that is all I have to say. Thank you.

*Brenda Kolby – OPPOSE*

- My name is Brenda Kolby. I work at Elkhart Community Schools in a non-teacher role. More importantly I am a single mom of two incredible daughters. I'd like to start by saying that as a single mother, Elkhart Community Schools staff has refused to let my children fail or fall through the cracks. My children have been supported by teachers, secretaries, custodians, nurses, and social workers who consistently put the needs of children before their own. Prior to 2021, I lived in Elkhart for eighteen years. My children attended Riverview Elementary. A diverse school just south of the river. Our experience at Riverview was outstanding. Both of my children excelled in the classroom including perfect I-READ 3 scores. In December 2020, due to a housing shortage in Elkhart, I moved across the county line into the highly awarded Penn-Harris-Madison School District. At this time, my children were enrolled in virtual learning through Riverview. As I thoughtfully considered our educational options for the next school year, I looked at the unique needs of my children and how they would best be served by the schools around us. My seventh grader has an interest in music and had attended Elkhart Community Schools month-long summer music camp, where her interest grew into a passion. I began researching our local offerings for middle and high school music programs. Undoubtedly, Elkhart Community Schools, and specifically Pierre Moran Middle School, has the best music program in our area. Music instructors at Pierre Moran have won countless awards as educators with their students excelling in music competitions in middle school and on to state competitions in high school. In addition to loving the music program, my daughter's doing very well in their high-ability classes and becoming close to the diverse group of students from around the district. My fifth grader struggled with virtual learning, as her attention span waned and she struggled to stay patient with her classmates. For her, I knew we had a significant challenge at looking at the coming school year. While she had done well in high-ability clusters, I knew she would struggle the following year with online learning. We were presented with the opportunity for her to apply to Elkhart's self-contained high-ability program at Roosevelt STEAM Academy. Our struggles with her attention span became opportunities for her under the leadership of a teacher who is trained and licensed to work with high-ability students. She is blossoming under the guidance of phenomenal teachers and administrators and support staff at Roosevelt. So far this year, she has participated in track, volleyball, and is looking forward to serving on student council where in her words she is "committed to making sure voices of all students could be heard." I could not be prouder of my children. I am certain there are no other schools in this area including PHM that could serve my child and her needs as well as Roosevelt STEAM Academy. So, when we speak about choice and her about the choices available to our community's children, I think we do a massive disservice to our public schools and especially to Elkhart Community Schools. I am a parent who lives in the highly awarded PHM school district and I choose to send my children to Roosevelt STEAM Academy and Pierre Moran Middle School South Central Elkhart because their programs are superior to other options. My children have never been more challenged and found more success and happiness than they have at our choosing of Elkhart Community Schools. I ask

you to thoughtfully consider the resources you'll be taking away from our communities most vulnerable students by allowing this charter to open in Elkhart. Using SchoolMint, the expensive marketing tool outlined in the Phalen application, and other expensive marketing tools as laid out in their plan, parents will be vastly oversold on schools that have been proven to consistently underperform. I ask you to look beyond the marketing curtain and see this school for what it is and to realistically understand how detrimental a school like this could be to the children and families in our Elkhart Community. Thank you.

*Sarita Stevens – OPPOSE*

- Alrighty, so when you are promoting any program, you would want to put your best foot forward or shine your highlights to make sure that people will see you and recognize you as a great service. So, I do want to say that it is a problem when an entity makes disparaging remarks that are not true or that the data is false to create a need for itself. And that is what we are seeing when we actually see what the data says about Phalen Academies. I am not a stranger to public education. I have been here for twenty-eight years in both traditional public and in charter. In fact, I did work for the Phalen Academies at Thea Bowman Leadership Academy. So, I do want to be very truthful about what the data actually says. While the schools did receive an A, the three schools that I found, did receive an A grade that grade was received from growth. Students are still functioning at below, ten percent of students are at the proficiency level for mathematics grades three through eight at Francis Scott Key, for example. Even the school that earned an A, students are operating. Sixty-five percent of the students are operating below the proficiency level. Meaning that only about twenty-four percent, I'm sorry twenty-seven percent of the students, are at proficiency or above proficiency. So, if you really drill down into the data and you compare the districts, there is not proven success with the Phalen Academies. You really do have to look at how a grade is determined. You have to look at actual proficiency and achievement and that is not showing here despite the fact that the subgroups are mainly Black and Brown. There are no diverse subgroups to compare the growth record or to affect their grades. And so, when you look at a district like Elkhart or Concord, that's actually embraced systems like the multi-tiered system of support, professional learning communities, where you actually identify the students that are not learning and why they are not learning and put the services behind them. In terms of summer school, we have a very robust summer school operation that includes about seven partners. One of them is the Elkhart, Elkhart Educational Foundation where students can pick their pathway or their career choice and learn from that. So, there is a robust effort also to do equity and inclusion. We are now becoming a trauma-informed school district. Where all of our teachers and employee groups are learning brain science to understand students better to understand how we can help students grow not only social and emotionally, but academically. We do know that the brain domains, the affected domain, is affected when it comes to what a student may be going through at home and so we have systems not just a framework not just the seven correlates of effective schools which just outlines effective leaders, strong curriculum, things like we actually have systems that are addressing those seven correlates and one of those systems is professional learning communities. And so, while I don't want to make disparaging remarks about an entity that is trying to become an LEA. I do want to say that it is vital that we are honest and that we have the data accurate. Which in this application there are several inaccuracies that we are going to write the Indiana Charter School Board about because if we are going to make, if an agency is going to make public comments about a school district, they need to be accurate. We also, there are a couple of entities in the application that there's an insinuation that they are

