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School Transfers in Indiana Public School Corporations 2022-2023

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Key Takeaways

- Transfers and choice options have led to significant enrollment shifts for school corporations.
- 47% of the net transfers out were from public school corporations to other public school corporations.
- 53% of the net transfers out were to nonpublic schools due to the choice scholarship program. These transfers result in irregular trends among schools gaining enrollment from school choice programs, where a small set of corporations gain or lose relatively higher proportions of enrollment than others.
- Within school choice programs, public/parent choice comprises the largest proportion of transfers out.
- Systemic and sustained inquiry with advanced statistical techniques can reveal valuable insights about the patterns and effects of school transfers in Indiana.

Overview

Over the last three decades, policymakers around the globe have emphasized parents' choice of schools. Such policies are complex and highly contested and have led to mixed outcomes. Nevertheless, the number of school choice programs is increasing. The state of Indiana has one of the largest school choice programs in the country, with seven types of school choice programs.

1. Indiana Choice Scholarship Program: Also known as the voucher program, this program started in 2011, allowing students in low- and middle-income families to receive vouchers to attend private schools.
2. Education savings account: enacted first in 2021 for students with special needs; recently expanded to almost all students, who receive a portion of their assigned state education funding for private school tuition or other educational expenses, including special needs services and therapies, individual classes, testing fees, and transportation.
3. Private school/homeschool deduction: Indiana's program is a tax deduction for individuals who make educational expenditures for private schools or homeschooling on behalf of their dependent children.
4. School scholarship tax credit: Indiana offers donors tax credits for contributing to Scholarship Granting Organizations (SGOs), nonprofits that distribute private school scholarships to students from low- and middle-income households.
5. Public School Choice: Students in Indiana may choose public schools outside of their home corporation via open enrollment policies.
6. Charter schools: Indiana allows for publicly funded but privately or independently run schools, often run by charter management organizations.
7. Homeschooling: Homeschooling is allowed in Indiana, providing that parents follow certain laws and regulations.



Indiana's school choice programs have been the subject of national attention, as they are some of the most extensive and expensive in the country. School choice advocates argue that these programs empower the public/families to make choices about their children's education and can improve educational outcomes (Chubb & Moe, 1990). In contrast, opponents claim that they drain resources from public schools and exacerbate inequality without improving outcomes (Abdulkadiroglu et al., 2017; Canbolat, 2021; Fuentes-Rohwer, 2019; Lubienski et al., 2022; Ravitch, 2021). Despite the contention over the issue, school choice programs continue to expand and impact school corporations. These impacts need to be examined closely.

This report examines the transfer data in student enrollment in Indiana school corporations as reported by the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE). The reported school transfers and ADM file may be found at: <https://www.in.gov/doe/it/data-center-and-reports/>.

Indiana collects data on the transfer of public school students each year. This current report breaks down the information from Fall 2022. In total, 99,017 students transferred out from their home districts/corporations to other school corporations. Of those students, 46,345 (47%) transferred to other public school corporations, and Choice Scholarships went to 52,672 (53%) students.

The information provided by IDOE includes public charter schools as public schools.

Review of Public Transfers OUT to Other Public Schools (including Charters)

Table 1 shows the 25 school corporations with the largest number of students transferring out to another public school corporation. Six out of the 25 school corporations experienced a loss of more than 2000 students, with two school corporations experiencing a markedly greater loss than others. As might be expected, larger corporations generally lose a larger number of students. For instance, the Indianapolis Public School Corporation has the highest number of transfers, including 9,192 students who attended the IPS Innovation Charter Schools. The next 12 school corporations, in descending order of number of student outflows, experienced outflows ranging between 1000 and 2000 students. The remaining seven school corporations experienced outflows of less than 1,000 students. Table 1 presents student outflows only. Net outflows are presented in the subsequent tables.

Table 1.
Top 25 school corporations with outflows to another public school corporation.

