

Data and Drafts

Where You Live Matters: Educational Opportunities and Outcomes in Central Indiana



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What is Data and Drafts?



We host these events to advance SAVI's mission, which is to *build capacity to use place-based data for better decisions.*

SAVI empowers nonprofits, researchers, government, and citizens with the data they need to make informed decisions by

- 1) providing reliable data about communities
- 2) creating actionable information
- 3) providing public access to data and research
- 4) building capacity, especially for nonprofit and community-based organizations, to use data effectively.



Goals of Data and Drafts

To create a welcoming space for community members to openly discuss educational outcomes data in Central Indiana. Our goal is to share accurate, neutral data to support honest conversations, build understanding, and empower collaborative solutions.



Background

Where you live matters. It's more than just a place – it's a reflection of your culture, community, and identity. Your environment significantly influences your long-term health, with socio-economic factors accounting for a large portion of it.



What Are Socio-Economic Factors?



**NEIGHBORHOOD AND
BUILT ENVIRONMENT**



**SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY
CONTEXT**



**HEALTH CARE
AND QUALITY**



**EDUCATION ACCESS
AND QUALITY**



**ECONOMIC
STABILITY**

- These factors account for 80-90% of health outcomes, while clinical care contributes to only 10-20%

Why Does this Matter?

Disparities in socio-economic factors can create stark differences in educational attainment. By shaping access to essential resources such as safe housing, quality education, job opportunities, and nutritious food.

This report explores the following:

- Indicators of educational achievement outcomes across all stages that impact economic opportunity
- Social and structural factors that impact and shape schools



Methodology

Data and Methodology

This report defines Central Indiana as a combination of eleven counties: Boone, Brown, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Johnson, Marion, Madison, Morgan, Putnam, and Shelby.

We have developed a series of visualizations to compare education trends across counties in Central Indiana.

Additionally, we identified the bottom 10% of tracts through an index score, highlighting areas with overlapping barriers to educational success



Key Factors:

- Pre-K access and participation
- ILEARN outcomes
- Graduation rates
- Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism



Indicators of Education

THEME	INDICATORS	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE AND YEAR	GEOGRAPHY
Early Childhood	Preschool Enrollment	Share of children under age 6 enrolled in preschool	ACS 2022 5-Year Estimates via SAVI	School District
	High-Quality Childcare Access	% of seats at PTQ Level 3 or 4 centers	Indiana FSSA 2022 via ELAC	School District
Academic Achievement	ILEARN Proficiency, Math & ELA	% of students proficient on statewide standardized test	Indiana DOE 2023	School District
	Advanced Coursework	% of students taking at least one AP exam	Indiana DOE 2022-23	School District
High School Outcomes	Graduation Rate	% of cohort graduating in four years	Indiana DOE 2022-23	School District
	Dropout Rate	% of youth age 16-19 not enrolled and not graduated	ACS 2022 5-Year Estimates	School District / Census Tract
	Chronic Absenteeism	% of students missing 10%+ of instructional days	Indiana DOE 2022-23	School District
College & Career Readiness	College-Going Rate	% of high school graduates enrolling in college within a year	CHE College Readiness Report, 2023 Cohort	School District
	Career & Technical Education (CTE) Pathways	% of students in CTE concentrator pathways & college-going outcomes	CHE College Readiness Report, 2022 Cohort	Statewide
Social Context	Youth Poverty Rate	% of children under 18 in poverty	ACS 2022 5-Year Estimates via SAVI	School District / Census Tract
	Adult Educational Attainment	% of adults age 25+ with a bachelor's degree or higher	ACS 2022 5-Year Estimates	School District / Census Tract



Key Findings

Key Finding - Early Childhood Education Attendance

For families above the poverty line, 22% of children under six attend preschool. The rate is just 13% for families below the poverty line.

Hamilton County has the highest preschool enrollment at 29%, while other counties—including Marion, Madison, and Boone—are at 18%.

Percent of children under 6 attending preschool (Central Indiana)