supporting this effort for the second location. We did check with them because they are also our partners and found that they are not aware. They do not understand why their name and their organization, non-for-profit organization, has been named in the application. And that's very significant when we address the fact that if we are going to create a choice it does need to be done honestly and above board. Thank you.

*Steve Thalheimer – OPPOSE*

- And I actually would just like to pick up and add a little more detail to to the comment that Dr. Stevens just made. Once we became aware that a couple of those entities listed on pages 19 and 20 of the application, were noticed in there. Ethos Innovation Site, Innovation Center and Lifeline are two entities that we have had long-standing relationships with at Elkhart Community Schools and so we were a little surprised to see that in there and so I have spoken to directors, acting directors, and board members of those two organizations and they are not sure why they are represented in this application as potential sites. There, there have not been conversations with them regarding this and so again when we are looking at where taxpayer dollars are going to be going and where this is being promoted as a choice for students, I just want to understand how it can be that again data can be represented in certain ways and that people that are being indicated as partners have indicated to me in the conversations that they have no idea why they are being represented in this application.

### **Emailed Comments**

No comments were provided via email.

August 22, 2021

Clara Hadley  
CH Educational Images  
1119 N. Main St #100  
Elkhart, IN 46514

Dear To, Whom It May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of Genia Excellence Academy in support of Phalen Leadership Academies proposal for Genai to become a Charter School in the Concord Community Schools.

I support this proposal because I have been involved with Genai Excellence since it's inception and have seen the positive effect and the impact it has made in the lives of the students. The programs and curriculum are wholistic, not only dealing with the educational training of the students but focusing on the mental and emotional part of learning. Teaching the students how to be productive citizens, making a difference in their community, and becoming Entrepreneurs is a vital part of their Educational Program. Becoming a Charter will provide an opportunity for more students to receive the excellent education that Genai gives.

The commitment Genia Excellence Academy has to ensuring excellence in the lives of their students is extraordinary and something to be emulated and certainly appreciated. They are committed to maintaining a high-quality educational environment for their students and I totally support their desire to become a Charter School in our Community.

Sincerely

Clara Hadley  
CEO, CH Educational Images

818 E. Bristol St.  
Elkhart, IN 46514.

August 18, 2021.

Dear Sir/ Madam:

**RE: LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR GENAI EXCELLENCE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL PROPOSAL.**

National and state public education funding formulae have been unable to sufficiently support the growing needs of the school districts. This fact is evidenced by the Elkhart and Concord Community Schools attempting to pass referendums to generate funds by appealing to the benevolence of community taxpayers.

With this background, it is relevant to note that the establishment of Genai Excellence Academy Charter School in this community qualifies for independent tax-payer funding from the government which will be a potential means of alleviating, to some degree, the burden on the community's public school system.

Genai Excellence Academy's Charter School will also provide employment opportunities for licensed teachers at competitive and comparable salary ranges in addition to the provision of professional development avenues for teachers. This will have the added benefit of retaining and attracting younger population into the community.

Although publicly funded, Charter Schools have the known advantage of being more independent than public schools. They however share many benefits offered by private schools without the associated cost of tuition. This furnishes Charter Schools with the ability to cater for specialized courses and approaches not offered by neighboring public schools. Genai Excellence Academy will provide an avenue for children from average and low-income families in this community to experience a more personalized interaction. This will increase student and parent engagement with resultant higher quality of education and consequent reflection in graduation rates; privileges which would otherwise be limited on the basis of financial constraints.

Providing diversity in educational resources to the community abolishes monopoly by any established school system. This grants access to alternative methods of imparting knowledge. Paraphrased, the establishment of different educational systems facilitates the introduction of additional sophisticated teaching methodologies which broadens the capability to address the individual needs of our children in a more individualized manner. Genai Excellence Academy has a track record for possessing the uncanny ability to nurture and remediate children

considered a challenge to school and who were expelled or rejected by the public school systems. The evolution of Genai into a Charter School will provide an additional resource for educational remediation for children in this category.

Families prefer to settle or relocate to thriving and successful school districts. The existence of diversified educational systems within a city will enhance attraction of new businesses with the possible increase of commerce.

In summary, it is my expressed opinion that the establishment of Genai Excellence Academy Charter School in this community will be a blessing for the following reasons:

1. A potential resource to attract additional governmental revenue which will partially alleviate the burden of our struggling public school systems.
2. Diversification of our community's educational resources.
3. Provision of employment opportunities to support the retention and attraction of the younger professional populace into our Elkhart community.
4. To facilitate otherwise unattainable educational alternatives for parents of minority, average and low-income families.
5. To render alternative avenues for educational remediation.
6. To attract new business which will increase commerce in this community.

