



March 11, 2016

Drexel Foundation for Educational Excellence, Inc.  
3401 West Fifth Avenue  
Gary, Indiana 46406  
Attn: Chairman of the Board of Directors

Dear Ms. White,

The Indiana Charter School Board (“ICSB”) respectfully requests the following additional information related to its review of the Change in Authorizer Application submitted by the Drexel Foundation for Educational Excellence, Inc. (“Drexel Foundation”) with respect to Thea Bowman Leadership Academy (“TBLA”).

1. Pursuant to the letter from Ball State University Office of Charter Schools (“OCS”) to the Drexel Foundation dated January 15, 2015 granting a provisional one (1) year renewal (“Renewal Letter”), TBLA was required to submit to OCS an action plan identifying a common set of instructional tools per grade level and the school's focus to increase ISTEP+ and NWEA, as well as maintaining or improving IREAD-3 scores. Please provide a copy of this plan.
2. Please address what steps the Board has taken, or will take, to address concerns that TBLA has had significant issues with state and federal financial reporting, management, oversight and legal compliance.
3. Please address what steps the Board has taken to address the issues identified in IDOE’s 2015-16 Title I and Title II Monitoring Report, including: 1) the alleged lack of highly qualified teachers; 2) improper or incorrect payment of instructional personnel from Title I and Title II funds; 3) a lack of financial and monitoring controls over the use of Federal dollars; 4) a failure to submit required reports and submitted reports not aligning with the approved grant; 5) a failure to properly design and implement a Schoolwide plan; 6) the provision of programing using federal funds that doesn’t match was approved in the FY2016 grant; 7) a lack of compliance with the required Title I federal equipment and inventory list; and 8) missing/unaccounted for Title I equipment. Please address what specific steps the Board has taken to ensure Title compliance in the future.
4. Please describe the proposed Board’s collective qualifications for operating a high-quality school in Indiana and assuming stewardship of public funds, including capacity in areas such as: 1) School leadership, 2) Administration and governance, 3) Curriculum, instruction and assessment, 4) Financial, business and school operations management, 5) Performance management, 6) Parent and community engagement, and 7) Facilities management. Explain how the proposed Board’s skills and

experience support its ability to effectively govern, monitor and provide oversight of the financial, academic and performance of the school and to hold the proposed ESP accountable. Please describe how the proposed Board's composition differs from the previous Board.

5. Please describe the results of the facility review required by the Renewal Letter to identify and address health and safety issues, i.e., a recently reported mold problem. Provide evidence that issues identified during the review have been addressed.
6. Please describe the proposed Board's policy with regard to compliance with Indiana Open Door and Public Access Laws. Please address the concerns that the Board had been failing to comply with Indiana's Open Door Law by failing to post notification of its meetings, failing to post notification of its executive committee meetings and improperly convening (and documenting the statutory reasons for) executive (i.e., closed) sessions.
7. Please describe the Board's current governance policies, what kind of training will new Board members be required to complete and by what date, and what you see as the nature of the board's contractual relationship with, and accountability to, the ICSB as a public school.
8. Please describe how the Board has or plans to address the items described in the February 29, 2016 Notice of Bond Default, including: 1) inadequate recordkeeping with respect to financial and human resources matters; 2) the Drexel Foundation's failure to provide the Bond Trustee with (i) its 2015 audit, (ii) its calculation of compliance with its Debt Service Coverage Ratio, and (iii) its officer's certificate certifying compliance with its covenants under the Loan Agreement; and 3) the Drexel Foundation's inability to produce audited financial statements for its prior Fiscal Year.

Finally, we note that, in order to be compliant with Indiana Code, the Drexel Foundation must amend its Bylaws or Articles of Incorporation to include the statutory requirements for dissolution contained in Indiana Code § 20-24-3-3:

“Upon dissolution: (1) the remaining assets of the charter school shall be distributed first to satisfy outstanding payroll obligations for employees of the charter school, then to creditors of the charter school, then to any outstanding debt to the common school fund; and (2) remaining funds received from the department shall be returned to the department not more than thirty (30) days after dissolution.”

Sincerely,



James R. Betley  
Executive Director  
Indiana Charter School Board