For total population and by poverty status

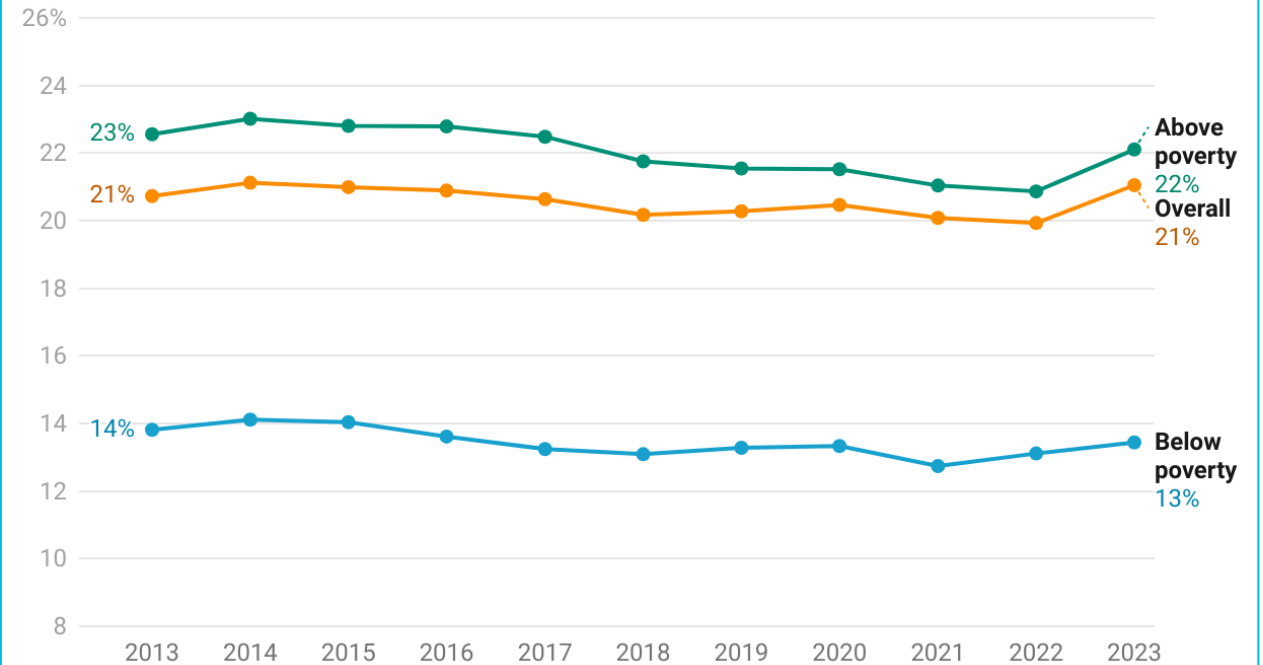


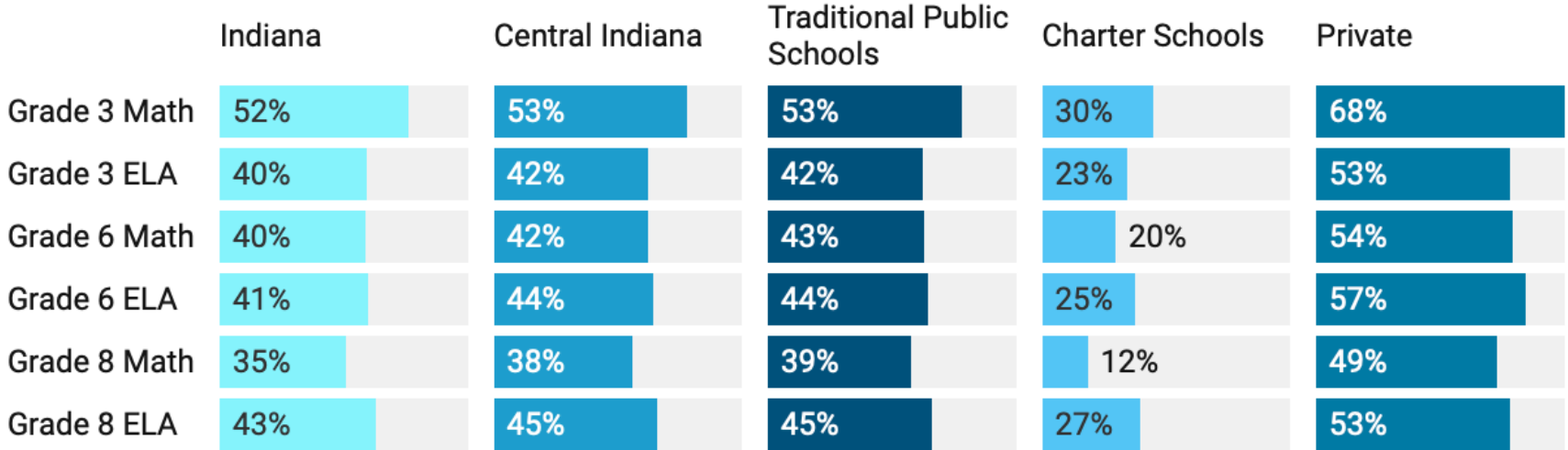
Chart: The Polis Center • Source: ACS via SAVI • Created with Datawrapper



Key Finding - ILEARN Outcomes