The South Bend community school district has had two charter schools for the past few decades with a third imminent establishment. It is overdue for the Elkhart community to embrace the first Charter School. Genai Excellence Academy Charter School will be a complimentary support to our current educational system.

I add my voice in support of the establishment of Genai Excellence Academy School in our Elkhart community.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute my opinion.

Sincerely,

(  )

**Abigail A. Annan, M.D., FAAFP, DIPL. ABOM.**

*C.E.O Quintess Primary Care LLC.*

*818 E. Bristol St. Elkhart, IN 46507.*

*922 E. University Dr. Granger, IN 46530.*

# CURTIS T. HILL JR.

James Betley  
Executive Director  
Indiana Charter School Board  
143 W. Market St., Suite 400  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Mr. Betley,

I am pleased to write this letter in support of Phalen Leadership Academies (PLA)'s application to create a high-quality, K-6 public school serving children at Genai Excellence Academy in Elkhart County.

As Indiana's 43rd attorney general and a four-time elected prosecuting attorney I have borne witness to the value of quality education to the opportunity afforded youngsters in our state. As a father, I am persuaded by my practical experience with our public school system to not only appreciate the many positive aspects of our current system, but to also appreciate and advocate for alternatives that will sharpen our children and enhance our community.

Every child should have the opportunity to succeed in an environment that engages them to learn. I believe that the combination of public district schools, public charters, private schools/charters, and the variety of supplemental and after-school programs must coexist and work together to provide the strongest ecosystem of educational opportunities in our region -- while meeting each scholar's individual and family needs.

My own research has taught me that PLA has a strong track record of scaling their success and raising educational achievement for children living in underserved communities. They have transformed six F-rated schools into A-rated schools. I am impressed by PLA's dedication to serving children from vulnerable communities. Most children who attend PLA schools are Black and Latino, are growing up in exceptionally difficult circumstances, and are representative of a fair portion of the population of Elkhart's children. PLA not only helps children grow academically, their schools also demonstrate strong engagement with families and communities. I appreciate that PLA is a community-minded education nonprofit whose leadership team reflects the diversity of families they serve.

Elkhart is a growing community, and our families are constantly calling for more high-quality public schools. This need is especially urgent for children and families of color, who have been historically underserved. If approved, PLA can bring a high-quality public-school option to our community, providing a stable educational home for 100 children and families.

I believe that the school outlined in this application is exactly in line with what is needed in Elkhart to help children excel, and I strongly urge you to approve this proposal.

Very truly yours,



Curtis T. Hill Jr.  
Former Indiana attorney general



To whom it may concern,

July 30, 2021

Genai Excellence Academy should be allowed to charter. When Allowed to charter Genai Excellence Academy would offer parent choice, small class sizes and specially designed financial entrepreneur curriculum for the youth.

Parents may have a child or children who may have trouble being academically or socially or emotionally successful in the public school setting, but with Genai Excellence Academy as an charter option for education it would greatly increase the students success.

Genai Excellence Academy as a charter school will have small class sizes that will foster personal and individualized support. Research shows that the teacher student connection is one of the first steps to student learning. Genai Excellence Academy small class sizes will help build the positive student teacher relationship, which also fosters a caring and safe learning environment.

Genai Excellence Academy as a charter school will address the problem of generational poverty. Research shows that students caught in generational poverty are sometimes academically and socially disadvantaged due to financial illiteracy. As a charter school Genai Excellence Academy will have a financial curriculum specifically written to educate the youth, with the focus on entrepreneurship.

Genai Excellence Academy's administrator's and teacher's are committed to a high standard of education for all their students and should be allowed to become a charter school.

Thank you,

Antoinette Martinez

August 26, 2021

Danielle R Army  
701 Concord Ave.  
Elkhart, In 46516

Dear To, Whom it May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of Genai Excellence Academy in support of Phalen Leadership Academies proposal for Genai to become a Charter School in the Concord Community Schools.

I support this proposal because

1. Genai as a Charter would Uplift Community Feeling by Creating a feel of acceptances with its ability to have a lower teacher student ratio in every grade level
2. Genai as a Charter brings to the Community a higher level of parent involvement with Father Day/ Mother Day and A Grandparent lunch with Your Student...allows school and home to both be involved in the student's development.
3. Give the Community Family A Freedom of Choice!!!
4. Sophisticated alternative teacher approaches such as their Business and Entrepreneur Program is an awesome addition to this community.

Genai Excellence Academy's commitment to excellence in the lives of its students is exceptional and inspiring. They are committed to maintaining a high quality, educational environment for students and I fully support their desire to become a charter school in our area.

Sincerely,

Danielle R Army

August 25, 2021

Deborah Ursery  
209 Clarinet Blvd. E  
Elkhart, In. 46516

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of Genai Excellence Academy in support of Phalen Leadership Academies proposal for Genai to become a Charter School in the Concord Community Schools.

