

Innovation schools saw some of the largest gains on ISTEP in Indianapolis Public Schools. Here are the schools that had big changes.

By [Dylan Peers McCoy](#) - 16 hours ago

When ISTEP scores are released each year, buried in the rankings of the highest and lowest scoring schools is another story — schools that have made significant progress or seen precipitous drops.

So this year, we're focusing on the schools with the largest changes in passing rates on the math and English tests for 3-8 grades. Changing tests scores can be driven by many factors beyond how much students learn, but they offer a hint at which schools are going through big shifts.



Cold Spring is one of the IPS schools that had the biggest gains on ISTEP. PHOTO: Dylan Peers McCoy

In IPS, several traditional neighborhood schools made the top of the list. But many of the schools that saw the biggest gains in passing rates were innovation schools, which the district [began creating two years ago](#). The schools are managed by outside charter operators or nonprofits, but they are still considered part of the district. The strong gains in passing rates are one of the first indications that the controversial strategy could pay off for the district.

Schools of every type show up on the list of campuses that saw the biggest declines in passing rates. But some schools on the list are particularly surprising because they have earned high marks from the state in the past.

These 10 schools had the biggest gains on ISTEP from 2016 to 2017

1. **William McKinley School 39** — This neighborhood school in Fountain Square had the biggest jump in passing rates in the district. About 28 percent of students passed both the math and English tests, an increase of 9.7 percentage points over the prior year.
2. **Cold Spring School** — Formerly an environmental science magnet, this school converted to innovation status last year. Passing rates rose to 30.2 percent, up 8.7 percentage points.
3. **Center for Inquiry at School 27** — An International Baccalaureate magnet school on the near north side, this school saw passing rates reach 33.8 percent, an increase of 8.4 percentage points.
4. **Phalen Leadership Academy at School 93** — This innovation school on the far east side was taken over by the Project Restore team about three years ago. Last year, it became an

innovation school in partnership with the [PLA charter network](#). The passing rate at the school reached 38.2 percent, up 8.2 percentage points from the previous year.

5. **Phalen Leadership Academy at School 103** — This far east side first school was the first struggling school to be restarted as an innovation school. Last year the passing rate jumped to 12.8 percent of students, up 8.1 percentage points.
6. **Global Prep Academy at School 44** — After years of academic problems, this campus was restarted as an innovation school last year, and it now uses a [Spanish and English immersion model](#). Last year 14.6 percent of students passed both tests, more than double the prior year with an increase of 7.5 percentage points.
7. **Emma Donnan Elementary School** — This innovation elementary school was founded in partnership with Charter Schools USA at the Emma Donnan Middle School campus on the south side. The passing rate was 22.6 percent last year, up 6.2 percentage points.
8. **Daniel Webster School 46** — This neighborhood elementary school on the southwest side had a passing rate of 27.4 percent, up 5.2 percentage points.
9. **Eliza A Blaker School 55** — A neighborhood elementary school on the north side, School 55 [could become a magnet school next year](#). The passing rate was 24.1 percent of students, up 4.3 percentage points.
10. **Raymond Brandes School 65** — At this neighborhood school on the far south side, 36.1 percent of students passed both the math and English tests, up 2.7 percentage points over last year.

These 10 schools had the biggest drops on ISTEP from 2016 to 2017

1. **George Julian School 57** — At this neighborhood school in Irvington, 23.1 percent of students passed both the math and English tests, down 11.7 percentage points from the prior year.
2. **Christian Park School 82** — This neighborhood school on the east side had a passing rate of 28.9 percent, down 10.9 percentage points.
3. **Anna Brochhausen School 88** — This far east side neighborhood school had a passing rate of 19.8 percent, down 9.9 percentage points from last year.
4. **Lew Wallace School 107** — At this [neighborhood school on the west side](#), 22.7 percent of students passed both the math and English tests, a drop of 8.2 percentage points.
5. **Rousseau McClellan School 91** — A Montessori magnet school on the north side, School 91 has one of the highest passing rates in the district at 49.4 percent. But it's down 8 percentage points from the prior year.
6. **Center for Inquiry at School 2** — This downtown magnet school offers the International Baccalaureate program. The school has the third highest passing rate in the district at 57.7 percent, but it had fallen 7.3 percentage points.

7. **Kindezi Academy at School 69** — This neighborhood school was restarted as an innovation school last year. It had a 7.1 passing rate on the test, down 7 percentage points.
8. **Ernie Pyle School 90** — This magnet school uses the [Paideia educational philosophy](#), which emphasizes seminar discussions as well as mastery of information. The school had a 35 percent passing rate, down 6.4 percentage points from the prior year.
9. **Jonathan Jennings School 109** — This neighborhood school on the northwest side had a passing rate of 26.7, a decline of 6.3 percentage points from the prior year.
10. **Clarence Farrington School 61** — This neighborhood school on the northwest side had a 9.3 percent passing rate, down 6.2 percentage points.

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