



# Indianapolis Education Reform Player Profiles



# Current Board Members

# Michael O' Connor, District 1 (8/15 – 12/16) \$0 [appointed]



- Michael O' Connor was appointed to the IPS Board in August 2015 to fill the vacancy left by Caitlin Hannon in District 1.
- He was an interesting choice given the competition: a former IPS board member who served as the board President in 2014 was one of the candidates.
- He left Bose McKinney Evans to begin working for Eli Lilly in 2010, under former Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson. He was chief Deputy Mayor under Peterson for two terms. He is in charge of State Government Affairs for Lilly and is a lobbyist.
- Michael O' Connor serves on the board of the Excel Center, a charter school servicing high school students and adult learners.

# Gayle Cosby, District 2 \$78,326



- Gayle Cosby was elected with a lot of ed-reform money in 2012. To date, she has the highest reported amount of money on campaign finance reports of any IPS board election.
- Shortly after her election, she began to veer away from voting with the typical reformer agenda. She has become pretty vocal and blogs at [gaylecosby.wordpress.com](http://gaylecosby.wordpress.com)
- Of all current board members, Gayle appears to have the most resonance with the community. She is a former IPS teacher and current IPS parent.

# Samuel Odle, At-large \$61,924



- Sam Odle retired from IU Health in July 2012. He was the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer. He announced his school board run in August 2012.
- He currently works at Bose, McKinney and Evans as a consultant.
- Odle was named Moderator for the Stanley K. Lacy Executive Leadership Series Class XXXVIII in 2013 with the Indy Chamber.
- Sam Odle serves on several boards: Wastepoint, Boy Scouts, Chairman of the United Way board, and the Jordan Foundation.

# LaNier Echols, District 5 \$65,028



- LaNier Echols was elected in 2014, defeating long time IPS board member Michael Brown in the north west side district 5.
- At the time of the election, LaNier Echols was the dean of Carpe Diem, a blended learning charter high school on Meridian Street in Indianapolis. This school predominantly uses computer based learning and therefore employs few teachers.
- After her election, she was quickly promoted to principal.
- In February 2015, under Echols' leadership, Carpe Diem's method of recruiting students involved [offering \\$100 Marsh gift cards](#) to prospective families or for referrals.

# Kelly Kennedy Bentley, District 3 \$52,677



- Kelly Kennedy Bentley has served on the IPS School board as the district 3 (north side) representative for several terms and is currently serving a term from 2014 – 2018.
- Kelly served as the treasurer for Democrats for Education Reform, a heavy hitting contributor during the pivotal 2012 campaign.
- She has also worked for the School Chooser Guide, an ed-reform attempt at notifying parents of their school choice options via a printed book and a website.

# Caitlin Hannon, District 1 (1/12 – 8/15) \$67,437



- Caitlin Hannon is a graduate of Teach for America. She taught middle school and high school English in IPS for 2 years before running for school board.
- Once elected in 2012, she quickly got a position as the Executive Director of Teach Plus. She stayed in that position and worked closely with IPS while also serving as an IPS board member.
- Caitlin Hannon left her IPS board seat vacant in August 2015 to pursue a fellowship with the Mind Trust. The scope of her fellowship (paying over \$100,000 per year for two years) is to [create a unified enrollment system for IPS and charter schools.](#)



# Mary Ann Sullivan, At-large \$73,303




Mary Ann served as a state representative in Indiana from 2009 – 2012.

She has worked closely with David Dresslar at CELL (U Indy) as a education consultant.

She is married to Brian Sullivan , second in line at Shiel Sexton, a company frequently doing developing and construction business with IPS. He is also in a leadership position at the Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce. Although she has not voted on any of IPS's major real-estate transactions in 2015, it is interesting to note that the Metropolitan Board of Realtors donated a substantial amount to her campaign.


Mary Ann serves on many other boards, including United Way and Democrats for Education Reform.