I support this proposal because of the additional support it will bring to the children in the Community that tend to be overlooked in a public school environment for example:

Individual learning assistance for children that may need a little extra attention. They have the ability to be able to focus on specific goals such as the building of character as well as opening up their minds to an alternative of Entrepreneur ship, all while still being able to maintain a high-quality education. Genai's smaller class sizes has continuously produced excellent learning results In Its students. This is to just name a few of the tremendous benefits that this charter would bring to the Children of Our Community.

Genai Excellence Academy's commitment to excellence in the lives of its students is exceptional and inspiring. They are committed to maintaining a high quality, educational environment for students and I fully support their desire to become a charter school in our area.

Sincerely,

Deborah Ursery  
Concern Community Grandparent



HIDDEN IN GOD, INC

SOUTH BEND, IN 46617

PHONE: (219) 902-7054

EMAIL: [INFO@HIDDENINGOD.COM](mailto:INFO@HIDDENINGOD.COM)

August 25, 2021

Dorlita Blakely of Hidden In God, Inc.

1020 N. Twyckenham Dr

Dear To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of Genai Excellence Academy in support of Phalen Leadership Academies proposal for Genai to become a charter school in the Concord Community Schools.

I support this proposal because I have seen the growth of the students attending its current program. The interest that they take in preparing their students early on for career and business success in the real world is one that you do not find in many school systems currently. So not only are the children's academic skills being strengthened but also their intellect, self-motivation, creative and execution skills strengthened.

Genai Excellence Academy's commitment to excellence in the lives of its students is exceptional and inspiring. They are committed to maintaining a high quality, educational environment for students and I fully support their desire to become a charter school in our area.

Sincerely,

Dorlita Blakely of Hidden In God, Inc

Founder and Chief Executive Officer

I'm Diana Father

I'm very grateful with this daycare

my daughter has learn a lot with them

and thank you for educating my

daughter more everyday

Good work.

Thank you for your time

and effort.

Jaime Pineda

It's been almost two years of day care for our son Diego. A time that may seem "short" at Genai Excellene Academy, but that requires for teachers (I would say quasi-mothers) a dose of effort, dedication, dedication, work, illusion, encouragement and that comes watered daily with a friendly smile and an intense red heart.

After this time and from close proximity, we have been able to see that no initial fear had reason to be, that the insecurities were disappearing and even accustomed us to the hug and kiss of farewell that awaits Diego every afternoon when we came to look for him.

Diego has learned a lot from you. From the English language to knowing more about GOD. And for my wife and me. Genai Excellene Academy are more than a daycare center, we have learned the meaning of caring for children with responsibility and a lot of love.

We thank GOD for allowing us to know about you. And we ask GOD to remain more professional every day.

They say good-bye with great pride

Darwin Villasmil and Marelis Lizardo

(Pope and Mom of Diego Villasmil)

FROM THE HOME OF

# THE HOLMES FAMILY

.....

March 22, 2021

Trevor and Breann  
Holmes  
3603 Olean Pl  
Elkhart, IN 46514

To whom it may concern,

This year has been very tumultuous for many students and teachers. My husband and I have a 7 year old daughter, Cali, who has down syndrome, and thus has special needs when it comes to schooling. Cali attended Genai Excellence Academy during her preschool years, where she thrived and had every need met. Cali then attended the public elementary school near our home when she started Kindergarten. We started this year, her 1st grade year, enrolled in the public school system here in Elkhart. We quickly found that Cali was forgotten and her needs were not being met. Not only was Cali not progressing in the way we knew she could, but we saw a regression when it came to learning and even behaviors. My husband and I made the decision mid year to remove Cali from the public school system.

Cali now attends Genai five days a week where she enjoys the staff and the positive learning

.....

environment. While in the public school system Cali came to believe she was naughty and failing. Because the staff at Genai took the time to learn about Cali and what her special needs are, she is once again thriving when it comes to schooling and behavior. Not only have we seen an extreme difference in Cali's willingness to go to school and learn, but we have also seen a difference in her behavior at home. Cali seems to be happier overall and excited to tell us about her day. We can not express enough how important Genai has been to our family and Cali's overall well-being. Genai's staff is attentive and caring and even though Cali has special needs she has never been forgotten or left behind.

