

Does Indianapolis really want an entirely privatized public school system?

As is stated in the B&LPI's recommendation for AACI regarding returning oversight of and voting on Mayor Hogsett's charters (Office of Education Innovation [OEI]) to the Indianapolis City-County Council, what started out as a push for a few local charters has grown. Now, [Indy is home of America's 2nd most privatized public school system!](#) New Orleans Public Schools is ranked first where every school is privatized.

Local citizens were not told back when the 2011 Mind Trust [Opportunity Schools](#) report came out, that possibly in 10 years [63.7%](#) of Indianapolis students would be in privatized schools. For more on charters, read closely: [Portfolio models: private ways of running public schools](#). Check out the [IPS Portfolio Management](#) scheme here.

Bait & Switch

Today, citizens are told Broad Ripple, Northwest, and Arlington high schools had to be closed [due to declining enrollment](#). However, what alumni and citizens were not told is that as soon as these 3 high schools close, the city/IPS/The Mind Trust are going to open up a bunch of other high schools.

Perhaps if citizens were told this, Broad Ripple, Northwest, and Arlington would still be open.

Here are the facts: waiting backstage were many smaller privatized high schools where these purported low numbers of students are now enrolled. With the future of Howe undetermined and Manual becoming privatized, here is the current bevy of local privatized high schools:

- KIPP
- Purdue Polytechnic Central
- Purdue Polytechnic North
- Herron
- Riverside
- Believe Circle City
- Victory College Prep
- Rooted School
- Performing Arts Academy
- Thrival Indy Academy

This specific dismantling of the district was done so smoothly, people hardly noticed the shell game.

What is tragic, Broad Ripple, Arlington or Northwest alumni will never get a chance to vie for local/state championships/awards in sports, music, academics, the arts, debate or other competitions.

The Indianapolis charter school experiment

IPS teaches its students that to trust science or social science theories, studies, or ideas, an analysis of the truth and viability of such research and conclusions must be rigorous, lengthy, and peer reviewed.

Regarding current Indy charters, many of the concepts, curricula, and programs are not backed by years of peer reviewed research (showing graduates went on to careers or to graduate from college becoming productive critically conscious citizens) that would justify their implementation. Purdue Polytechnic, Matchbook Learning, pilotED, Ignite Achievement Academy, and Rooted school, Thrival, and Invent Learning Hub are some examples.

The Rooted School experiment

The [Rooted School](#) opened its doors in just 2017 in New Orleans. That's not enough time to have a substantiated schooling concept, except maybe on paper. Again, educators tell students that their ideas, or a particular thesis, must have viable "proof" in the form of research. Rooted has yet to have a cohort of 9th graders graduate. We don't know if Rooted grads will go to university, graduate and become critically conscious citizens contributing to the self-determination of their communities.

The pilotEd Experiment

pilotED co-founders Jacob Allen, (Teach for America alum) and former English teacher Marie Dandie, have little to no experience being principals. They basically ran an afterschool program in Chicago which started in 2013. The activities included a 3-tiered curriculum focusing on academic success, civic engagement, and social identity. Read <https://magazine.washington.edu/feature/for-struggling-students-a-new-charter-school-sees-identity-as-the-solution/>.

This concept sounds good, but where is the longitudinal peer-reviewed research saying the schooling concept is viable in charter form?

Also, did the Barrington neighborhood self-organize and search the US to find an appropriate school which happened to be pilotEd (<https://www.pilot-ed.org>) and invite them in to use school 64? No. Indy education power brokers and pilotEd manipulated its way into Barrington.

School #64's ugly past experience with privatization

Barrington residents already had a bad taste in their mouths regarding charters. Residents had already been stung by the imposition of the Indiana Math and Science South (IMSS) school into Barrington's legacy Harriet Beecher Stowe school #64 by Indy's Southside state representative and local charter powers. It turned out to be a failed experiment that subtracted resources from both the IPS district and the Barrington neighborhood. For details, read "A deconstructing of the closing of Indiana Math & Science Academy-South" <http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/A-deconstructing-of-the-closing-of-Indiana-Math-and-Science-Academy-South.pdf>.

Question: Where's the justice? Who's responsible for the failure? Who's paying?

Shouldn't there be a fine on IMSS organization and shouldn't Mayor Hoggset's OEI pay back the human and other resources taken from Barrington by this failed experiment?

Evidently, school 64's past with IMSS did not matter, another school, pilotEd was also imposed.

