

BUYING THE 2020 ELECTION OF THE IPS SCHOOL BOARD

Unfortunately, the CEO of the Mind Trust continues to hide that the Mind Trust and its close allies, Stand for Children, Rise Indy, Hoosiers for Great Public Schools, bought the election of its IPS school board candidates. That the mainstream media documented this influx of a huge amount of money from outside Indiana just indicates the truth of this deception.

We know from Indiana state government documents that the Mind Trust and its allies received \$500,000 from three white, strongly pro-charter individuals: Alice Walton (\$200,000); Michael Bloomberg (\$100,000); and Reed Hastings (\$200,000). And none of these white billionaires live in Indiana; two live in California and one in New York.

What differences do these large sums of money make in an election, especially when one slate has hundreds of thousands of dollars and the other has less than 10% of that? Those with the big money can send numerous mailings, buy text messages to thousands of Indy citizens, and purchase huge billboard size signs to drive around Indy. In other words, those with the big money get their names in front of many more voters.

Why would these white billionaires who will likely not set foot in Indianapolis give so much money for our school board election?

All three of these white billionaires have been clear about what they want for their money: they strongly support charter schools. And, remember, charter schools are private schools, and those running these privatized schools can make money for themselves on the education of our children, using money we paid to the state in taxes. Also, remember, innovation schools are another type of charter school.

This large infusion of billionaire money raises some questions:

1. Why is the Mind Trust leadership failing to mention that they bought the election for their candidates?
2. How do the Mind Trust's four IPS board members—Pritchard, Allen, Arnold, and Moore—feel about having their board seats bought for them with hundreds of thousands of dollars by white pro-charter billionaires who will never step foot in Indianapolis?
3. Do these four newly elected board members understand that ending public schooling and the local democratic control of public schooling are the goals of the big money that bought their election?

Here's a couple of our conclusions:

1. The hidden agenda of the Mind Trust-Stand for Children-Rise Indy-Hoosiers for Great Public Schools (really one group of people working together) is that all Indianapolis schools will be charter schools, and, remember, innovation schools are just charters inside the school district.
2. Buying elections with hundreds of thousands of dollars from pro-charter billionaires from outside of Indiana is a direct threat to local democratic control of our IPS school board.
3. If local democratic control is being undermined by hundreds of thousands of dollars, this means that local communities of color are having their participation in local democracy undermined, which might be called a racist effect.

Is this what we really want for IPS? Do we want the end of public schooling? Do we want the end of local democratic control of public schooling?

IPS Community Coalition

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