



**Board Members Present Electronically**

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

**Board Members Absent**

Vanessa Allen-McCloud

**Staff**

James Betley  
Bridgett Abston  
Ryan Preston  
Nicole Hornyak

**NOTICE OF VIRTUAL MEETING AND AGENDA  
June 17, 2020 at 1:00 pm EDT**

<https://indiana.webex.com/indiana/j.php?MTID=m45b163ed36b020fe22bc7327764f7981>

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

- a. Call to Order
  - i. Board Chair, Kim Preston, called the virtual meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. EDT.
  - ii. Vice Chair Jill Kramer joined the meeting at 1:06 p.m. Board member Janet Rummel joined at 1:24 p.m., and board member Gretchen Gutman joined at 2:01 p.m. Board member Virginia Calvin left the meeting at 2:30 p.m.
- b. Approval of Board Minutes (4/29/2020)
  - i. Member Calvin moved to approve the April 29, 2020 board minutes. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote with Members Calvin, Dillon, Gough, Ruegger, Rummel, Vice-Chair Kramer and Chair Preston voting aye.

## **II. Charter Approval**

- a. Consideration of Charter Activation for PLA @ Louis B. Russell School 48
  - i. Executive Director, James Betley, gave background on Phalen Leadership Academy's (PLA) request to activate a charter to convert Louis B Russell, Jr School #48, into a participating innovation network charter school, tentatively named PLA at Louis B Russell Jr School #48 ("PLA@48").
  - ii. Jamie Vandewalle, IPS Chief Portfolio Officer, described the track record with the Phalen organization and expressed support for the request. Members of PLA organization, Earl Phalen and Nicole Fama, spoke to the board regarding the activation and planned operation of the school under the innovation agreement with Indianapolis Public Schools.
  - iii. Member MaryAnn Ruegger posed questions to the PLA team regarding staff retention and special education. Mr. Phalen answered and provided additional details to the board.
  - iv. Chair Preston opened the floor for a motion. Member Rummel moved to approve the request to activate a charter to convert Louis B Russell, Jr School #48, into a participating innovation network charter school. Member Calvin seconded, and the motion passed with members Calvin, Dillon, Gough, Rummel, Vice-Chair Kramer and Chair Preston voting aye and member Ruegger voting nay.

## **III. Staff Updates**

- a. Fall Application Cycle and Renewal Process
  - i. Mr. Betley gave a brief overview of the application cycles and dates for board members.
- b. Current State of the Agency
  - i. Mr. Betley provided the board with an update on the agency's budget and current operations since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- c. End of Year Observations
  - i. Bridgett Abston, Director of Accountability and Applications, detailed to the board the staff's work of monitoring and providing technical assistance to schools throughout the end of the school year.
- d. Considerations for Fall

- i. Mr. Betley spoke to the board about proposed student funding and the potential budget concerns schools could face. He described the history of virtual student funding through the legislature and how schools could be impacted.
- e. Spring Application Cycle
  - i. Mr. Betley described circumstances that led to the spring cycle being cancelled, including the uncertainty of holding meetings during the pandemic while complying with open door law. Mr. Betley reached out to the applicants and provided information regarding the cycle cancellation.

#### **IV. Other Board Business**

- a. Charter Amendment Flexibility
  - i. Mr. Betley gave the board a brief synopsis of the current charter amendment process. He explained that given the current circumstances, the board would need to meet almost weekly to continuously approve school amendment plans due to COVID-19. He stated the staff recommendation is that the board give the Executive Director the flexibility to approve proposed amendments to a school's Charter Agreement without requiring formal Board approval, in order to address the inevitable changes required by the COVID-19 pandemic.
    - 1. Member Calvin stated her support of the staff's judgement and their plan for schools moving forward. Member Ruegger asked questions specific to what the approval of flexibility would be. Mr. Betley gave examples of potential plan changes a school could bring. Member Ruegger expressed concern about location changes and transparency.
    - 2. Chair Preston acknowledged the potential difficulty of holding multiple meetings to approve each school's amendment request. She opened the floor for a motion. Member Rummel moved to accept the staff recommendation, removing item three, to give the Executive Director the flexibility to approve proposed amendments to a school's Charter Agreement without requiring formal Board approval for the 2020 school year. Member Ruegger seconded, and the motion passed unanimously by voice vote.
- b. Administrative Fee Adjustments
  - i. Mr. Betley described how the agency has operated and been impacted by the pandemic. Mr. Betley stated the staff recommendation is to increase the administrative fee collected from schools by ICSB under the authority provided by Indiana Code by one quarter of a percent (0.25%) if it is determined that existing revenue will not meet the expenditures for FY 2020-21 or FY 2021-22.
    - 1. Member Gutman questioned the agency's budget and appropriations including surplus. She questioned what amount the proposed increase would bring in. Mr. Betley stated it was impossible to know, given enrollment variations. He explained that the agency is able to slowly raise the fee because of the cautious spending and low expenditures.
    - 2. Member Gough questioned how the State was operating and the processes for funding. Mr. Betley explained that due to the pandemic,

the State is making very quick actions, unlike a normal budget year. He stated that this recommendation is just to have the flexibility to make the decision to increase the admin fee, if needed.

3. After lengthy discussion, Mr. Betley requested the recommendation be removed from board vote.
- ii. Accountability
    1. Mrs. Abston provided the board with a brief overview of school accountability and current performance frameworks.

**V. Closing Remarks and Adjournment**

- a. Chair Preston called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Member Ruegger moved to adjourn the meeting and Member Dillon seconded. The meeting ended at 3:04 p.m. EDT.