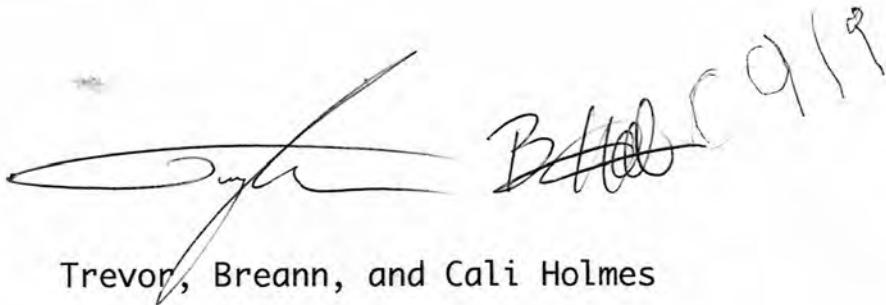
We would love to keep Cali in Genai in the years to come. Because Cali has special needs, she has an IEP that needs to be met. As parents we do not take our child's education lightly. We want nothing but the best for Cali and Genai is an integral part in providing that to her. We would love to see Genai accredited so we could continue providing Cali with the best. Cali has always been excited to attend Genai and it is so important to us that Cali is again excited about school and her education. Routine and consistency is so important to Cali, not only because she is a child, but because she has special needs, she thrives on routine and loves to know what her day has



in store. Genai provides that consistency and is always so attentive when it comes to not only our child but every child that walks through their doors.

Sincerely yours,



Holmes Family

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of three names: Trevor, Breann, and Cali. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish under the first name. The names are written in a slightly upward-sloping line.

Trevor, Breann, and Cali Holmes

# Genai Excellence Academy Charter

28 people have signed this petition. Add your name now! 

 Edwin Newsome Elkhart  3 Comments



## Support Petition

To: Indiana Charter School Board

In Support of:


PLA@Genai Excellence Academy Charter Application

The undersigned shows support for PLA@Genai becoming a charter school to serve children and families in our community.

Full Name Signature Contact Info

## Share for Success

 Share on Facebook

 Share on Twitter

 Share in Messenger

## COMMENTS

Nicole Bonds

Aug 31, 2021

Yes my kids will attend. Love the idea.



Anthony Greer

Aug 31, 2021

An Academy of excellence.



Edwin Newsome

Aug 30, 2021

Knowing that it is God's will for our sister to continue her legacy as a profound educator and transformer of lives for many years to come.



[Sign in](#) to comment

## SIGNATURES

Denise Chase United States	Shannon Warfield United States	Beverly Maroney United States	Nicole Williams United States	Nicole Bonds United States	Anthony Greer United States
Michael Bates United States	Sean brown United States	Michelle mccall United States	Kalie Harbaugh United States	C Mwale United States	Shamara Smith United States
Stephanie whitener United States	Lisa Banks United States	Bria Williams United States	Corey McKinney United States	Crystal Smith United States	VIVIAN WASHINGTON United States
Arielle Pratcher United States	Marshai Phillips United States				

# Support Petition

To: Indiana Charter School Board

In Support of: PLA@Genai Excellence Academy Charter Application

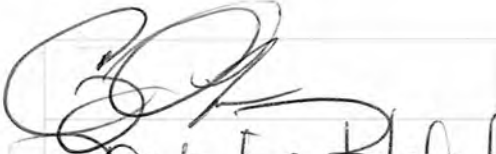
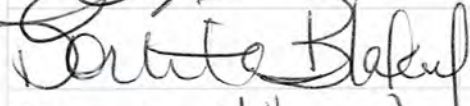
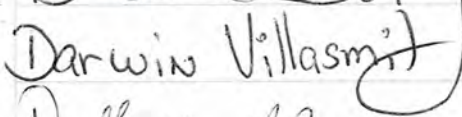
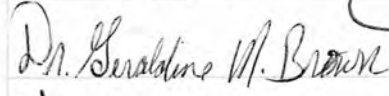
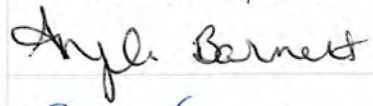


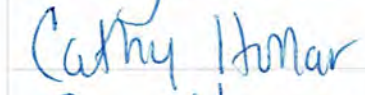
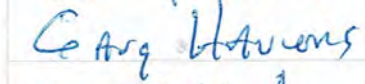

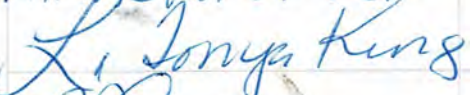





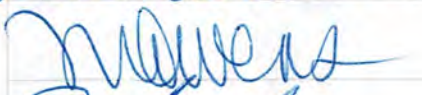





The undersigned shows support for PLA@Genai becoming a charter school to serve children and families in our community.



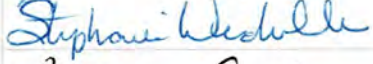














Full Name	Signature	Contact Info.
Nicole Martinez	N. Mtz	574 350 5649
Phyllis Lewis	Phyllis Lewis	574-575-7452
Bernadetta Simmons	Bernadetta Simmons	574-293-3463
Tiara Norman	Tiara Norman	(740) 258-3875
Kristy Robb	Kristy Robb	(574) 354-2991
Michelle Gider	Michelle Gider	574-386-5386
Jessica Stanley	Jessica Stanley	574 931 0452
Latrechia Riley	Latrechia Riley	(574) 226-7641
Brenetta Jackson	Brenetta Jackson	(574) 304-4546
Stuart Jackson	Stuart Jackson	(574) 849-9100
Bren Lewis	Bren Lewis	smoothmeme.bl@gmail
Kevin Davis Jr.	Kevin Davis Jr.	gloryrealm25@gmail
Caine Espinoza	Caine Espinoza	574.584.4905
Deborah Ursery	Deborah Ursery	(574) 389-6798
Donna Gooden	Donna Gooden	574-206-5936
Diane Hooker	Diane Hooker	574-575-8145
Alicia Aguirre	Alicia Aguirre	574-575-8145

