



Learning from the Competition

Lessons from the charter sector
on how to grow enrollment



Your speakers today



Kim Reier

Chief Strategy Officer, Purdue Polytechnic HS

Previous Role: Head of National Expansion, The Excel Center



Nick LeRoy

Chief Enrollment Officer, SchoolMint

Previous Role: Executive Director of the Indiana Charter School Board, Authorizer for 6 Excel Centers



The School Environment in Indiana

Pro school choice

- Conservative political environment
- Choice within public schools
- Charter school sector
- Private school voucher program

Pro collaboration

- Indianapolis Public Schools':
“Innovation Program”
- Enroll Indy common app for charters and IPS

Who is Goodwill and why The Excel Center

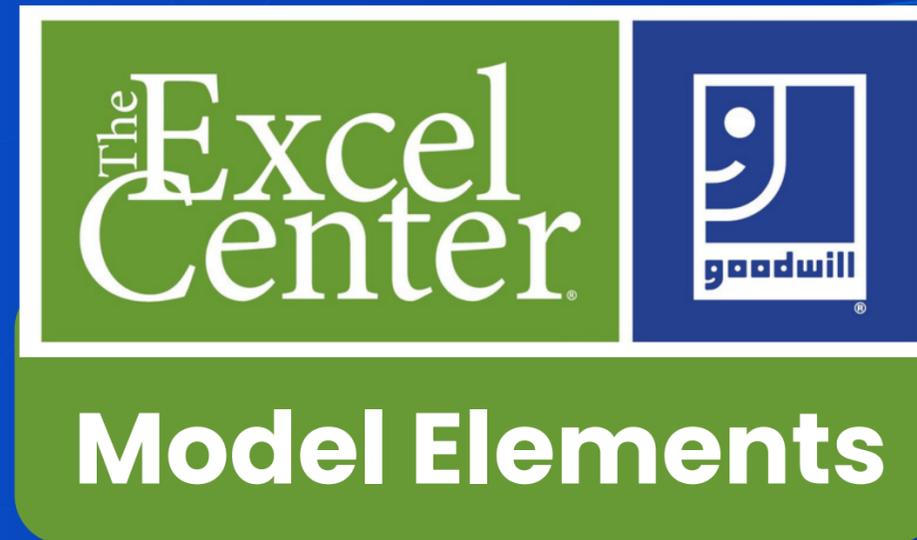
Who is Goodwill?

- Known mainly for thrift stores
- Work to address the most challenging social problems in their communities
- Becoming more difficult for adults with low education levels to find stable employment
- Goodwills' existing social programs often became a revolving door
- GED programs are helpful, but not enough

Research and Data

- 30+ million adults in the US do not have a high school diploma
- Dropouts are 3x more likely to be unemployed
- By 2027, 65% of all jobs in Indiana will require an education beyond high school
- Significant wage gap between HS dropouts and HS diploma holders
- Intergenerational cycles of educational attainment

What is The Excel Center



**Barrier Removal
& Asset Building**



Life Coaching



**Rigorous, Secondary
Education**



**Career Pathways &
College Transition**



**Data-Driven Continuous
Improvement**



**Two Generation
Approach & Impact**



Our typical student and our message

*Who were we seeking to **attract?***



What was our message to them?

Not too late

A school designed for you

Better earnings potential. \$8,000 / year

Better opportunities for their children

Community Engagement

*How were we going to **attract** them?*

- Built partnerships with other groups for referrals and collaborations
- Local schools (partnership vs. competition)
- Social services agencies
- Communities of faith
- Government agencies and policymakers



Community Engagement

Removing barriers to enrollment

- Hardest step is the first one
- Two-generational approach
- Child care
- Transportation
- Life coaching / wrap around services





Continuous Recruitment

Each campus had a specific recruitment target

- Principal is accountable - but the ENTIRE staff is responsible
- #s based upon the census data and research, not a budget
- Try new things, fail fast, and keep pushing

Active vs. passive recruitment

- Always be recruiting, rolling enrollment
- Leverage the community

Speed and responsiveness

- Call the student back the day they have inquired/identified
- Continuous engagement
- Get them in the door and to orientation!



Strong Marketing Assets

Website as the key marketing tool

Centralized lead inquiry

Centralized call center

Active lead database



A Free High School for Adults

Since 2010, The Excel® Center has helped thousands of graduates increase their earning potential with a free Indiana Core 40 highschool diploma. Ready to get started?



It's never too late to earn your high school diploma



The Excel Center Today

Over 30+

**Excel Centers
across the country**

Thousands of graduates

~\$1.9M

economic impact





Step 1

Clearly define your target audience, value proposition, and message



Learning from the Competition

Who are you seeking to serve?

Why should they choose you over the private school, charter school, other public school?

Are you actively communicating this to them?



Step 2

Become well known
in the community



Learning from the Competition

Stop assuming that parents know who you are and think you are a good choice.

When a parent seeks to learn about you are you present in the places that they search?

School review sites

Via Google

Social Media posts and ads

Neighborhood groups like NextDoor

From the child's current school



Step 3

Remove barriers by making enrollment easy and friendly



How easy is your enrollment process?

Is it friendly to people from out of district or from a new school?

Can I navigate it with limited English proficiency or low technical acumen?



Step 4

Develop a culture of recruitment



Learning from the Competition

Does enrollment “happen” to us or do we control the outcome?

Who’s job is it to ensure a campus achieves their recruitment goals?

Are their incentives and alignment to ensure successful feeders?

Do we treat every potential family like they are important?

Do we make the same push to get them in the door (tour/open house/shadow)?



Step 5

Invest in the marketing of the school



Learning from the Competition

Is our website easy to find, tells the story and motivates people to take the next step?

Do we use advertising strategically to drive awareness and change perceptions of our district / school?

Do we understand that to drive the desired outcomes in a changing environment that we need to change how we have approached this in the past?



Thank you and Questions