In Central Indiana, math proficiency for 6th and 8th grade improved from 2024 to 2025.

Primary School ILEARN Pass Rates



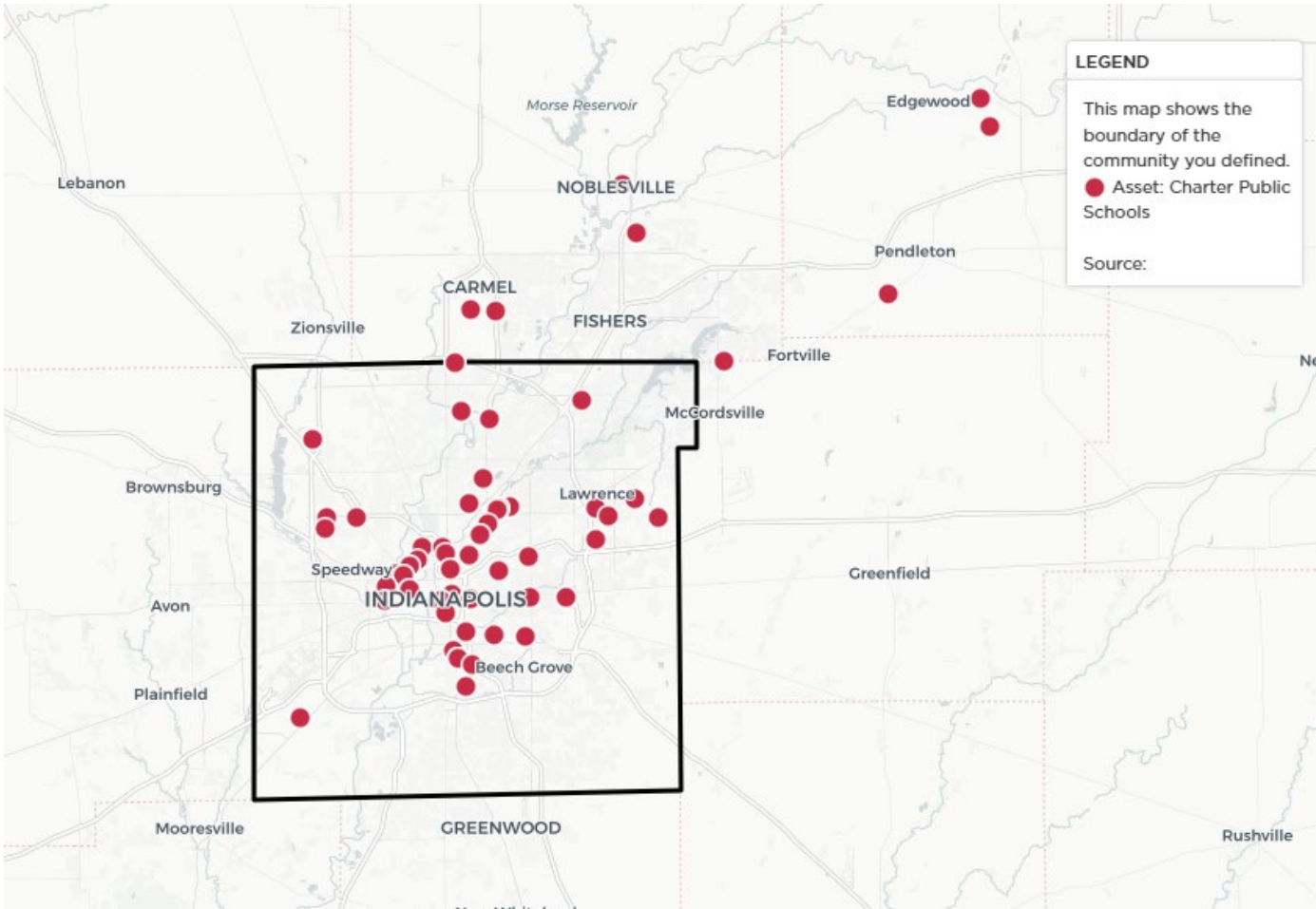
Private schools include the Catholic and Lutheran Schools. Independent private schools do not report ILEARN scores.