School Corporations	Transfers Out to Another Public School (N)
Indianapolis Public Schools	23459
Gary Community School Corp	6972



South Bend Community School Corp	4805
Anderson Community School Corp	3162
Fort Wayne Community Schools	2540
Muncie Community Schools	2370
Elkhart Community Schools	1958
MSD Warren Township	1902
Kokomo School Corporation	1892
Greater Clark County Schools	1727
School City of Hammond	1513
MSD Lawrence Township	1509
Marion Community Schools	1361
School City of East Chicago	1218
Evansville Vanderburgh School Corp	1185
MSD Pike Township	1065
Perry Township Schools	1064
Richmond Community Schools	1027
New Albany-Floyd Co Con Sch	979
Monroe County Community Sch Corp	910
North Lawrence Com Schools	884
MSD Washington Township	880
MSD Wayne Township	864
Michigan City Area Schools	849
LaPorte Community School Corp	839

Net Transfers Out

The analysis of net transfer out revealed that 165 school corporations have a net outflow to another public school corporation. They lost more students than they gained through student transfer provisions. Table 2 shows the net outflow numbers and percentages for the 28 school corporations with the largest net losses to other public schools. The top two school corporations experienced a net outflow of more than 100%, meaning that these schools lost more students than they gained, and the number of students that transferred out was greater than their enrollment in 2022. The next 11 school corporations, in descending order of net percentage outflow, experienced a net outflow between 25% and 53%. The remaining 15 school corporations experienced a net outflow between 15 and 25%.

Table 2.

Top 28 Corporations which LOST ADM by percent to other public school corporations (represents at least 15% of ADM loss in net transfers out).



School Corporations	Net Transfers OUT (N)	Net Transfers OUT (% of Total ADM)
Gary Community School Corp	-6972	-170.97%
Indianapolis Public Schools	-22500	-102.15%
Northeast School Corp	-402	-52.21%
Anderson Community School Corp	-3137	-50.63%
Tri-Township Cons School Corp	-166	-49.26%
Muncie Community Schools	-2187	-43.05%
Hamilton Community Schools	-135	-38.35%
Marion Community Schools	-1296	-35.01%
School City of East Chicago	-1154	-34.46%
Cannelton City Schools	-73	-33.33%
Kokomo School Corporation	-1623	-30.99%
South Bend Community School Corp	-4478	-29.00%
Oregon-Davis School Corp	-127	-25.60%
East Gibson School Corporation	-175	-24.27%
C A Beard Memorial School Corp	-245	-22.94%
North Lawrence Com Schools	-805	-22.00%
Richmond Community Schools	-962	-21.25%
South Dearborn Community Sch Corp	-407	-20.70%
Lakeland School Corporation	-330	-20.56%
Whitko Community School Corp	-241	-19.82%
North Judson-San Pierre Sch Corp	-174	-18.69%
North Adams Community Schools	-281	-17.45%
Blackford County Schools	-256	-17.10%
MSD Shakamak Schools	-114	-16.91%
Madison Consolidated Schools	-452	-16.71%
Tell City-Troy Twp School Corp	-225	-16.07%
Pike County School Corp	-252	-16.01%
Borden-Henryville School Corp	-263	-15.33%

Where Are Students Transferring To?

Analyzing the proportion of transfers out to nonpublic schools reveals that for a majority of the school corporations — 150 out of 290 (about 52%) — 2% or less of their transfers out are attributable to school choice scholarships. Within these school corporations, most of the transfers out from public school corporations were to other public schools, including public charter schools. Public charter schools are public schools that operate independently of the traditional public school system and are authorized to provide education services accessible to all students.



However, it is important to note that the overall proportion of transfers out (53%) are from choice scholarships, or “vouchers,” so while there are schools whose transfers out are largely to other public school corporations, the overall transfer out due to vouchers is higher than transfers out to other public school corporations. This trend is complicated due to public charter schools being presented as public schools in the IDOE data. Disaggregating public charter schools presented in Table 7 changes the net transfer out to other public schools trend presented in Table 2. Tables 3 and 4 present the top 25 school corporations with nonpublic transfers, accounting for 62% of the total nonpublic transfers out.

