



**Board Members Present**

Joshua Owens (Chair)  
Gretchen Gutman  
Janet Rummel  
Mary Ann Ruegger

**Board Members Electronically Participating**

Virginia Calvin

**Board Members Absent**

Jill Robinson Kramer (Vice-Chair)  
DeLyn Beard

**Staff**

James Betley  
Bridgett Abston  
Nicky Hornyak  
Ryan Preston  
Jamie Brady

**March 19, 2019**

**Indiana Government Center South – Conference Room A  
Indianapolis, IN 46204**

**1:00 p.m. ET**

**Renewal Board Meeting**

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## **Agenda**

### **I. Call to Order/ Board Meeting Minutes Approval**

- a. Chair Josh Owens called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. ET.
- b. Approval of Board Minutes (3/19/2019)
  - i. Board Member Gretchen Gutman moved to approve the minutes from the December 11 meeting. Board Member Janet Rummel seconded, the motion passed by a voice vote with Members Calvin, Rummel, Gutman and Owens voting yay, and Member Mary Ann Ruegger abstaining.
- c. Board Member Virginia Calvin participated in the meeting via conference phone.

### **II. Board Business**

- a. Indianapolis Academy of Excellence Renewal Application
  - i. Executive Director, James Betley, gave the board an overview of the school's performance on the accountability system during operation. He gave background on the school's management agreement and self-management plan. Mr. Betley answered questions from board members regarding outcome metrics, monitoring processes and school enrollment for students.
  - ii. Chair Owens then invited representatives from Indianapolis Academy of Excellence ("IAE") in front of the board to answer questions. Bill Harris, board chair, addressed questions from the board regarding the school's lease and management agreements. Tara Gustin, school leader, answered questions from the board pertaining to academics and recent changes occurring at the school.
  - iii. Andrew Locke, IAE board member, updated the board on the outstanding loan and lease negotiations. He informed the board about conversations he has had with the management company, including possible forgiveness.
  - iv. Chair Owens then opened the floor to additional questions from the board. Member Rummel questioned Ms. Gustin about academic progress and curriculum changes. Member Ruegger inquired about enrollment trends and teacher retention.
  - v. Member Gutman questioned Mr. Harris about the financial history of the school and management company. Member Gutman asked about the declining enrollment and affects that has had on the school's budget.
  - vi. Ms. Gustin answered questions from Member Gutman around the renewal application's curriculum. Member Rummel inquired about where cuts would occur, if the school did not meet enrollment. Member Reugger questioned how much parents knew about the renewal process, and public comment.
  - vii. Chair Owens opened the floor to a motion. Member Calvin motioned to accept the staff's recommendation. No members voiced a second. Chair Owens opened the floor to accept another motion. Member Rummel motioned to vote to not renew Indianapolis Academy of Excellence's charter. Member Gutman seconded, and the motion passed by voice vote with Member Calvin voting nay, and Members Gutman, Ruegger, Rummel and Chair Owens voting yay.

- b. Chair Owens called for a recess at 2:14 pm. The meeting was called back to order at 2:18 pm.
- c. Gary Middle College West: Additional Charter
  - i. James Betley gave the board background on the Gary Middle College West's ("GMCW") request to add an additional charter to their current charter agreement.
  - ii. Dana Teasley, Vice President and General Counsel of Gary Middle College West and GEO Academies, gave the board an overview of the amendment request. Ms. Teasley detailed the history of GMCW and the model of the school. She informed the board of the main partnerships with Ivy Tech and Indiana Black Expo. Ms. Teasley spoke to the board about the unusual situation of the request and acknowledged that it is not past practice to have a school open the same year as the charter is awarded.
  - iii. Chair Owens asked Mr. Betley about the status of the organizer's current charter and the application process. Mr. Betley informed the board that currently the organizer has only one charter, and they are requesting the board hear their new application prior to the May board meeting so they can begin the start-up process with their partners. Member Gutman inquired about the school model and funding.
  - iv. Chair Owens clarified that the request coming before the board in May would be for an additional charter, within the application that had already been submitted. Mr. Betley confirmed the staff's capacity to review the application and request during the standard application window.
  - v. Member Gutman expressed concerned around the uncertainty of the organizer's capacity to open the school due to the budget going through legislature. She also expressed concern about allowing an exception for this organizer and how that would affect future applicants and processes.
  - vi. Chair Owens opened the floor for a motion. Hearing none, Chair Owens informed the applicant that the board, in its capacity that day, would not move forward with the request.
- d. Renewal Process
  - i. Mr. Betley introduced the option of having both the renewal and fall application board meetings at the same time. He explained the rationale for the timeline shift, citing enrollment windows and student choice options as the main motivations.
  - ii. Member Ruegger raised the concern about the availability of audited annual financials, and Member Rummel questioned capacity of schools to complete applications over the summer.
  - iii. Member Ruegger left the meeting at 2:57 p.m. and rejoined the meeting at 2:58 p.m.
  - iv. Chair Owens explained that he wants staff to have flexibility to review and evaluate most effectively, and asked for input on best processes. Mr. Betley described how the possible new timeline
  - v. Member Ruegger questioned if the timeline switched, would people leave the school prior to the end of the school year. Mr. Betley confirmed that is a concern, and explained April was chosen as the original renewal date so that it did not disrupt the educational environment of the students affected.

- vi. Chair Owens clarified the proposed change and confirmed that with the new timeline, both the fall and renewal cycle meetings will occur at the same time.
- e. ReThink Forward: Request to Waive Application Deadline
  - i. Mr. Betley informed the board of the unique situation around ReThink Forward's request. Since their ability to seek charters was dependent on the State Board of Education's ("SBOE") decision, they requested a waiver to submit their applications after the deadline. Mr. Betley confirmed their applications would go through the same internal and external reviews as others.
  - ii. Member Gutman requested that the applicant include a description of the schools' bond issues within their application. Mr. Betley agreed, informing the board that staff was cognizant of that fact. He spoke to the board about his conversations with SBOE.
  - iii. Member Ruegger indicated she was not inclined to allow the deadline waiver, stating that they would not have the bond issue resolved by the spring deadline.
  - iv. Chair Owens opened the floor to a motion on the waiver. Member Rummel motioned to waive the application deadline for ReThink Forward to submit two charter applications for the May 2019 Board Meeting. Member Calvin seconded, and the motion passed by voice vote with Member Ruegger voting nay, and Members Gutman, Calvin, Rummel and Chair Owens voting yay.

### **III. Staff Updates**

- a. New hire - Jamie Brady, Director of School Services
  - i. Jamie Brady introduced herself to the board. She detailed her experience in education and her role in the agency.
  - ii. Mr. Betley informed the board that Ms. Brady will be focused solely on support for the schools authorized by Indiana Charter School Board.
  - iii. Chair Owens welcomed Ms. Brady to the team.

### **IV. Closing Remarks**

- a. Chair Owens noted there were no further agenda items or public comments. He thanked the staff for their work.

### **V. Adjourn**

- a. The meeting adjourned at 3:19 p.m. ET.