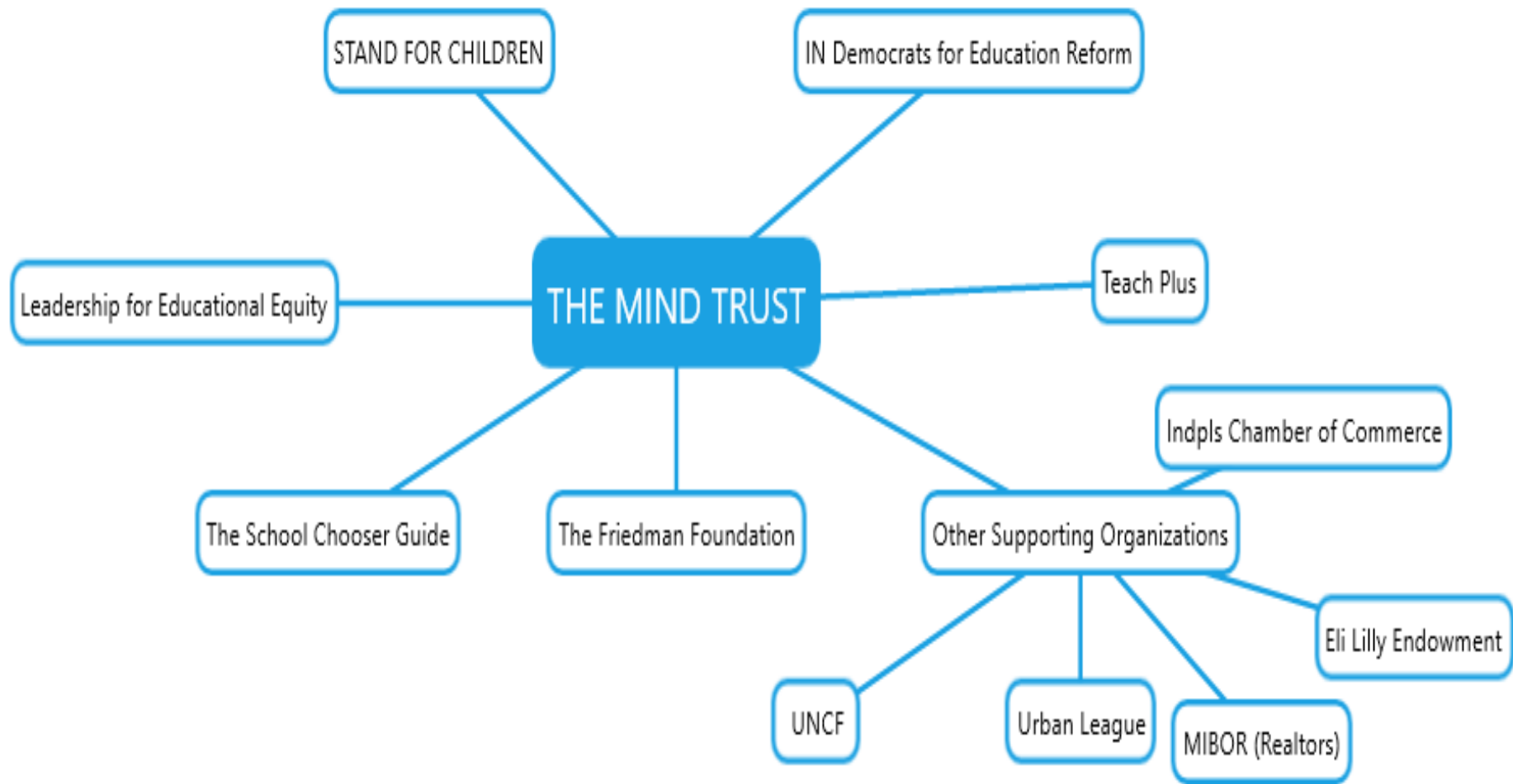
# Indianapolis Organizations (and their hacks)

Stand for Children, The Mind Trust, Teach for America,  
The New Teacher Project, Teach Plus, The Friedman  
Foundation, Democrats for Education Reform