Table 3.
Transfers out to nonpublic school corporations.

Top 25 Corporations with Nonpublic Transfers	Number of Nonpublic Transfers (N)
Fort Wayne Community Schools	5159
Indianapolis Public Schools	4184
South Bend Community School Corp	3553
Evansville Vanderburgh School Corp	2566
Perry Township Schools	2015
East Allen County Schools	1524
School City of Hammond	1159
MSD Lawrence Township	1009
Franklin Township Com Sch Corp	998
MSD Pike Township	876
MSD Warren Township	874
MSD Washington Township	820
Hamilton Southeastern Schools	799
Bartholomew Con School Corp	758
Anderson Community School Corp	744
Tippecanoe School Corp	719
Penn-Harris-Madison School Corp	618
Gary Community School Corp	592
MSD Wayne Township	588
Elkhart Community Schools	582
Lafayette School Corporation	576
New Albany-Floyd Co Con Sch	576
Greater Clark County Schools	514
Lake Central School Corporation	507
Avon Community School Corp	506
Total	32,816



Table 4 presents the top 25 school corporations based on transfers out to nonpublic schools. The total range of transfers from these 25 school corporations is between 7% and 23%, with 13 school corporations experiencing more than 10% transfers out and the remaining 12 between 7% and 10%.

Table 4.

Top 25 transfers out to nonpublic by percent of ADM.

School Corporation	Nonpublic Transfers (% of ADM)
South Bend Community School Corp	23.01%
Indianapolis Public Schools	18.99%
Fort Wayne Community Schools	18.03%
East Allen County Schools	15.10%
Gary Community School Corp	14.52%
North Adams Community Schools	13.04%
Perry Township Schools	12.42%
Anderson Community School Corp	12.01%
Evansville Vanderburgh School Corp	11.80%
Madison Consolidated Schools	11.79%
School City of East Chicago	11.20%
MSD Mount Vernon	10.66%
School City of Hammond	10.07%
Brownstown Cnt Com Sch Corp	9.63%
MSD North Posey Co Schools	9.19%
Seymour Community Schools	8.91%
Franklin Township Com Sch Corp	8.90%
Hanover Community School Corp	8.81%
Michigan City Area Schools	8.78%
Lake Station Community Schools	8.36%
North Judson-San Pierre Sch Corp	8.27%
MSD Martinsville Schools	8.24%
MSD Pike Township	8.20%
Washington Community Schools	7.84%
Kankakee Valley School Corp	7.83%

When analyzing the transfer data by a corporation, charter, or nonpublic school, some trends address which public school corporations, charters, and nonpublics gained from choice programs. These trends are presented in the tables below.

Table 5 presents transfers out disaggregated by “Parent Choice” and “Public Other”. Public other is when a student has an alternative placement, to an alternative school or



onsite behavioral school, where students are sent by a school's and not a parent's choice. 36 corporations gained at least 500 or more students from choice programs combined. 28 out of the 36 school corporations gained from 500 to 1000 students from parent choice, six school corporations gained 1000 to 2000 students, and the top two received 2859 and 6939 students, respectively. For public other transfers, 20 school corporations gained from 1 to 59 students, whereas 12 school corporations did not gain any students.

Table 5.

Top 36 corporations that gained at least 500 students from choice.

School corporations	Parent Choice (N)	Public Other (N)
Union School Corporation	6939	0
Clarksville Community School Corp	2859	0
Penn-Harris-Madison School Corp	1765	0
MSD Lawrence Township	1696	59
MSD Wayne Township	1294	0
School City of Mishawaka	1200	54
MSD Warren Township	1093	0
Beech Grove City Schools	1088	10
Frankton-Lapel Community Schools	981	3
Indianapolis Public Schools	959	0
New Albany-Floyd Co Con Sch	911	7
East Allen County Schools	872	40
MSD Washington Township	788	6
Concord Community Schools	787	13
Cloverdale Community Schools	764	0
Mooresville Con School Corp	757	1
MSD Wabash County Schools	746	50
Greenwood Community Sch Corp	695	21
Eastern Howard School Corporation	687	1
Silver Creek School Corporation	672	0
Southern Hancock Co Com Sch Corp	667	0
Mississinewa Community School Corp	645	0
New Prairie United School Corp	628	6
South Madison Com Sch Corp	617	0
Yorktown Community Schools	574	8
Northwestern School Corp	572	5
Western School Corporation	563	0
Mt Vernon Community School Corp	561	24
Daleville Community Schools	532	0
Center Grove Community School	525	0