Chart: The Polis Center • Source: IDOE via SAVI, 2025 • [Get the data](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)



Charter Schools

Charter Public Schools are generally in Marion County, including highest concentrations in the Indianapolis Public Schools district.



Key Finding – Racial Disparities in ILEARN Outcomes

The consistency of these disparities across subjects and grade levels suggests that Indiana’s education system is not yet equipped to close longstanding achievement gaps.

ELA Pass Rate

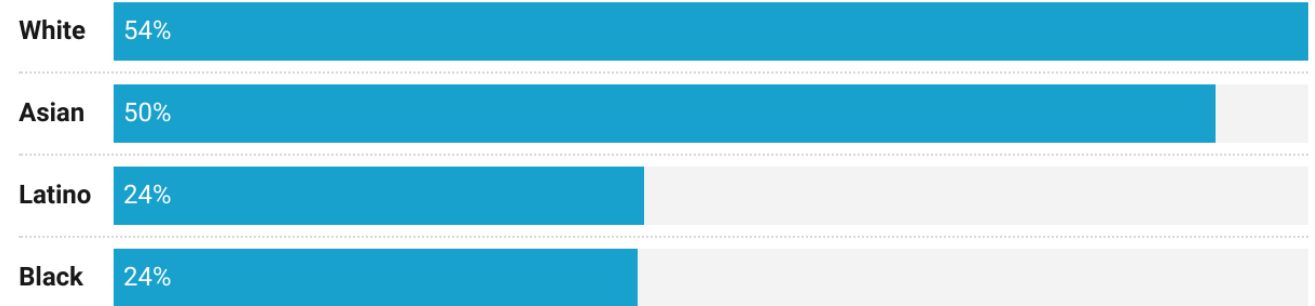


Chart: The Polis Center • Source: 2025 IDOE via SAVI • Created with Datawrapper

Math Pass Rate

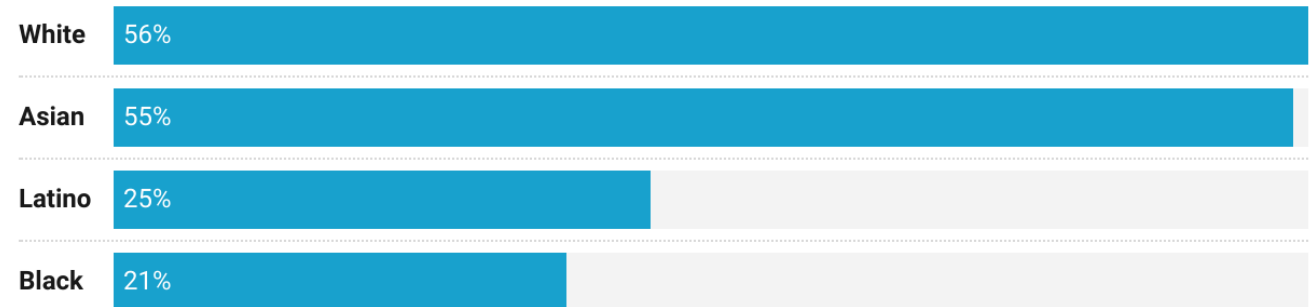
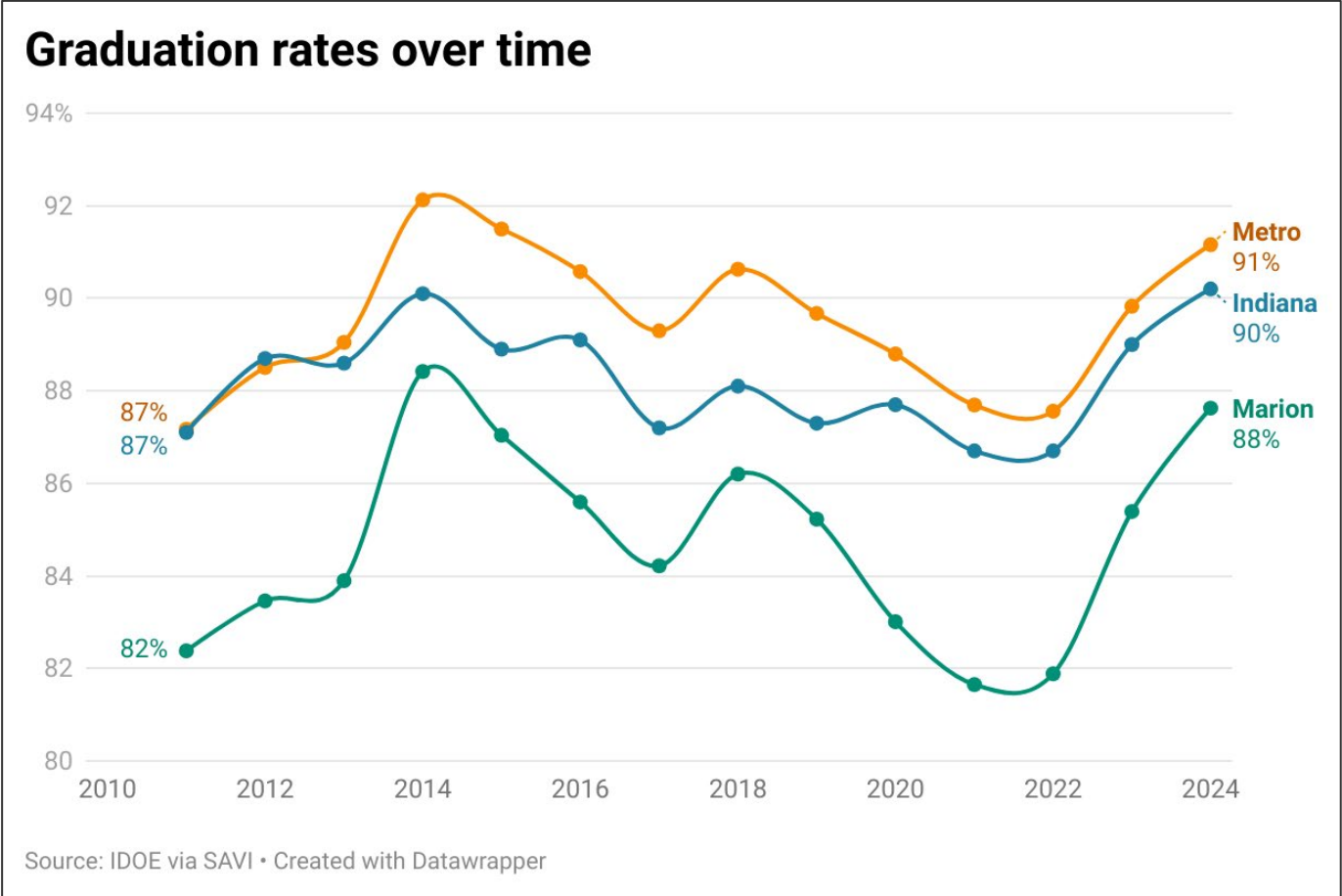


