August 19, 2015

Ms. Kristin Hines
Director of Charter Schools
Office of Education Innovation
Office of Mayor Greg Ballard
City of Indianapolis

Dear Ms. Hines:

EmployIndy is pleased to support the Purdue Polytechnic Indianapolis High School. As an organization focused on developing skilled talent for Marion County, EmployIndy couldn’t be more encouraged by Purdue’s leadership and commitment to Indianapolis students who will benefit from a new approach to learning in order to succeed in an increasingly technical workforce.

Purdue’s Polytechnic Indianapolis High School will help close the educational gap for many Indianapolis students. Now, more than ever, the need is great to deliver more innovative learning experiences and provide opportunities to high school students who have STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) capabilities but might not have access to tailored programs to ensure their success. Polytechnic is a unique solution that will cater specifically to these students and help them emerge with the skills needed for personal, professional and community success.

As a region and as a nation, we are at a critical junction. We need to expand our intellectual capital and we need new approaches for doing so. We know that in Central Indiana alone, by 2025 we will have 51,500 net new jobs that will require technical skills. Without some dramatic changes in how we prepared tomorrow’s talent, we will be short 24,500 workers. This shortage has direct consequences for our businesses, residents and region’s economic vitality.

EmployIndy has long been focused on aligning education with industry needs and bringing industry into the fold as we develop and deliver programs and training to our residents. The need for alignment is perhaps most pronounced in STEM fields, where technology changes almost as fast as it’s introduced. With open and constant dialogue and partnerships with industry, EmployIndy has successfully developed talent to drive our region’s economy.

The Purdue Polytechnic Indianapolis High School is yet another example of how the region is coming together to prepare students for success in an evolving workforce. It will be unlike any educational experience offered in Indiana and potentially, the nation. The Purdue Polytechnic Indianapolis High School is specifically designed to develop a new generation of skilled talent by seamlessly transitioning students from high school and postsecondary education to high-wage, high-demand jobs.
The rigorous curricula and learning environment are built on strong industry relationships, an innovative partnership with Purdue University and a goal to ensure a diverse student body succeeds in the 21st Century economy.

It’s been an honor to participate in the early stages of the Purdue Polytechnic Indianapolis High School’s early development as the planning grant’s fiscal agent. Over the past year, EmployIndy has led planning grant activities and provided labor market data and analysis to align the curriculum with employer needs. This effort has been a true demonstration of what can happen when you bring industry, academia and the community together to tackle one of our most pressing needs.

Please accept this letter of support for the Purdue Polytechnic Indianapolis High School. EmployIndy remains committed to partnering with Purdue and the community to deliver this innovative learning model to Indianapolis students in August 2017 and ensure its success in the Indianapolis K-12 education landscape.

Sincerely,

Nicole Thompson
Interim President & CEO
EmployIndy