Corp		
John Glenn School Corporation	522	6
Oak Hill United School Corp	522	2
Madison-Grant United School Corp	520	0
Middlebury Community Schools	516	9
Plainfield Community School Corp	514	20
Centerville-Abington Com Schs	501	0
Totals	36,532	345

Figure 1 below shows how a few schools have disproportionately received more enrollment boosts from public/parent choice than others. The first eight schools comprise more than 50% of the enrollment gains from public/parent choice programs among schools that gained at least 500 students from the program.

Figure 1.
Enrollment gains by schools from public/parent choice.

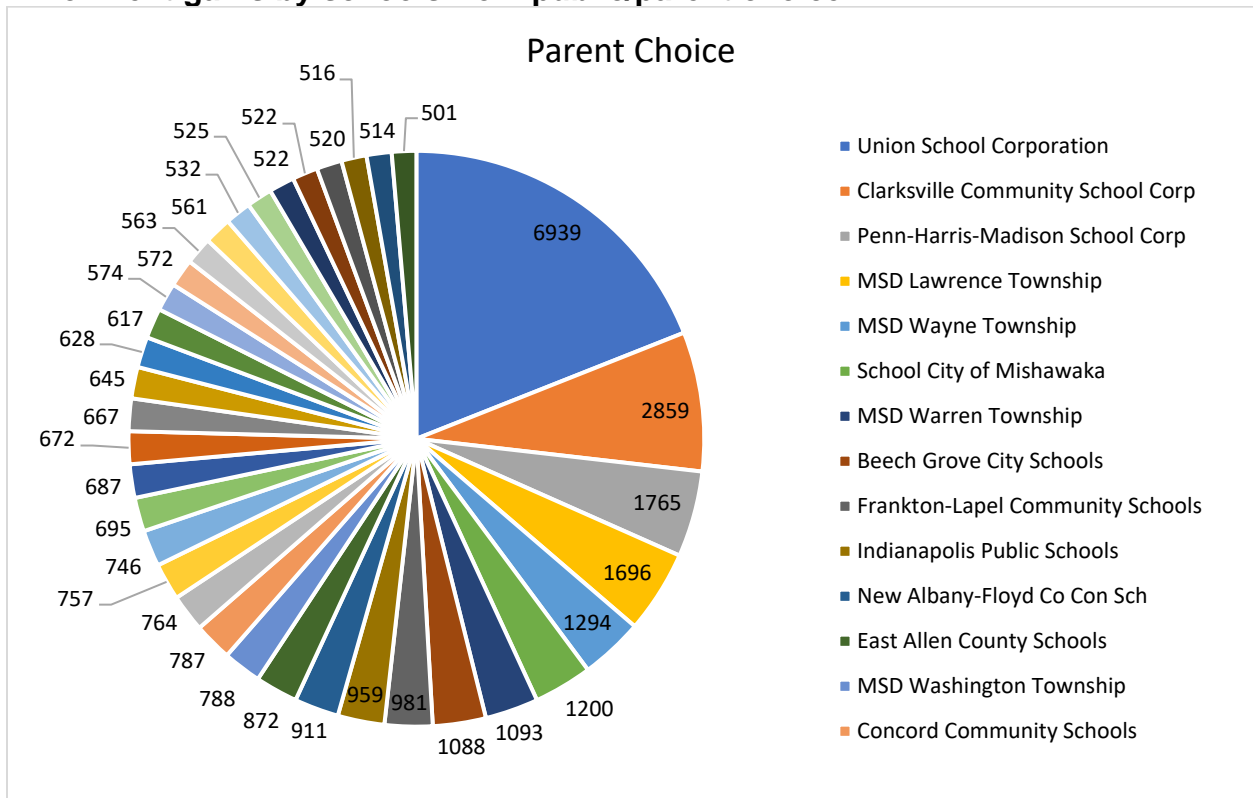


Table 6 lists the 62 school corporations receiving over 20% of their enrollment from public/parent choice programs. The top two school corporations gained 95.87% and 71% of their students from parent choice, which in large part can be attributed to online schools administered by these two school corporations, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 shows the trends in enrollment numbers from 2006 – 2022 in Union school corporation and Clarksville community school corporation, which indicates that while enrollment in in-person schools in the two school corporations remains approximately constant, the total enrollment gains are from enrollment spikes in online schools post-2018 (i.e., 6795 – 7131 – Indiana Digital Jr and High School, 6795 – 7142 – Indiana Digital Alternative School, 6795 – 7122 – Indiana Digital Elementary, and 1000 – 1007 – Indiana Gateway Digital Academy). To reinforce the significance of online schools in these enrollment spikes, it is noteworthy that the school corporation (Union School Corporation) with the highest enrollment increase has three online schools, two starting in 2019 and one in 2020. Whereas, Clarksville Community School Corporation, with the second highest enrollment increase, has only one online school that started in 2022. It is also important to highlight the huge enrollment gap (1252.66%) between the two school corporations with the highest enrollment gains that can be attributed to the number of online schools and their duration of operations. The availability of state-wide data on online schools might also reveal other interesting trends. However, here, it is evident that online schools have played a significant role in boosting enrollment for those two school corporations, whose enrollment gains are markedly higher than gains observed in all other school corporations.

