



**STATE OF INDIANA
INDIANA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

200 W. WASHINGTON STREET
THIRD FLOOR STATE HOUSE
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 46204

August 7, 2018

Superintendent Ferebee
Indianapolis Public Schools
120 East Walnut Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dr. Ferebee and IPS Commissioners:

Let us start by thanking you for your willingness to rethink the traditional school system to better serve your students. Your efforts to provide new educational options and learning opportunities are getting results and earning IPS a well-deserved national reputation as an innovative, student-focused district. We also applaud your willingness to protect this progress by making courageous choices like restructuring IPS high schools.

We're writing to express our concerns about the current process to utilize the former Broad Ripple High School. In July 2017, you provided a timeline toward a final recommendation for the building's reuse by February 2018. However, last week you announced yet another delay, meaning it could take years to determine the fate of this highly-visible and venerable property.

Early this year, Purdue Polytechnic provided a verbal proposal for a \$6-\$8 million lease of the facility, significantly higher than IPS's internally-developed value assessment of \$4.5 million. This offer is contingent on expedient action by the district in the next month so that Purdue Polytechnic can make plans for the 2019-2020 school year.

The potential partnership between IPS and Purdue Polytechnic has generated tremendous civic support, as evidenced by a recent petition collected by the Broad Ripple Village Association that accumulated over 1,600 signatures in a few short weeks. The public has spoken clearly in several forums that retaining a high school on that property is paramount to the success of the neighborhood.

Based on the financial terms alone, this is a unique opportunity to capitalize on an immediate revenue opportunity while adhering to the letter and spirit of state law regarding the disposition of former school facilities and charter schools. Additionally, if this offer isn't accepted by IPS, it is highly likely that the building won't be used as a high school for many years – if ever. This would be a tremendous loss to the community.

It is our understanding that your intention is to put school district personnel in this building as a justification for not leasing it to a charter school. This will mean another underutilized building costing the district hundreds of thousands of dollars each year. It certainly would not be a good faith start to any effort to persuade the General Assembly to reconsider the charter facility law.

Obtaining fair market value for the facility while welcoming an outstanding academic partner to become part of IPS adds to an overwhelming rationale for the deal. It also addresses the \$1 law without the time, expense, and turmoil of lobbying, and navigating land use processes with an engaged community focused on attracting a high school anchor.

Action should be taken now to move forward. As a coalition of state legislators, we ask that you immediately act to finalize a deal with Purdue Polytechnic that adds another great option to IPS; it would serve today's young people (and prepare tomorrow's workforce), the interests of local taxpayers and the Broad Ripple neighborhood.

We're committed to the success of the state's largest school system, and we are confident that further consideration will lead you to a positive decision that puts students first.

Sincerely,



Brian C. Bosma
Speaker of the House
House District 88



Robert Behning
State Representative
House District 91



Dave Frizzell
State Representative
House District 93



Cindy Kirchhofer
State Representative
House District 89



Mike Speedy
State Representative
House District 90



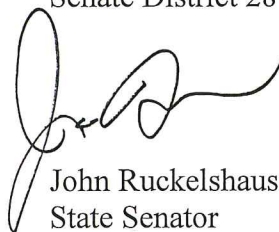
Michael Crider
State Senator
Senate District 28



Aaron Freeman
State Senator
Senate District 32



Jim Merritt
State Senator
Senate District 31



John Ruckelshaus
State Senator
Senate District 30