Chart: The Polis Center • Source: 2025 IDOE via SAVI • Created with Datawrapper



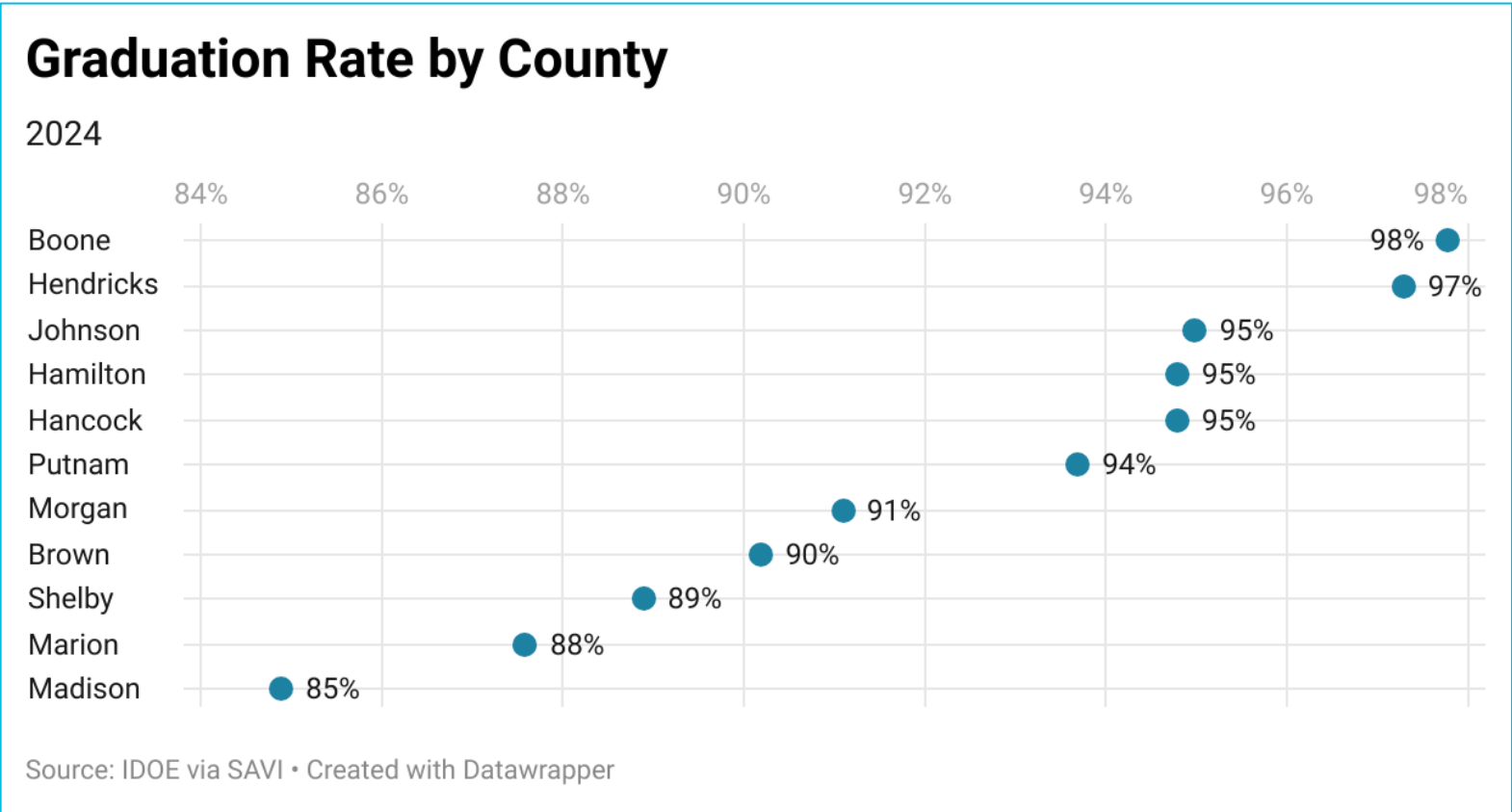
High School Outcomes: Graduation Rates

High school graduation rates across Central Indiana dropped during Covid but have rebounded to near record levels in the last few years.



Key Finding - High School Graduation Rates

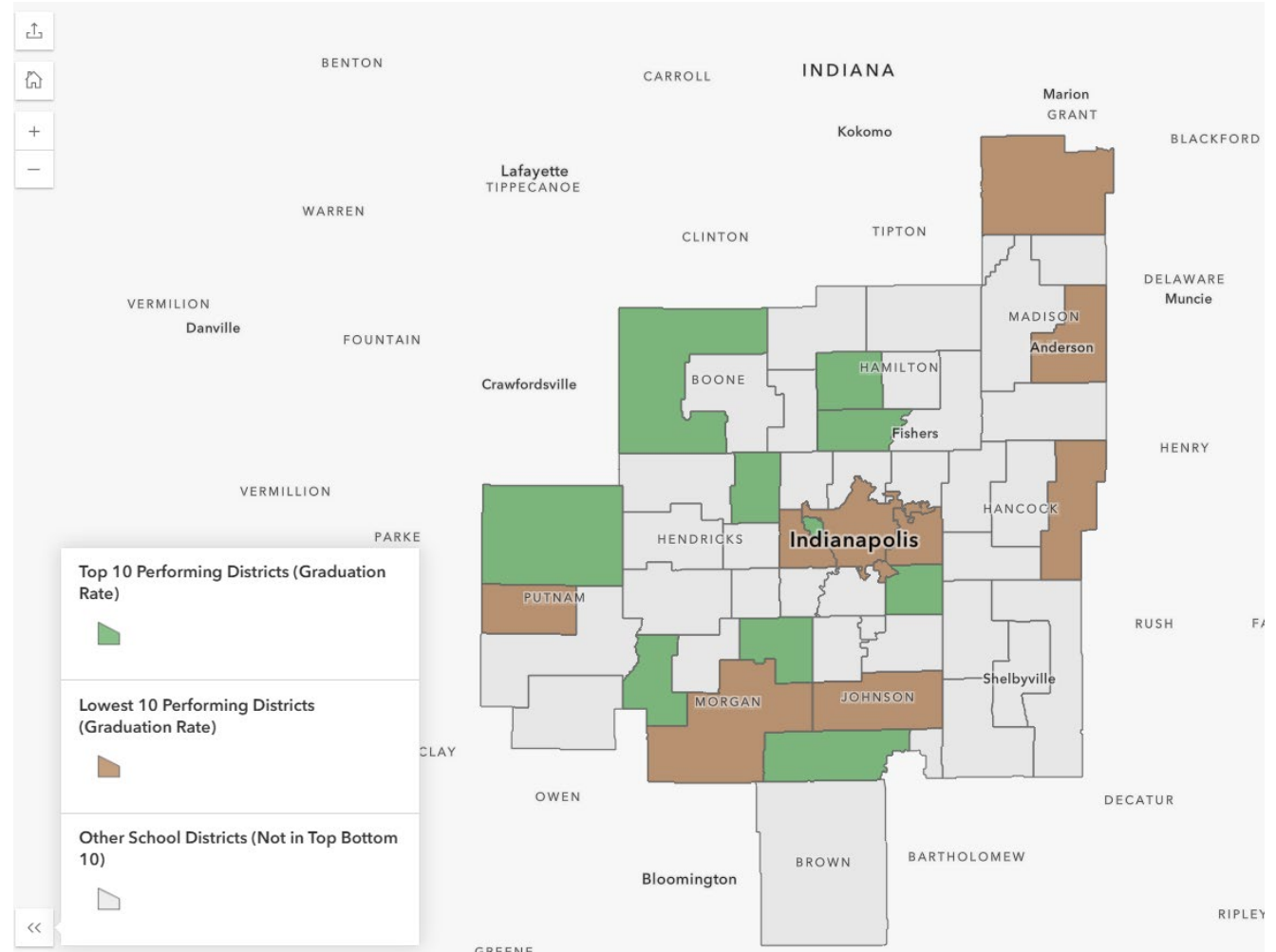
In 2024, suburban counties like Boone (97.8%), Hendricks (97.3%), Johnson (95.0%), and Hamilton (94.8%) posted graduation rates well above the state average.



School Districts with Highest and Lowest Graduation Rates

High performing districts are located on in rural and suburban areas. (I.e., Western Boone, Carmel Clay and Westfield-Washington).