Table 6 shows four school corporations gained 42% to 52% of students from public/parent choice. 22 school corporations gained 30% to 40% of their students, while the remaining 34 school corporations gained between 10% and 30% of their students in this manner.

Table 6.
62 school corporations that receive 20% or more of their enrollment from public/parent choice transfers in.

School corporations	Parent Choice at a Percent (%) of ADM
Union School Corporation	95.87%
Clarksville Community School Corp	71.00%
Daleville Community Schools	52.26%
Cowan Community School Corp	48.29%
Cloverdale Community Schools	45.31%
Eastern Howard School Corporation	42.11%
South Central Com School Corp	39.05%
Cannelton City Schools	38.81%
Beech Grove City Schools	38.62%
Taylor Community School Corp	38.00%
Union-North United School Corp	37.21%
MSD Wabash County Schools	35.13%
School City of Whiting	34.57%
MSD of New Durham Township	34.53%



Northeastern Wayne Schools	34.49%
Liberty-Perry Community Sch Corp	34.26%
South Henry School Corp	33.86%
Lanesville Community School Corp	33.47%
Madison-Grant United School Corp	33.31%
Southern Wells Com Schools	32.96%
Eastern Hancock Co Com Sch Corp	32.74%
Tri-Central Community Schools	32.27%
Oak Hill United School Corp	32.21%
Frankton-Lapel Community Schools	31.84%
Barr-Reeve Community Schools Inc	31.69%
West Washington School Corp	31.69%
Northwestern School Corp	31.14%
Monroe Central School Corp	31.02%
Lake Ridge New Tech Schools	29.32%
Blue River Valley Schools	29.28%
Wes-Del Community Schools	29.15%
Perry Central Com Schools Corp	29.11%
Centerville-Abington Com Schs	28.19%
Milan Community Schools	27.74%
Oregon-Davis School Corp	27.62%
Mississinewa Community School Corp	26.53%
Adams Central Community Schools	26.27%
John Glenn School Corporation	26.24%
Nettle Creek School Corporation	25.30%
Randolph Southern School Corp	25.29%
Tri-Township Cons School Corp	24.93%
Wabash City Schools	24.67%
School City of Mishawaka	24.45%
Orleans Community Schools	24.12%
Caston School Corporation	24.07%
Eastbrook Community Sch Corp	23.14%
Northwestern Con School Corp	22.85%
South Knox School Corp	22.69%
River Forest Community Sch Corp	22.36%
Western School Corporation	22.14%
Argos Community Schools	22.06%
Southwestern-Jefferson Co Con	21.93%
Flat Rock-Hawcreek School Corp	21.91%
New Prairie United School Corp	21.79%