New kids on the block: Innovation in Public School  
Choice, Institute 4 Quality Education



Ancillary Organizations: The Indianapolis Chamber of  
Commerce, The Mayor's Office, Charter Schools, Eli Lilly  
Foundation and Political Action Committees



# David Harris, Mind Trust CEO



## 2014 Salary: \$273,390

Source:

[http://pdfs.citizenaudit.org/2015\\_09\\_EO/20-4560286\\_990\\_201412.pdf](http://pdfs.citizenaudit.org/2015_09_EO/20-4560286_990_201412.pdf)

David Harris was the first person in charge of the mayor's office of charter schools in 2001 when it was created, under Mayor Bart Peterson.

The Mind Trust was founded in 2006 by David Harris and Bart Peterson. David Harris serves as the CEO, and Bart Peterson is the president of the board.

The Mind Trust pushes for education reform in Indianapolis in three ways:

- (1) the Education Entrepreneur Fellowship that serves as an incubator for transformative education ventures
- (2) a Venture Fund to recruit to Indianapolis the nation's most successful entrepreneurial education initiatives
- (3) a Charter School Incubator that awards \$1,000,000 in funding as well as support and training to leadership teams who intend to start networks of charter schools in Indianapolis

Since their inception in 2006, the Mind Trust has managed to raise large sums of money (according to Aspen Institute, \$17 million) and 11+ entrepreneurial education ventures.

David Harris serves on the boards of the Nicholas H. Noyes Jr. Memorial Foundation and Teach Plus, and he holds a seat on the State of Indiana's Charter Schools Review Panel. He also serves on the advisory board of Western Governors University Indiana and the local advisory boards of Teach for America.

# Justin Ohlemiller



## Stand for Children, Executive Director

- Was the CEO of Trendy Minds during the 2012 campaign, where tens of thousands of dollars were spent by pro-reform candidates
- Shortly after the campaign, Justin became the executive director of Stand for Children, the organization that orchestrated paying Trendy Minds so handsomely in 2012
- Former deputy chief of staff under Bart Peterson
- Former Communications Director for Andre Carson

# Larry Grau former President of DFER IN

Democrats for Education Reform (DFER) is a political action committee with 13 state offices whose mission is to encourage a more productive dialogue within the Democratic Party on the need to fundamentally reform American public education.

In Indiana, the DFER political action committee was only active during the years 2011, 2012, 2013.

DFER contributed significantly to the 2012 IPS school board campaign. The most notable donation was to [Gayle Cosby](#), in which DFER contributed more than \$40,000. DFER also contributed over \$5,000 in 2012 to Caitlin Hannon's IPS School Board campaign.

In 2013, DFER quietly ceased operations.

DFER's treasurer, [Kelly Kennedy Bentley](#), was previously an IPS board member. Kelly Kennedy Bentley successfully ran for re-election to the IPS board in 2014.

The logo for DFER IN INDIANA features the word "DFER" in a large, black, serif font at the top. Below it, the word "IN" is written in a very large, bold, red, serif font. At the bottom, the word "INDIANA" is written in a smaller, black, serif font. The entire logo is set against a light blue background with a faint network of grey dots and lines.

# Teach Plus Indianapolis

Offers a stipend to early career teachers to get involved in policy. Teachers typically write briefs and offer delegations to the IPS board, or lobby at the state level. The director of policy was hired under Caitlin Hannon, and served as her campaign manager in 2012.



