THE EXCEL CENTER, LLC
BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING
AUGUST 4, 2025

MINUTES

The Board of Directors of The Excel Center, LLC met at 9:00 a.m. August 4, 2025, at The Excel Center – Southeast location. Present were:

Gita Baker, present
Kofi Barko, present/virtual
Patricia Castaneda, present
Garland Graves, present/virtual
Perry Griffith, not present
Kent Kramer, present
Jay Oliver, present
Don Palmer, present/virtual
Laura Pickett, present
Josh Shelton, present/virtual

Staff/Other:

Brady Bridgeforth
Katie Bustamante
Twyla Carlson
Twyla Carlson
Josh Cooper
Ivan Cropper
Betsy Delgado
Steve Dillon
Corey Emery
Matt Fortney
Emily Fritsch
Mike Gallo
Lynn Greggs
Amanda Grube
Elysse Hamlin
Miriam Henry
Kacie Klem
Johnny Manson
Kim Myers
Mike Myers
Andrea Newman
Lakia Osborne
Kari Podany
Shonda Russell
Eric Schlegel
Dan Scott
Todd Strong
Tammi Tebbe
Sarah Thomas
Julie Vick
John Westfall
Danielle White

Guests:

Bre Petty, OEI, Mayor's Office
Brenda Moore, GW of the Valleys

Board Chair Gita Baker presided and called the meeting to order.

There was no public comment.

On a motion by Jay Oliver, duly seconded, the meeting minutes of May 19, 2025, meeting were approved as previously distributed. Roll call by individual members' present were all in agreement of approval.

Matt Fortney and Josh Cooper gave the Treasurer's report for the period through June 30, 2025.

Matt/Josh noted the fiscal year 2025 financial performance was reviewed, showing strong results with revenue of $38.2 million, exceeding budget by $1.9 million. Operating profit for the year is $276,000, $173,000 ahead of budget, and positive cash flow of $2.1 million, ending the year with a cash balance of $10.1 million. Josh reviewed the Balance Sheet with unrestricted net assets at $18.2 million, up $236,000 from this time last year.

On a motion by Patricia Castaneda, duly seconded, the financial statements for June and accounts payable for April, May and June were approved unanimously. Roll call by individual members' present were all in agreement of approval.

Jay Oliver commented on the GEI Finance & Audit Committee, noting this meeting was to approve the budget. He noted discussions on the economy, tariffs and approval of the budget during the meeting.

Katie Bustamante discussed the upcoming relocation of the Noblesville Excel Center to a new dedicated space near Big Lots, which will allow continued collaboration with Ivy Tech students. Ribbon-cutting ceremonies were announced for the newly completed permanent spaces in Bartholomew County (tomorrow at 9:30 am) and Grant County on August 25 at 10:30 am. Katie then pointed to the Education Achievement Award Video featuring Saja Abbas, a former Excel Center student who overcame significant challenges to achieve her goals.

Corey Emery and Lakia Osborne reported on the Academic Dashboard, highlighting the following:

Demographics –

- The Multilingual Learner (MLL) population in the network bounced back after dropping to 39% in May from 45% in January, alleviating concerns that the drop in May was the beginning of a trend.
    - Hired MLL Manager, Katrina McCarroll, to increase support to teachers and leaders across the network in serving this population.
    - 75% of students served last school year enrolled with basic English proficiency, leading to a revision in our curriculum in serving these students that is hyper-focused on English proficiency.
- No major shifts at the network level in age demographics of Special Education.
- 3,950 students "rolled over" from last school year into Term 1 this year.

There was discussion on the age and special populations categories of the matriculation rate from a success factor.

Number of Credits Earned –

- A long-term goal that we will continue to prioritize in this school year is raising credit attainment.
    - Over 15,000 more credits were earned in 2024-25 than the previous school year.
        - Several schools increased year-over-year credits by more than 1,000 credits: Decatur, Meadows, Michigan St., Shadeland, Southeast, and University Heights – accounting for 60% of the increase.
        - The network also increased the number of students earning at least one credit last school year by nearly 1,000 students.

There was discussion on populations relocating to be closer to schools, increase in immigrant population in Kokomo and the Shelbyville communication re-engagement.

Graduate Outcomes –

- Largest graduate totals since 2019-2020.
- 100% of graduates earned dual credits and/or certifications for the first time ever.
- More work to do to meet individual school goals and increase the enrolment-graduation rate.

Lakia reported on the 2024-25 Outcomes, highlighting the following:

Post-Secondary Outcomes –

- Excel Center achieved 10,000 graduates this year.
- Anderson, Noblesville, and Lafayette are the highest dual credit earners for the year.
- University Heights, Meadows, and Kokomo are the highest certification earners for the year.
- Top Four Certifications Earned:
    - Emergency Telecommunications Certification
    - Home Health Aide
    - Pharmacy Tech
    - QuickBooks

Lakia discussed the organization's success in retaining talent, highlighting a significant reduction in teacher vacancies from 51 in July last year to 10 this year. She attributed this to competitive changes, including a complete overhaul of the teacher salary band in 2023-24, and a restructured organizational chart that improved team access and decision-making.

Betsy Delgado emphasized the importance of the model's culture and the trust between teachers, coaches, and students, which contributes to teacher retention.

Miriam Henry introduced Mike Myers, Director, Excel Center – Lafayette. Mike highlighted the success of a recent graduate, Stephanie Solis Ocampo, and discussed the center's achievements, including regional collaboration and credit collection goals. Mike expressed gratitude for the support received and set a goal to increase certification rates.

Miriam then introduced Tood Strong, Director, Excel Center – University Heights. Todd shared his return to the Excel Centers, emphasizing the meaningful work and community.

Bre Petty from the Mayor's Office attended and gave a "hello" to Directors. There were no further updates/comments from her office.

The meeting was adjourned.