Low performing area are found in both urban centers (i.e., IPS, Wayne and Warren Townships and Beech Grove) and rural areas (Martinsville, Greencastle, and Franklin)



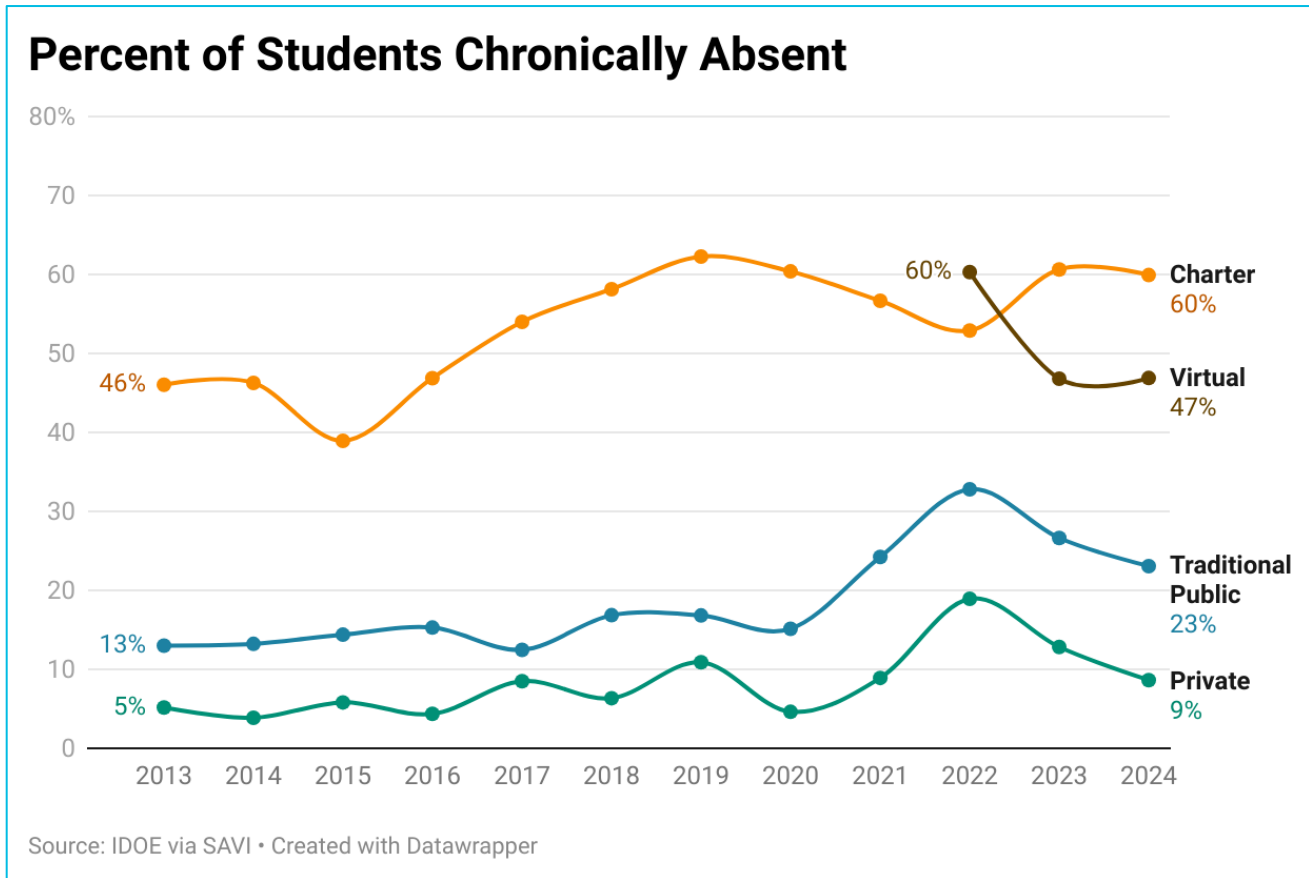
Key Finding - Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism

Chronic absenteeism surged after the pandemic and has yet to return to pre-pandemic levels.

Traditional public high schools had a chronic absenteeism rate of 23% in 2024, up from just 15% in 2020. Charter high schools, however, consistently show rate 20-30 points higher than traditional public schools.

Virtual schools also have a high rate of chronic absenteeism.

Percent of Students Chronically Absent



Key Finding - College and Career Readiness

As of 2025, just 52% of Indiana’s and 57% of Central Indiana’s high school graduates (class of 2023) enrolled in college within one year of graduation.

Zionsville Community Schools (84.8%), Carmel Clay Schools (82.2%), and Westfield-Washington Schools (80.1%) lead the region.

College-going rate for demographic groups

2023 graduates from Central Indiana schools (as of 2025)

Race/Ethnicity



Socioeconomic Status



Source: The Polis Center Analysis of Commission for Higher Education, 2023-2025 • Created with Datawrapper