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Iran Jennings	Iran Jennings	
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Vincent E Coleman	Vincent E Coleman	574-226-1510
Teila Hazwood	Teila Hazwood	574-903-8392
Valerie Malone	Valerie Malone	574-208-7974
Dennis Giden, Sr	Dennis Giden, Sr	574-309-6486
Jimmy Furlow	Jimmy Furlow	574-522-5541
Christian Dotson		708 830 6205
Sonja Peopple		
Maurie Peopple		
Richard Gunn	Richard Gunn	574-440-5824
ERIC B. CURRY	ERIC B. CURRY	574-612-1532
Nicole M. Smith	Nicole M. Smith	574-596-7601
Chris Fisher	Chris Fisher	574-343-0098
Adrienne Davis	Adrienne Davis	773-971-5859

Sharon Parkes	Sharon Parker	574 327 1926
Alice McCallister	Alice McCallister	574-315-8292
George Clark	George Clark	269-506-9735
A. Ann Brown	Dr. Abigail Annan	574-622-0145
Danisha Rouse	Jean Rouse	(602) 422-2859
Chasity Quiggin Conrad	Chasity Quiggin Conrad	(574) 703-5100
Sandra Conrad	Sandra CONARD	574 329 1820
Crystal Parker	Crystal Parker	574-320-6415
Tiana Hammond	Zettel	574-217-1519
Margo Brown	Margo Brown	293-6399
Pat Kirkendall	Pat Kirkendall	522-9699
Francis Rodriguez	Francis Rodriguez	849-1276
KAKESHIA ELLIS	Ellis	574-606-0025
MARCUS MARONE	McMANON	MARCUSURSER4@aol.com
Derek White	Derek White	574-334-2378
Cassandra White	Cassandra White	574 406-4573
Melvin T. Blakely Jr.	Blakely	574-703-8304
Shandra Jemison	Shandra Jemison	574-226-2693
Michael Jemison	Michael J	574-226-2693

Pat Roby	PAT Roby	574-274-9053
Dewayne Roby	DEWAYNE ROBY	574 274-9053
<del>Delphine Colar</del>	<del>Delphine Colar</del>	601-209-6071
DGC	Delphine Colar	601-209-6418
Gertrude Calhoun	Gertrude Calhoun	574-612-4762
Thomas Calhoun	Thomas Calhoun	574-612-2676
Davarinus Echols	Davarinus Echols	574-500-5132
Brenda Snider	Brenda Snider	574-849-1593
Tarita Thomas	TARITA THOMAS	574-292-3061
Denary Harvey	Denary Harvey	574-214-8113
Keshua Conard	Keshua Conard	574 3505470
Jean Carke	Jean Carke	574-612-6851
<del>Michael Bates</del>	Michael Bates	574-386-5988
Sharday Bates	Sharday Bates	574-210-9758
Charlene Thompson	<del>Charlene Thompson</del>	574-326-1878
Marshall Phillips	<del>Marshall Phillips</del>	574-347-0337
Alexxis Perez	<del>Alexxis Perez</del>	(574)327-0004
Andrew Goodman	<del>Andrew Goodman</del>	(574)386-3885
Thelma Smith	Thelma Smith	574-226-2420

	Corey Payton	(773) 557-9646
	Darlita Blakely	darlita.j@gmail.com
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	<del>MARSHA HAVENS</del>	<del>havensmarsh@Yahoo.com</del>
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	Marta Cerda	574-361-2893
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	Casey Clays	casey.clays@elkhart police.org
	Brandon Landtree	big81tree@gmail.com
	Ronnie Barron	rbarron514@hotmail.com

	Dustin Young	young-dustin@hotmail.com
	Jason Tripp	stripp407@gmail.com
	Stephanie Windmiller	swindmiller65@gmail.com
	Karen Eaton	eatonk259@gmail.com
	Brian Davis	Brian1davis1983@icloud.com
	Derek Heign	DHEIGN@GMAIL.COM
	Trevor Holmes	trevor-holmes@ellekurtzpolice.org
	Breann Holmes	breann.n.hall@gmail.com
	Olivia Cruz	yayabug1234@froid.com
	GABINO MARTINEZ	Gmartinez1074@yahoo.com
	Sydney Cruz	Texas1697@yahoo.com
	Chantella Newsome	574-575-5023
	Edwin Newsome	574-307-4430
	Robert Ursery Jr.	urseryrobert@aol.com
	Robin Thomas	(574) 514-2891
	Sandra Mose	sandraursery@yahoo.com
	Renee Army	reneearmy@gmail.com



08/26/2021  
Lakeesha Ellis  
169 State St Apt.203  
Elkhart IN 46516

Dear To Whom It May Concern

I am writing this letter on behalf of Genai Excellence Academy in support of Phalen Academies proposal for Genai to become a Charter School in the Concord Community Schools,

I support this proposal because the school brings another level of education, an openness with the teacher, they focus on a higher education, they will bring more to the community. They have a team that cares about what matters and what is important not just for students but what's for the teachers and community. Genai Excellence have compassion and heart for what they do and how they do it. They have a mission and vision to provide the students to the community so we all can unite one.