Nineveh-Hensley-Jackson United	21.46%
Yorktown Community Schools	21.40%
Silver Creek School Corporation	21.37%
Shenandoah School Corporation	21.25%
Clinton Prairie School Corporation	21.21%
Lawrenceburg Community School Corp	20.99%
Medora Community School Corp	20.48%
Clinton Central School Corporation	20.42%



Figure 2. Enrollment trend 2006 – 2022 in two school corporations with online schools.

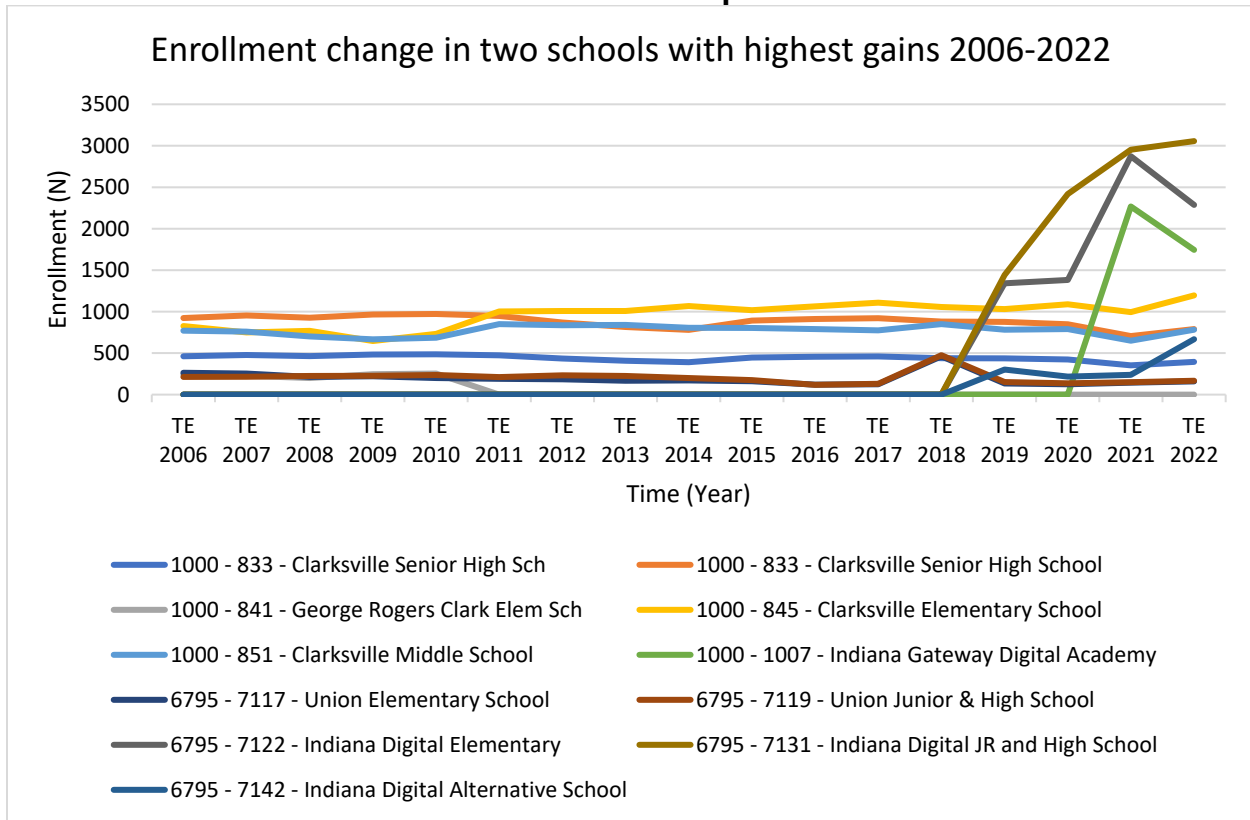


Table 7 presents the 64 public charter schools that received students transferring from public school corporations. The school corporations are organized in descending order based on the number of students received by the public charter schools. The top three school corporations received more than 1000 students, of which the top school corporation received 5863 students (about more than four times the students received by the second highest school corporation). 31 school corporations received 500 to 999 students, while the remaining 30 school corporations received less than 500 students.