**Patrick McAlister**  
Director of Policy



**Carlotta Coopriider**  
Director of Instructional Practice

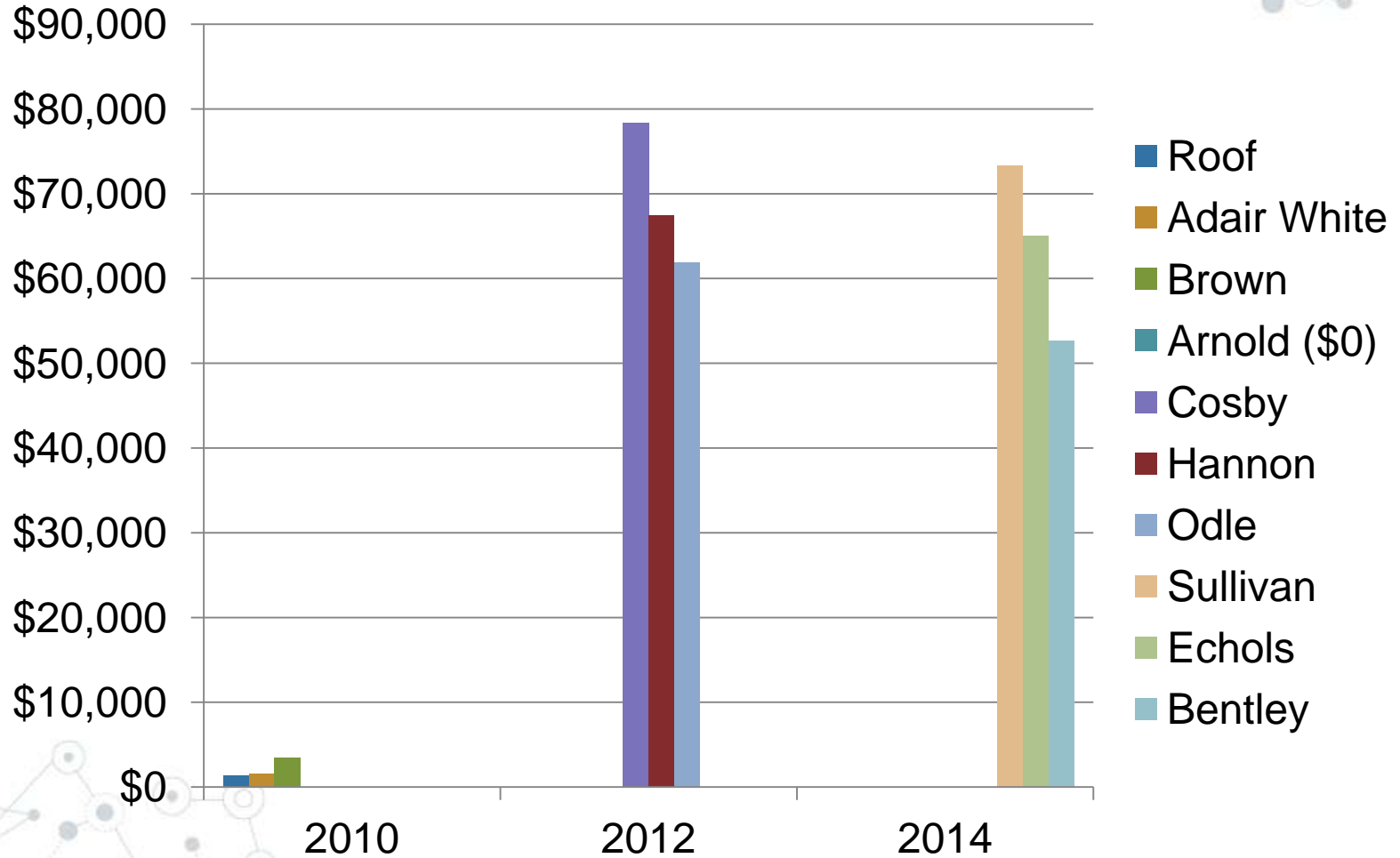
# Big Money

What happened to  
local, grassroots  
elections in  
Indianapolis?

