



**Board Members Present**

Kim Preston (Chair)  
Jill Robinson Kramer (Vice-Chair)  
Gretchen Gutman  
Janet Rummel  
Mary Ann Ruegger  
Leslie Dillon  
Michelle Gough

**Board Members Absent**

Virginia Calvin  
Vanessa Allen-McCloud

**Staff**

James Betley  
Bridgett Abston  
Ryan Preston  
Nicole Hornyak

**December 13, 2019**  
**Indiana Government Center South – Conference Room A**  
**Indianapolis, IN 46204**

**11:00 a.m. ET**  
**Board Meeting**

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

- a. Chair Kim Preston called the meeting to order at 11:02 a.m. ET.
- b. Approval of Board Minutes (8/30/2019)
  - i. Chair Preston accepted a motion by Member Gretchen Gutman to approve the minutes from the August meeting. The motion was seconded by Member Janet Rummel and approved unanimously by voice vote with Members Leslie Dillon, Michelle Gough, Gretchen Gutman, Rummel, Vice-Chair Jill Robinson Kramer and Chair Preston voting aye.
  - ii. Member MaryAnn Ruegger joined the meeting at 11:07 a.m. ET.
  - iii. Vice-Chair Kramer recused herself during the Excel Center discussion and votes from 11:04 a.m. to 11:34 a.m. ET.

**II. Charter School Renewal Application Consideration**

- a. **Excel Center – Noblesville**
  - i. Presentation of staff recommendation (5-7 minutes)
    1. Executive Director, James Betley, detailed the staff recommendation for a five-year renewal. He provided the board with an overview of the school's performance during their charter term.
  - ii. Presentation of proposal by board (8-10 minutes)
    1. Betsy Delgado, Vice President of Excel Center's Mission and Education and Steve Dillon, Director of Excel Center – Noblesville introduced themselves to the board. Dr. Dillon spoke of the achievements the campus has achieved.
  - iii. Question and answer period
    1. Members Gutman and Ruegger inquired about where their students were coming from, relationships the campus has created with local school corporations, including programs and certifications.
  - iv. Board decision
    1. Chair Preston called for a motion. Member Gutman motioned to accept the staff recommendation of approval for a five year charter and Member Rummel seconded.
    2. The motion for a five year renewal passed with Members Dillon, Gough, Gutman, Ruegger, Rummel and Chair Preston voting aye.
- b. **Excel Center – South Bend**
  - i. Presentation of staff recommendation (5-7 minutes)
    1. Mr. Betley, detailed the staff recommendation for a full renewal. He gave a synopsis of the school's performance on ICSB and DOE's accountability systems.
  - ii. Presentation of proposal by board (8-10 minutes)
    1. Debie Coble, President of Goodwill, Cindy Cavanaugh, Vice President of Excel Centers and Justin Zobrosky, Director of Excel Center – South Bend introduced themselves to the board and gave an overview of the school's performance and future projects.
  - iii. Question and answer period
    1. Member Ruegger asked questions around the total enrollment of all three campuses, advertising expenses and governance transparency.
  - iv. Board decision

1. Chair Preston opened the floor to a motion. Member Gutman motioned to accept the staff recommendation for a full renewal and Member Rummel seconded.
2. The motion for a full renewal passed with Members Dillon, Gough, Gutman, Ruegger, Rummel and Chair Preston voting aye.

### **III. Charter School Activations Consideration**

#### **a. Phalen at Francis Scott 103**

- i. Presentation of staff recommendation (5-7 minutes)
  1. Mr. Betley provided the board with a background on the charter activation process and the history of charters granted to Phalen.
- ii. Presentation of proposal by board (8-10 minutes)
  1. Earl Phalen addressed the board and gave a brief synopsis of the charter activation request.
- iii. Question and answer period
  1. Members Dillon and Gutman inquired about the logistics of the agreement between Phalen and IPS. Member Ruegger questioned the financial structure and impact of less funding.
- iv. Board decision
  1. Chair Preston opened the floor to a motion. Member Gutman motioned to accept the staff recommendation to grant the charter activation for Phalen at 103 and Member Rummel seconded.
  2. The motion passed with Members Gough, Gutman, Rummel, Vice-Chair Kramer and Chair Preston voting aye. Members Dillon and Ruegger voted nay.