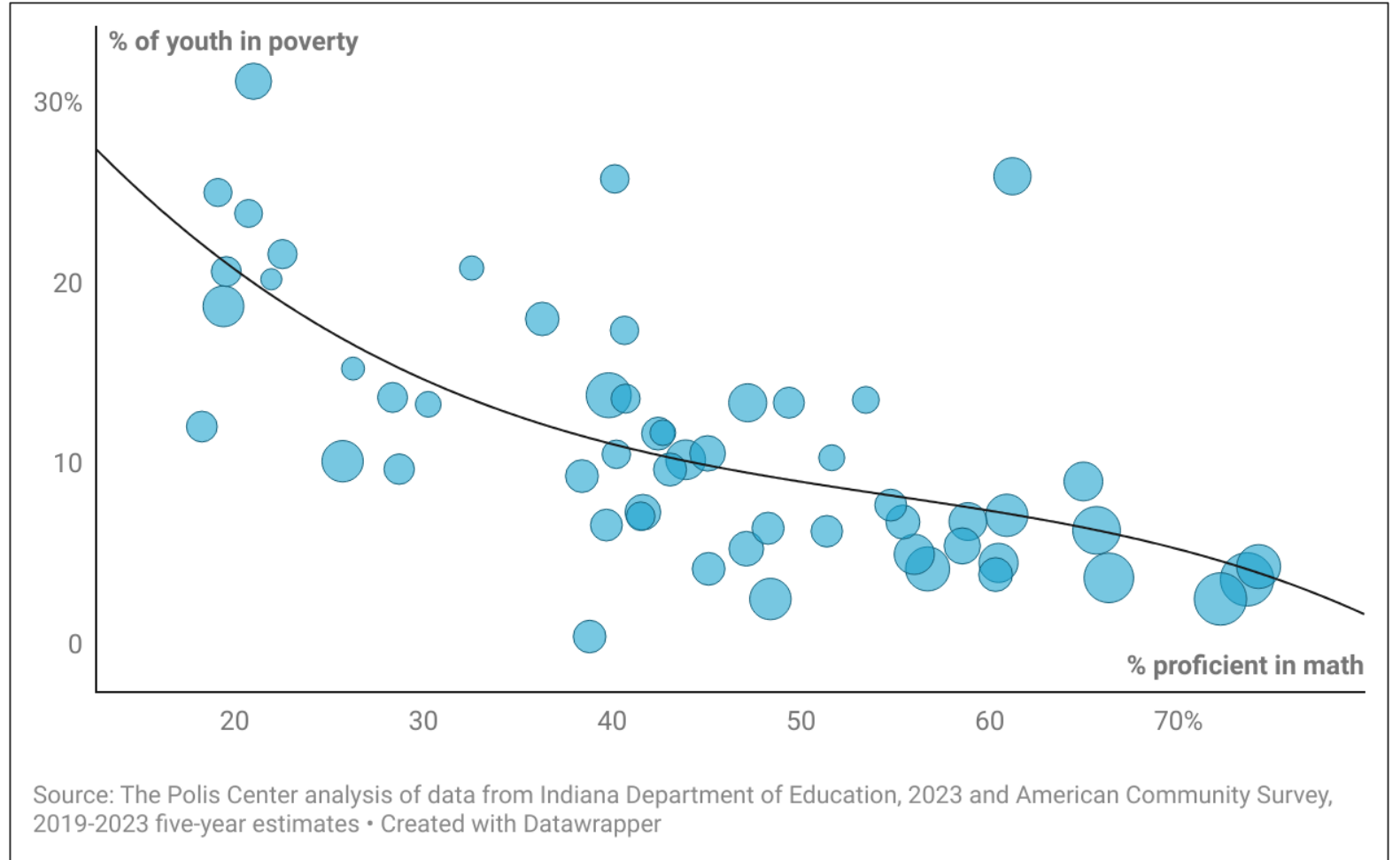


Key Finding - Community conditions impact primary school outcomes

Why do some districts have much higher test scores in elementary school than others?

Students in districts with **less poverty** and **highly educated parents** are more likely to be proficient at math.

Districts with higher rates of preschool enrollment tended to have slightly better math outcomes by elementary school.



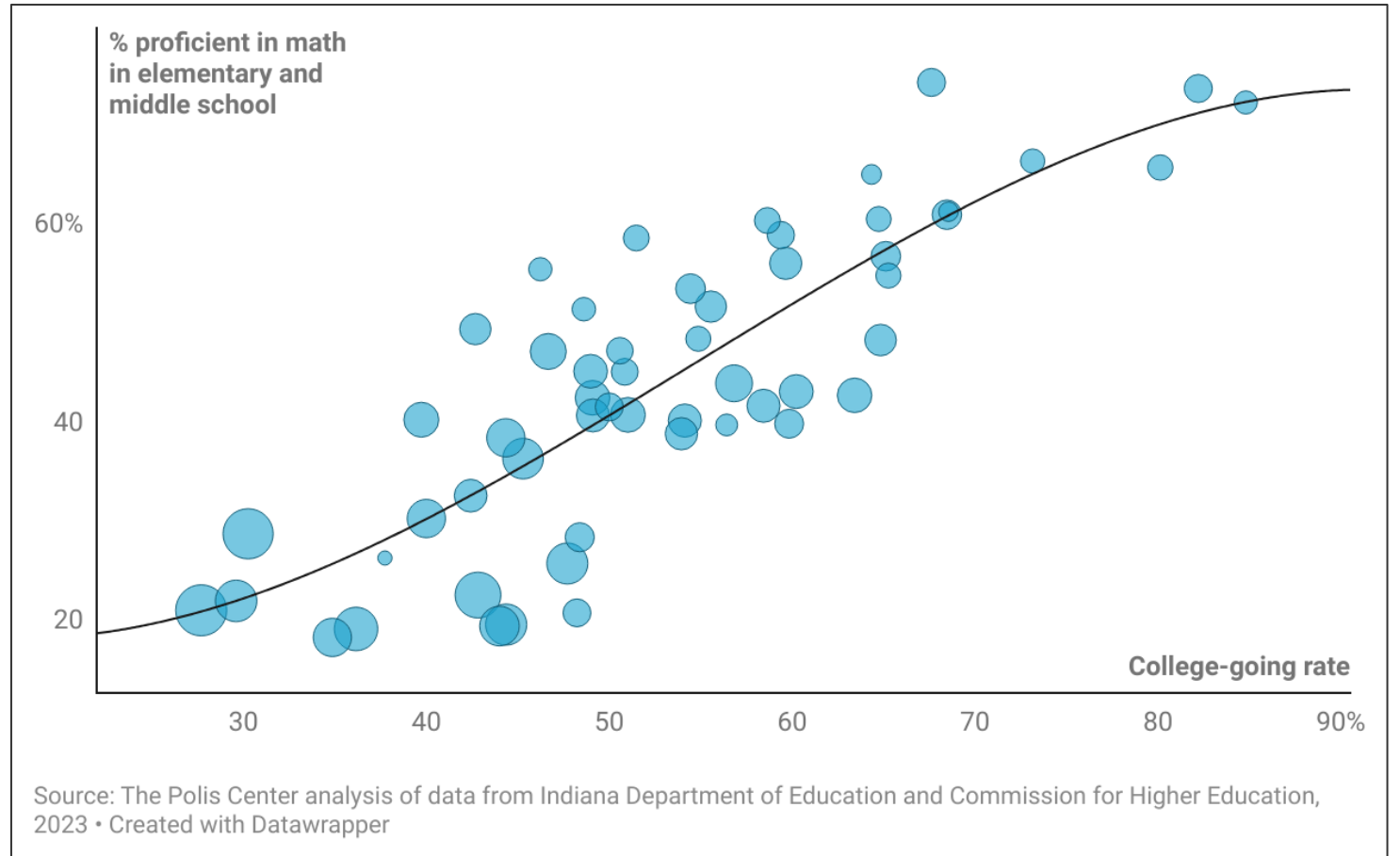
Larger bubbles indicate a higher share of the population has a college degree



Key Finding - What influences college-going rates?