Table 7. The number of students transferred to charter schools from public school corporations.

School corporations	Sum of Public Transfers: Charter (N)
Indiana Connections Academy	5863
21st Century Charter Sch of Gary	1350
Gary Lighthouse Charter School	1146
Herron Charter*	997
Irvington Community School	942
Options Charter Schools	915



Victory College Prep Academy	906
Anderson Preparatory Academy	850
Thea Bowman Leadership Academy	841
Paramount Brookside	812
Christel House Academy South	781
Indiana Connections Career Academy	753
Global Preparatory Academy	740
KIPP Indy Unite Elementary	704
Charter School of the Dunes	689
Hoosier College and Career Academy	684
Burriss Laboratory School	681
Rock Creek Community Academy	674
Enlace Academy	663
Aspire Charter Academy	660
Matchbook Learning	655
IN Math & Science Academy - North	637
Success Academy Primary School	606
Andrew J Brown Academy	600
SE Neighborhood Sch of Excellence	568
Purdue Polytechnic High School Ind	565
Discovery Charter School	564
Dugger Union Community School Corp	564
Hammond Academy of Science & Tech	562
The PATH School	540
IN Math & Science Academy	539
Phalen Leadership Academy at Franc	523
Seven Oaks Classical School	512
Community Montessori Inc	504
James and Rosemary Phalen Leadersh	478
East Chicago Lighthouse Charter	477
Christel House Academy West	471
Career Academy High School	433
Tindley Genesis Academy	433
Vision Academy	429
East Chicago Urban Enterprise Acad	424
Riverside High School	410
Career Academy Middle School	394
Signature School Inc	393
Timothy L Johnson Academy	390
Charles A Tindley Accelerated Sch	389



KIPP Indy Legacy High	384
KIPP Indy College Prep Middle	379
PLA at George H Fisher School 93	357
Steel City Academy	349
Phalen Virtual Leadership Academy	343
Adelante Schools	334
The Bloomington Project School	331
Circle City Prep Charter School	323
Indiana Agriculture and Technology	314
Urban ACT Academy	308
Avondale Meadows Academy	303
James & Rosemary Phalen Leadership	284
Purdue Polytechnic High Sch North	281
Paramount Cottage Home	271
Phalen Leadership Academy at Louis	271
Joshua Academy	265
Renaissance Academy Charter School	247
Lawrence County Independent School	242
Paramount Englewood	239
Phalen Leadership Academy - IN Inc	237
Geist Montessori Academy	233
Liberty Grove Schools	230
Tindley Summit Academy	228
HIM By HER Collegiate School for t	224
BELIEVE Circle City High School	213
pilotED Schools	213
Indianapolis Metropolitan High Sch	212
Higher Institute of Arts & Tech	206
Timothy L. Johnson Academy Middle	196
Avondale Meadows Middle School	195
Indiana Academy for Sci Math Hmn	195
Inspire Academy - A Sch of Inquiry	181
Damar Charter Academy	180
Herron Preparatory Academy	176
Invent Learning Hub	169
Paramount Online Academy	165
Indy Steam Academy	164
Springville Community Academy	164
Canaan Community Academy	160
GEO Next Generation Academy	158



ACE Preparatory Academy	156
Allegiant Preparatory Academy	145
The Nature School of Central India	145
Gary Middle College	144
Purdue Polytechnic High School Sou	143
Rooted School Indianapolis	137
Neighbors' New Vistas High School	128
Mays Community Academy	119
Dynamic Minds Academy	107
Otwell Miller Academy	95
Rural Community Schools Inc	87
Smith Academy for Excellence	76
Vanguard Collegiate of Indy	70
The Genius School	69
Promise Prep	66
Monarca Academy	39
The Hope Academy, Inc.	32
Grand Total	46,393