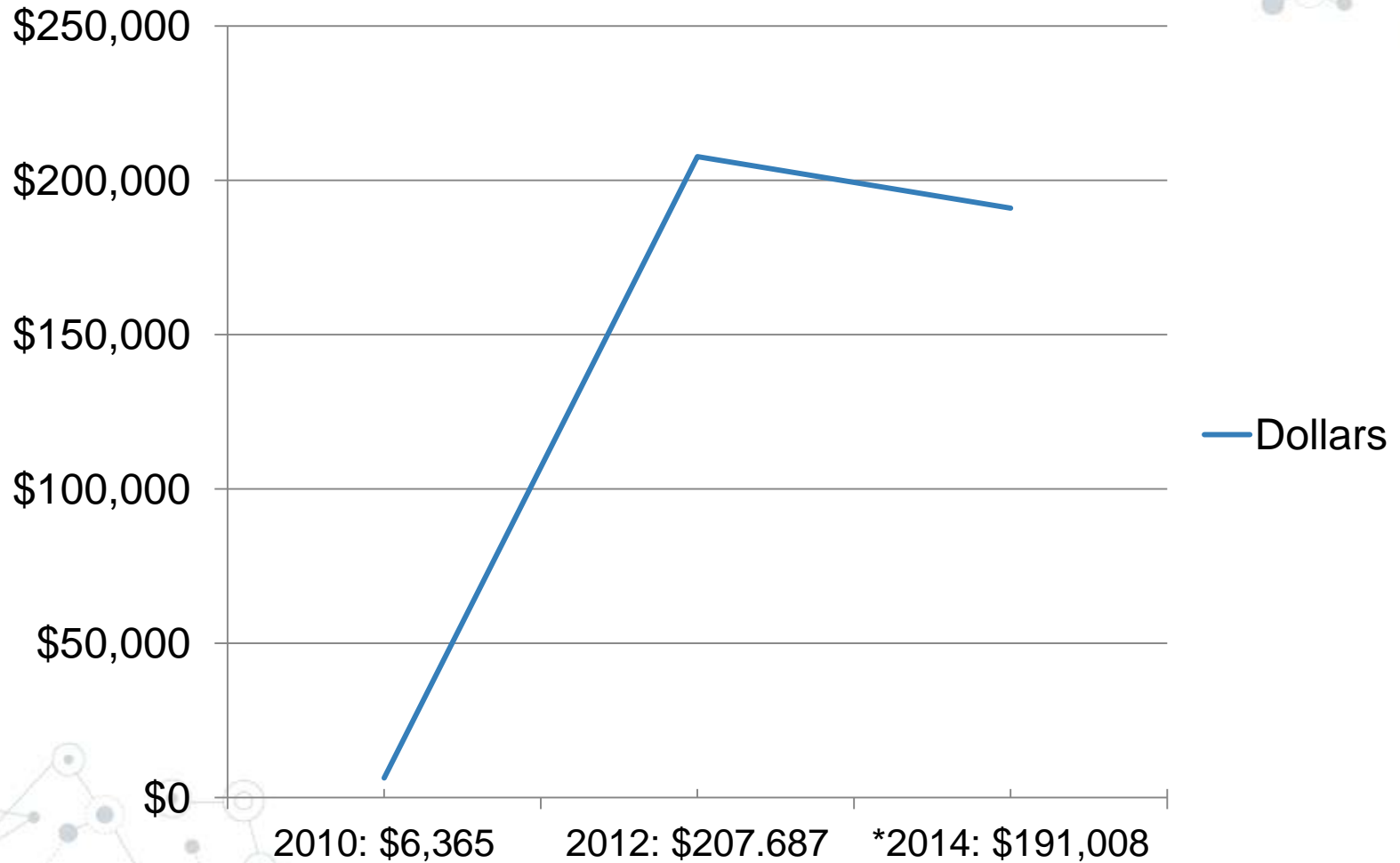




## Winning Campaigns by Candidate, 2010-2014



## IPS Winning Candidates Total Sums, 2010 - 2014



\*2012/2014 campaign contributions also involved super PACs, which are not required to report publicly.

# myIPS

**Whose IPS is this, and at what cost?**





“

“Corruption is authority plus  
monopoly minus transparency.”

- Unknown

## Credits

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