I fully support their desire to become a charter school in our area. They will put the students first and personal attention, creativity, and passionate teaching that students need to learn.

Sincerely,  
Lakeesha Ellis

August 26, 2021

Mr & Mrs. Corzell D. Riley  
2920 Benham Avenue  
Elkhart, Indiana 46517

Dear To Whom It May Concern,

It is my pleasure to write a letter on behalf of the Genai Excellence Academy in support of the Phalen Leadership Academies proposal for Genai to become a charter school in the Concord Community Schools.

I support this proposal because, Genai Excellence Academy is committed to ensuring that our future leaders in this region become successful. As grandparents of a current student, we have seen tremendous growth. Our granddaughter came into the academy at one, knowing very little. She will be two in less than one month, and I can honestly say that we are very impressed. The growth from week to week has been tremendous. She was hardly speaking, she didn't know colors, and she didn't know her full alphabet, amongst many other things. She is now extremely advanced, and eager to come home to show us what she has learned each day.

We believe that Genai Excellence Academy is already a tremendous asset to the community, and to become a Charter School would be an added bonus.

We trust that the leaders of Genai Excellence Academy will run an awesome, integral Charter school.

Sincerely,

Mr & Mrs. Corzell Riley

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in support of making Genai Coleman Excellence academy a charter school. My son has been attending this school since he was 1 and has been excelling in more ways than one from attending Genai.

We have seen our son recognize letters by the age of 2, writing his name by 3, and reading now at the age of 5. We cannot commend Genai enough for their continued excellence in their method of teaching students, not just STEAM subjects, but also general daily life of respect and courtesy for others. With the smaller class sizes, they can provide our son and other students a more personal touch when it comes to teaching. We know that not all people learn the same, at Genai the teachers have the flexibility to help individual students and ensure each child has the best opportunity of furthering their education. The smaller class sizes also allow for a more "community" feel when it comes to school. Everyone knows one another and from different grades. I went to Concord Community High School and I didn't know anyone outside of my grade. This is a big plus for helping students feel more comfortable in their atmosphere which will allow them to be more successful.

One statistic that has been proven time and time again is the level education and its correlation to general success in life (this includes better health, higher income and wealth, greater life span, and overall better decision making). Genai is a wonderful steppingstone to this path of success. Charter schools have also proved time and time again that kids are more likely to attend college and furthering their education to increase their likelihood of the successes that I noted.

To help ensure the success of students, we cannot rely on parents nor a school alone. We know that we need to work together to ensure our kids are staying active in school and help guide them to make the better decision for future success. Charter school help with the involvement of parents in their kids' schoolwork, we can see that studies show there is more involvement with kids in charter schools. By working together, we see a much higher turnout of student involvement and success in education.

Public schools in our area are not showing a very high level of success when it comes to students and their proficiencies in different subjects. Concord is in the bottom 50% for Math Proficiency, Overall Testing Rank, and Graduation Rate; the current Student:Teacher Ratio is 17:1. They rank a 4/10 on Public School Review. Before the merging of schools, Elkhart Central were in the same percentiles but had lower rates of graduation, math proficiency, and reading proficiency with a 16:1 student:teacher ratio. Elkhart Memorial statistics were even lower than Elkhart Central High School. The Elkhart area needs help to ensure the betterment of the students' success in future life. We cannot continue the road we are on with continuing decreases in test scores and proficiency levels and expect the area to be a better place. Genai is a school that can help with that, even if it is just a little bit; but a little bit can go a long way.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and consider Genai as a charter school. They are providing better education, flexible education, and general respect and courtesy education. Because of what they provide, we will statistically see healthier, wealthier, and longer living residents who will be more productive members of society and could provide more to the community. Knowing that we are missing the education that we need in this area, it would behoove us to move forward the acceptance of Genai as a charter and will make this area a better place for all.

Thank You,

Caine Espinoza

8-27-2021

Ms. Hummel's Cleaning Service  
918 W. Blanco Ave Elkhart IN 46516

To Whom it may Concern,

I am writing on behalf of  
Genae Excellence Academy in  
support of Phalen Leadership  
Academies proposal for Genae  
to become a Charter School in  
the Concord Community Schools.  
I support this proposal because  
Genae teaches children to  
dream for more than the  
normal. They know its child.  
personally and can work with  
them according to that child  
needs. It's more than a school,  
It's a place of love, where you  
can feel safe, by leaving your  
child.

Genae Excellence  
Academy's commitment to  
Excellence on the lives.

of its students is exceptional  
and inspiring. They are  
committed to maintaining  
a high quality, educational  
environment for students  
and I fully support their  
desire to become a charter  
school in our area.