#### **b. Phalen High School**

- i. Presentation of staff recommendation (5-7 minutes)
  1. Mr. Betley provided the board with a background of Phalen's middle school grade span and the reasoning for using the charter activation for a high school to separate the two.
- ii. Presentation of proposal by board (8-10 minutes)
  1. Phalen Leadership Academy Principal, Nicole Fama, spoke to the board about the school's culture and performance to date. Mr. Phalen explained the split was also helpful for fundraising.
- iii. Question and answer period
  1. Member Gutman asked questions around the current grade structure and enrollment. Members Dillon and Ruegger inquired about building and financial logistics.
- iv. Board decision
  1. Chair Preston opened the floor to a motion. Member Gutman motioned to accept the staff recommendation to request to activate a charter for the purpose of establishing James and Rosemary Phalen High School. Member Gough seconded.
  2. The motion passed with Members Gough, Gutman, Rummel, Vice-Chair Kramer and Chair Preston voting aye. Members Dillon and Ruegger voted nay.

### **IV. Charter School Applications Consideration**

- a. **Purdue Polytechnic High School – South Bend**
  - i. Presentation of staff recommendation (5-7 minutes)
    1. Mr. Betley summarized the staff recommendation to approve the application, and gave an overview of the proposed school plan and potential partnership with South Bend Community School Corporation (“SBCSC”).
  - ii. Presentation of proposal by board (8-10 minutes)
    1. Scott Bess, school founder and CEO of Purdue Polytechnic High School approached the board. He gave a background on the proposed partnership with SBCSC and the progress of the two operating campuses.
  - iii. Question and answer period
    1. Member Ruegger questioned the applicant on current student enrollment, financial statements and philanthropy. She inquired about Purdue’s enrollment agreement and the organization’s transparency.
    2. Member Dillon asked questions regarding the partnership with South Bend, emotional support for students and teacher recruitment.
    3. Member Kramer asked for clarification on the services and spaces the school will share with SBCSC. Member Gutman inquired about the board make-up and other avenues students have at the school.
  - iv. Board decision
    1. Chair Preston opened the floor to a motion. Member Gutman motioned to accept the staff recommendation to approve a charter for Purdue Polytechnic High School – South Bend, Member Rummel seconded.
    2. The motion passed with Members Gough, Gutman, Rummel, Vice-Chair Kramer and Chair Preston voting aye. Members Dillon and Ruegger voted nay.
- b. **Indianapolis STEAM Academy**
  - i. Presentation of staff recommendation (5-7 minutes)
    1. Mr. Betley gave the board a history of the organizer’s progression through multiple application cycles and the rationale behind the staff’s recommendation of approval for this cycle.
  - ii. Presentation of proposal by board (8-10 minutes)
    1. School founder and CEO, Yvonne Bullock, addressed the board and provided updates to the board on the continued outreach that was done in the community and the new partnerships that were created, since the last application cycle.
  - iii. Question and answer period
    1. Chair Preston inquired about the literacy structure. Member Rummel questioned the administrative staffing. Both Members Ruegger and Dillon asked about community partnerships and parent interest. Member Gutman inquired about where students would matriculate once they completed their 8<sup>th</sup> grade year.
  - iv. Board decision
    1. Chair Preston opened the floor to a motion. Member Gutman motioned to accept the staff recommendation to approve a charter for Indianapolis STEAM Academy, Vice-Chair Kramer seconded.

2. The motion passed with Members Gutman, Rummel, Vice-Chair Kramer and Chair Preston voting aye. Members Dillon and Ruegger voted nay. Member Gough recused herself from the vote.