Table 8 presents the number of students nonpublic providers gained from Indiana's Choice Scholarship. Overall, 304 nonpublic schools received funds from the voucher program for 52,674 students in total. The 48 schools presented in the table below gained 300 or more students. The top five schools gained 600 to 700 students, followed by eight schools that gained 500 to 600 students, followed by 13 schools that gained 400 to 500 students, while the remaining 22 schools gained 300 to 400 students.

Table 8.

The 48 top nonpublic schools receiving choice scholarship students.

Nonpublic Schools	City	Sum of Non-Public Transfers: Choice Scholarship (N)
Saint Charles Borromeo School	Bloomington	700
Saint Joseph School	South Bend	672
Roncalli High School	Indianapolis	655
Saint John The Baptist School	New Haven	607
Heritage Christian School	Indianapolis	606
Bishop Dwenger High School	Fort Wayne	589
Saint Vincent DePaul School	Fort Wayne	589
Saint Jude Elementary School	Fort Wayne	547
Marian High School	Mishawaka	525
Evansville Christian Sch Newburgh	Newburgh	524



Suburban Christian School	Indianapolis	521
Faith Christian School	Lafayette	517
Cardinal Ritter High School	Indianapolis	509
Christian Academy of Indiana	New Albany	493
Saint Michael School	Bloomington	457
Holy Cross School	Bloomington	456
Saint Joseph High School	South Bend	452
Crown Point Christian School	Saint John	446
Cathedral High School	Indianapolis	436
Bishop Luers High School	Fort Wayne	433
Holy Cross Lutheran School	Indianapolis	425
Bishop Noll Institute	Hammond	416
Elkhart Christian Academy	Elkhart	414
Lakewood Park Christian School	Auburn	414
Saint Mark School	Indianapolis	411
Seccina Memorial High School	Indianapolis	405
Trinity Lutheran School	Crown Point	399
Blackhawk Christian Elementary Sch	Fort Wayne	398
Concordia Lutheran High School	Fort Wayne	398
Christ The King School	South Bend	382
Tabernacle Christian School	Martinsville	376
Holy Family School	New Albany	361
Saint Mary School	North Vernon	357
Greenwood Christian Academy	Mooreville	351
Mooreville Christian Academy	Mooreville	343
Highland Christian School	Highland	337
Saint Lawrence School	Lawrenceburg	327
Saint Casimir School	Hammond	324
Holy Spirit School	Indianapolis	323
Immanuel Lutheran School	Seymour	321
Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic	Carmel	321
Our Lady Of Grace School	Noblesville	314
Bishop Chatard High School	Indianapolis	313
MTI School of Knowledge	Indianapolis	312
Blackhawk Christian Mdl/High Sch	Fort Wayne	311
Reitz Memorial High School	Evansville	311
Saint Barnabas School	Indianapolis	311
Concordia Lutheran School	Fort Wayne	310



This report presents Indiana DoE data on student transfers through some of Indiana's school choice programs. The findings demonstrate a pattern of "winners" and "losers" under these choice policies. The data show some intriguing patterns of student movements, including shifts in students from multiple corporations to a small number of corporations with online schooling. Additionally, many students have moved from public to private schools, but often not in areas with the greatest economic or educational needs, contrary to policymakers' expectations.

As a descriptive presentation of these data, the report offers possibilities for further, more in-depth analysis of questions surrounding such choice programs. For instance, analysts may want to consider the inflows of transfer students to certain schools relative to the size of their actual enrollment to determine the proportion of students in these schools who are supported by tax-funded choice programs and, thus, the degree to which specific private schools are reliant on public funds. Similarly, further research might consider the popularity of schools relative to their actual academic performance, socio-economic needs, or educational underperformance in the surrounding communities.

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