Sincerely,  
Mrs. Huanes Claring

August 26, 2021

Genai Excellence Academy

2201 Toledo Rd,

Elkhart, In 46516

Dear To, Whom It May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of Genai Excellence Academy in support of Phalen Leadership Academies proposal for Genai to become a charter school in the Concord Community School district. In supporting this proposal, I believe that Genai Excellence Academy creates a nurturing and compelling learning community that engages young people in an integrated curriculum, allowing them to thrive and be their best selves. I believe that learning should be fun and exciting, and that youth should be actively involved in their education. Genai Excellence Academy has a vision to raise their level of excellence to create an authentic education experience. In addition, to the development of character, leadership skills, and community responsibility is at the heart of our whole-child approach and ensures students have the knowledge and skills to become contributing members of our community. I fully support Genai's desire to become a charter school in our area.

Sincerely,

Liane R. Hooker

Genai Excellence Academy

Substitute Teacher

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing regarding the Genai Excellence Academy, in support of Phalen Leadership Academies Proposal for Genai to become a Charter School in the Concord Community Schools.

I uphold this proposal because Genai Excellence Academy has created and provided opportunities for teachers, parents, and students as well as community members to be part of building an involvement in the child's adolescent years. The small classrooms settings would benefit for a more personalized attention to each student.

Genai Excellence Academy's commitment to excellence in the lives of its students is an encouragement. The high standard they hold and honor for the educational system is needed in the community. I am in agreement with their desire to become a charter school in this area.

Sincerely,

Alice Saxton

James Betley  
Executive Director  
Indiana Charter School Board  
143 W. Market St., Suite 400  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Mr. Betley,

I am pleased to write this letter in support of Phalen Leadership Academies (PLA)'s application to create a high-quality, K-6 public school serving children at Genai Excellence Academy in Elkhart County.

Insight Strategic Concepts is a strategic growth firm that has work with a number of business, nonprofit, and municipal, county and state government leaders. Our mission is to serve by facilitating the development and implementation of private-public growth and community development initiatives. Elkhart's greatest challenge, like that of the state of Indiana, is providing exceptional education to our young people and inspiring them to choose to stay long-term in our community -- to live, work and play while achieving a prosperous quality of life here in Elkhart.

Every child should have the opportunity to succeed in an environment that engages them to learn. We believe that the combination of public district schools, public charters, private schools/charters, and the variety of supplemental and after-school programs must coexist and work together to provide the strongest ecosystem of educational opportunities in our region -- while meeting each scholar's individual and family needs.

We know that PLA has a strong track record of scaling their success and raising educational achievement for children living in underserved communities. They have transformed six F-rated schools into A-rated schools. We are impressed by PLA's dedication to serving children from vulnerable communities. Most children who attend PLA schools are Black and Latino, are growing up in exceptionally difficult circumstances, and are representative of about half of the population of Elkhart's children. PLA not only helps children grow academically, their schools also demonstrate strong engagement with families and communities. We appreciate that PLA is a community-minded education nonprofit whose leadership team reflects the diversity of families they serve.

Elkhart is a growing community, and our families are constantly calling for more high-quality public schools. This need is especially urgent for children and families of color, who have been traditionally underserved. If approved, PLA can bring a high-quality public-school option to our community, providing a stable educational home for 100 children and families.

We believe that the school outlined in this application is exactly a piece of what we need in Elkhart to help children excel, and I strongly urge you to approve this proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shelley Moore".

Shelley Moore  
President, Founder



8/25/2021

3601 Bent Oak Trl Unit I

Elkhart, IN 46517

To whom it may concern:

I am writing on behalf of Genai Excellence Academy in support of Phalen Leadership Academies proposal for Genai to become a Charter School in the Concord Community School district.

I support this proposal because the faculty at Genai is extremely compassionate about enriching the lives of each and every student that enters the corridor of the building. Not only is scholarly education a priority, but a strong biblical foundation is an added bonus the students receive. Genai Excellence Academy is a place where students come first, and dedicated educators are eager to pour into the lives of the next generation of leaders.

In closing, Genai Excellence Academy's commitment to excellence in the lives of its students is exceptional and inspiring! They are committed to maintaining a high quality, educational environment for students and I fully support their desire to become a charter school in our area.

With gratitude,

Crystal Smith

August 25,2021

Thelma Smith

3601 Bent Oak Trail Unit I

Elkhart, IN 46517

Dear To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of Genai Excellence Academy in support of Phalen Leadership Academy's proposal for Genai Excellence Academy to become a Charter school in Concord Community Schools.

I support this proposal because the school has proven that they care about their student's education as well as their well being. They maintain a high level of expectation from staff as well as students, and work very hard for the success of every student.

Genai Excellence Academy's commitment to excellence in the lives of its students is exceptional and inspiring. They are committed to maintaining a high quality educational environment for students and I fully support their desire to become a charter school in our area.

Sincerely,

Thelma Smith

Special Needs Paraprofessional – Elkhart Community Schools