Questions for the board of the current experiment: Did pilotEd buy the school? If so, for how much? Is pilotEd renting? If so, from whom and for how much?

The Thrival experiment

The first cohort of 11 students was started by [Thrival](#) in Oakland, CA in September of 2016. In 2017, the Thrival experiment expanded to Indianapolis at IPS Tech HS. It closed for a year and will start again now at Arlington. Indy Thrival claims that the Thrival concept is based on a variety of valid research. But the Thrival concept and school, contrived out of this pool of studies, has not been around in the form of an actual school and curriculum long enough to validate its existence.

At minimum, a decade of peer-reviewed studies/research would be needed before the Thrival concept qualified for reproduction. This begs the question: why was the Indy Thrival experiment charter application accepted without any scientific support from a peer-reviewed longitudinal study showing that the concept was viable, let alone scalable?

The Matchbook Learning experiment

Matchbook Learning's Sajan George, favorite of the DeVos/Walton matrix, was given school No. 63 by IPS even though his programs were asked to leave Newark and Detroit schools. See:

- <http://www.schoolsmatter.info/2017/07/billionaire-fave-matchbook-learning.html>

The Purdue Polytechnic experiment

Purdue Polytechnic (PPHS) opened in the fall of 2017 in downtown Indianapolis. Its website (<https://pphs.purdue.edu/about>) has a great sales pitch, but offers no years of peer-reviewed research on the "Polytechnic" concept. The school has yet to graduate a cohort and so this present cohort has not graduated from universities. Perhaps we will know in 15-20 years whether or not the PPHS concept lives up to its hype.

Nonetheless, PPHS people are opening of another Indianapolis campus on Indy's north side—despite the bad press around issues of low Indy enrollment numbers and their request for collaboration with the South Bend Public Schools being solidly rejected:

- <https://www.wfyi.org/news/articles/purdue-polytechnic-high-school-north-posts-low-enrollment-data-asks-community-partners-for-help>
- <https://www.insideindianabusiness.com/story/41658146/south-bend-rejects-purdue-polytechnic-hs>.

Regarding the [Innovative schools in Indy](#) experiment

The AACI conscience must unpack and interrogate the Innovation concept which looks like another way to wrestle away the voter's direct democratic control of their public schools and turn them over to non-public (private)/unelected boards and their corporate supporters and funders.

The issue here is where is the 10 years of peer-reviewed research supporting Innovations? Please analyze the WFYI program, "[Do Innovation Schools Work?](#)"

AACI must critique the IPS privatizers who enable charters through the Innovation schools concept which is a way to get around all the "messy" charter details and requirements. Read "[States increasingly extend charter like flexibility to district schools.](#)"

AACI must also look into any ALEC (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ez2VWdI72os>) connections to the [Innovation Schools and School Districts Act](#).

And, again, let's not forget [Portfolio models: private ways of running public schools](#) and the [IPS Portfolio Management](#) maneuver.

National office vs. local NAACP on charters: Indy Branch ignores national policy. Why?

Notably, the [national NAACP calls for a moratorium on charters](#). The national office suggests [6 problems with charter schools and 5 ideas for reshaping the sector](#).

"Charter schools were created with more flexibility because they were expected to innovate and infuse new ideas and creativity into the traditional public school system. However, this aspect of the promise never materialized. With the expansion of charter schools and their concentration in low-income communities, concerns have been raised within the African American community about the quality, accessibility and accountability of some charters, as well as their broader effects on the funding and management of school districts that serve most students of color." ~ NAACP Educational Taskforce.

Nonetheless, Indy's NAACP Branch #3053 ignores the national taskforce's conclusions and supports the Indy privatization/charter matrix. Why?

Proposed Action Items

Begin a moratorium on charters/Innovation schools

AACI will gather citizens for a series of 3 televised and taped public debates on the pros and cons of having a 5-year moratorium on new charters and Innovation schools. The basis of the dialogue is the question: *Does Indianapolis really want an entire privatized school public school system?*

AACI will sponsor legislation calling for a 5-year moratorium on Charters and Innovations. AACI will go to the state legislative branches to get the bill passed. AACI will make sure the governor signs it.

The AACI will also sponsor televised and recorded public panels on the question:

Are the unproven education programs experimenting on students of color and at taxpayer's expense?

Lastly, besides calling for a moratorium on privatization, ACCI will gather support for the Parents Across America endorsed Indianapolis Parent Power's plan to reunite Black families and public education: http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Parents-Across-America-reports-Parent-Powers-plan-to-reunite-Black-families-and-public-education.pdf
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