## V. Break

- a. Chair Preston called for a motion to break. Member Rummel motioned for a five minute break and Member Gutman seconded. The break lasted from 1:26 – 1:42 p.m. ET.
- b. **ReThink Forward – Emma Donnan Middle School**
  - i. Presentation of staff recommendation (5-7 minutes)
    1. Mr. Betley reminded the board of the strenuous application and evaluation process. He informed board that each of the three applications submitted were not handled any differently than other applications that have been received. He gave an overview of each of the three schools, including concerns staff had around enrollment, financials and educational program. Due to those concerns, the staff recommendation was to approve a charter conditionally for three years.
  - ii. Presentation of proposal by board (8-10 minutes)
    1. Ted Feeny, Board Chair of ReThink Indiana, introduced himself to the board. John Hage, CSUSA CEO, spoke to the board about the history CSUSA has had at the schools, including the support they have provided financially.
  - iii. Question and answer period
    1. Member Gough inquired about staffing moving forward. Member Dillon asked about board member experience. Member Ruegger stated that the organizer structure prohibits them from receiving a charter. Member Gutman asked clarifying questions around the governance tax structure. Member Ruegger inquired about student data comparison and student data ownership. Questions regarding IPS bond and facility issues were addressed by Mr. Betley.
  - iv. Board decision
    1. Chair Preston opened the floor to a motion. Member Gutman motioned to accept the staff recommendation to approve a conditional charter for Emma Donnan, Member Gough seconded.
    2. The motion did not pass. Members Gough, Gutman and Chair Preston voted aye. Members Dillon, Ruegger Rummel and Vice-Chair Kramer voted nay.
- c. **ReThink Forward – Emmerich Manual High School**
  - i. Presentation of staff recommendation (5-7 minutes)
    1. Mr Betley provided the board with the staff summary. He noted high homeschool rate, enrollment and budgetary concerns and lack of a board member with educational experience for the staff's recommendation.
  - ii. Presentation of proposal by board (8-10 minutes)
    1. Manual Principal, Michael Wingert, addressed the board and detailed the progress the school has made and the multiple ways the school reaches, supports and holds their students accountable.

- iii. Question and answer period
  1. Chair Preston inquired about the trends and trajectory of the school and students attending.
  2. Mr. Wingert spoke to the board about the difficulty of hearing the Emma Donnan vote and stated the amount of support their school.
  3. Member Ruegger asked the applicant to explain the homeschool data. Misty Ndiritu, Indiana State Director for NEI, explained the process and how the numbers were calculated.
  4. Vice-Chair Kramer inquired about outcomes and success measurements. Member Rummel asked about the graduation waiver rates. Member Ruegger requested more information on the students who spoke at the public hearing, specifically if they were helped in their comments.
- iv. Board decision
  1. Chair Preston opened the floor to a motion. Member Gutman motioned to accept the staff recommendation to approve a conditional charter for Emmerich Manual, Member Gough seconded. Member Dillon impressed on the members of the public to continue to remain united, regardless of the outcome.
  2. The motion did not pass. Members Gough, Gutman and Chair Preston voted aye. Members Dillon, Ruegger Rummel and Vice-Chair Kramer voted nay.

**d. ReThink Forward – T.C. Howe Community School**

- i. Presentation of staff recommendation (5-7 minutes)
  1. Mr. Betley noted that the summary and recommendation for this school was essentially the same, except the applicant is wishing to operate as a K-12 school. If approved, they would need to come back with a grade amendment request in the future.
- ii. Presentation of proposal by board (8-10 minutes)
  1. Paige Pittman, Principal of T.C. Howe addressed the board and gave brief stories of the school and students she has had.
  2. Member Gough left at 4:00 p.m. and returned at
- iii. Question and answer period
  1. Chair Preston requested a description of the students who attend the school and the plan the organizer has for a potential school pipeline.
  2. Member Gutman questioned what, if any, plan IPS has for the future of the school. Member Ruegger inquired if community members would be involved with any plans IPS has moving forward.
- iv. Board decision
  1. Chair Preston opened the floor to a motion. Member Gutman motioned to accept the staff recommendation to approve a conditional charter for T.C. Howe, Member Gough seconded.
  2. The motion did not pass. Members Gough, Gutman and Chair Preston voted aye. Members Dillon, Ruegger Rummel and Vice-Chair Kramer voted nay.

**VI. Other Board Business**

- a. Board Meeting Procedures and Electronic Participation Policy
  - i. Mr. Betley gave an overview of the changes made in board policies.
    - 1. Chair Preston accepted a motion by Member Gutman to approve the revised board policies. The motion was seconded by Member Dillon and approved unanimously by voice vote with Members Dillon, Gough, Gutman, Ruegger, Rummel, Vice-Chair Jill Robinson Kramer and Chair Preston voting aye.

**VII. Closing Remarks and Adjournment**

- a. Chair Preston accepted a motion by Member Rummel to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Member Gutman and approved unanimously by voice vote with Members Dillon, Gough, Gutman, Ruegger, Rummel, Vice-Chair Jill Robinson Kramer and Chair Preston voting aye.