Elementary and middle school math proficiency is closely linked with the share of students who go on to college.

Chronic absenteeism and community education levels also play a significant role.



Larger bubbles indicate a higher rate of chronic absenteeism in high school



Where You live Matters: Example of Bottom 10% Tract Calculation.

Selection of Indicators –
We identified seven key educational and socio-economic factors.

Data Processing and Scoring –
We created a composite rankings based on a total score (out of 7).

Each census tract was assigned a binary value (1 or 0) for every indicator. For example, tracts in the bottom 10% for a given barriers, such as youth poverty rate, received a score of 1, while all others received a score of 0.

Census Tract	Youth Poverty	Poverty Ranking	Graduation rate	Graduation Ranking	Combined Scores
Tract 18097355100	65%	1	90	0	2
Tract 18097360302	50%	1	95	0	4
Tract 18097350300	50%	1	92	0	4
Tract 18097330806	49%	1	70	0	3
Tract 18097353500	48%	1	61	0	2
Tract 18097391001	15%	0	50	0	1
Tract 18097358000	10%	0	94	1	3

Where You Live Matters: Indicators used to Calculate Bottom 10% Calculation

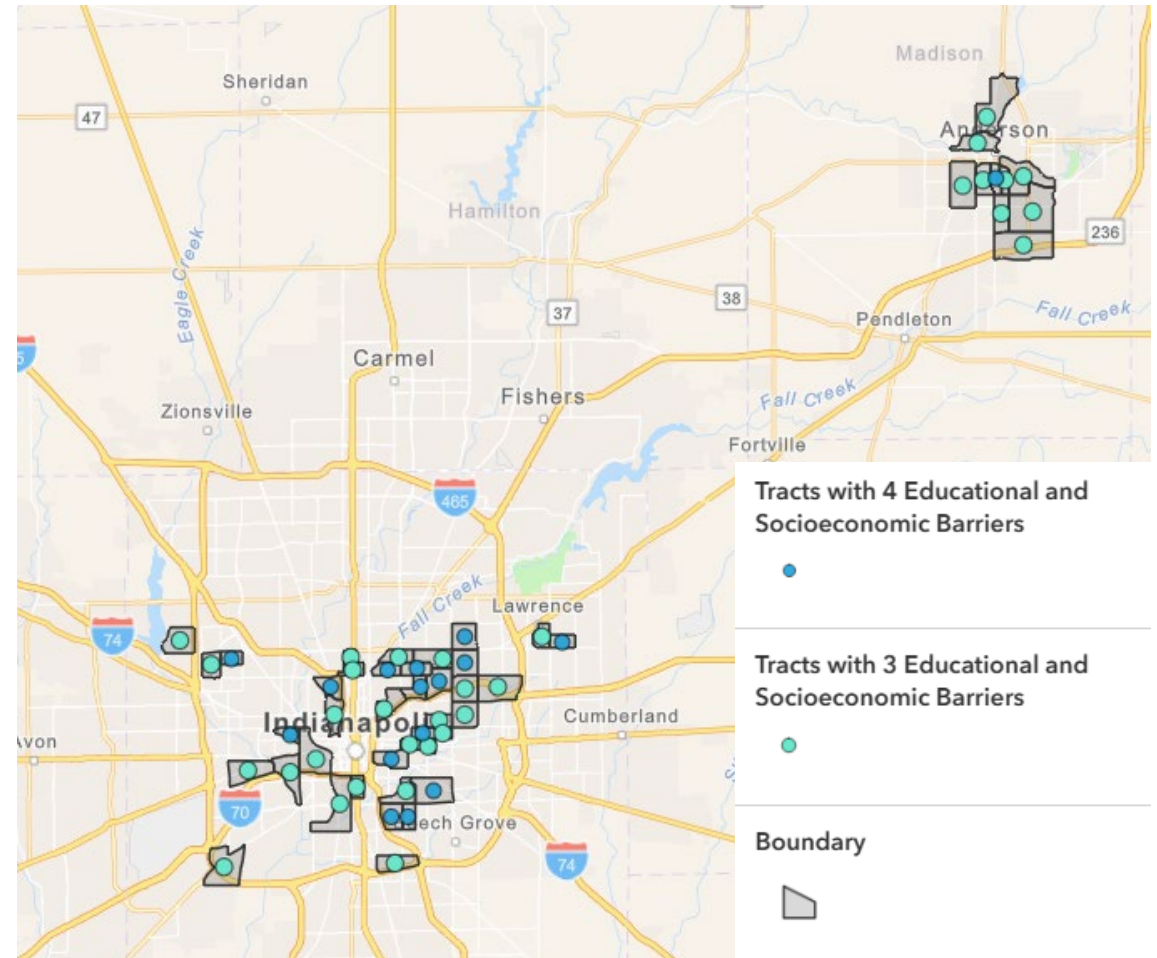
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Where You Live Matters: Areas with Overlapping Barriers to Educational Success

49 tracts in Central Indiana scored in the worst 10% for **three** or **four** out of seven socioeconomic and educational measures.

Some neighborhoods in Central Indiana face deeply layered challenges that can limit students' educational outcomes.

In Indianapolis, several adjacent census tracts served by Indianapolis Public Schools rank poorly across almost every measure.



Narrowing the High Barriers Areas (Marion)

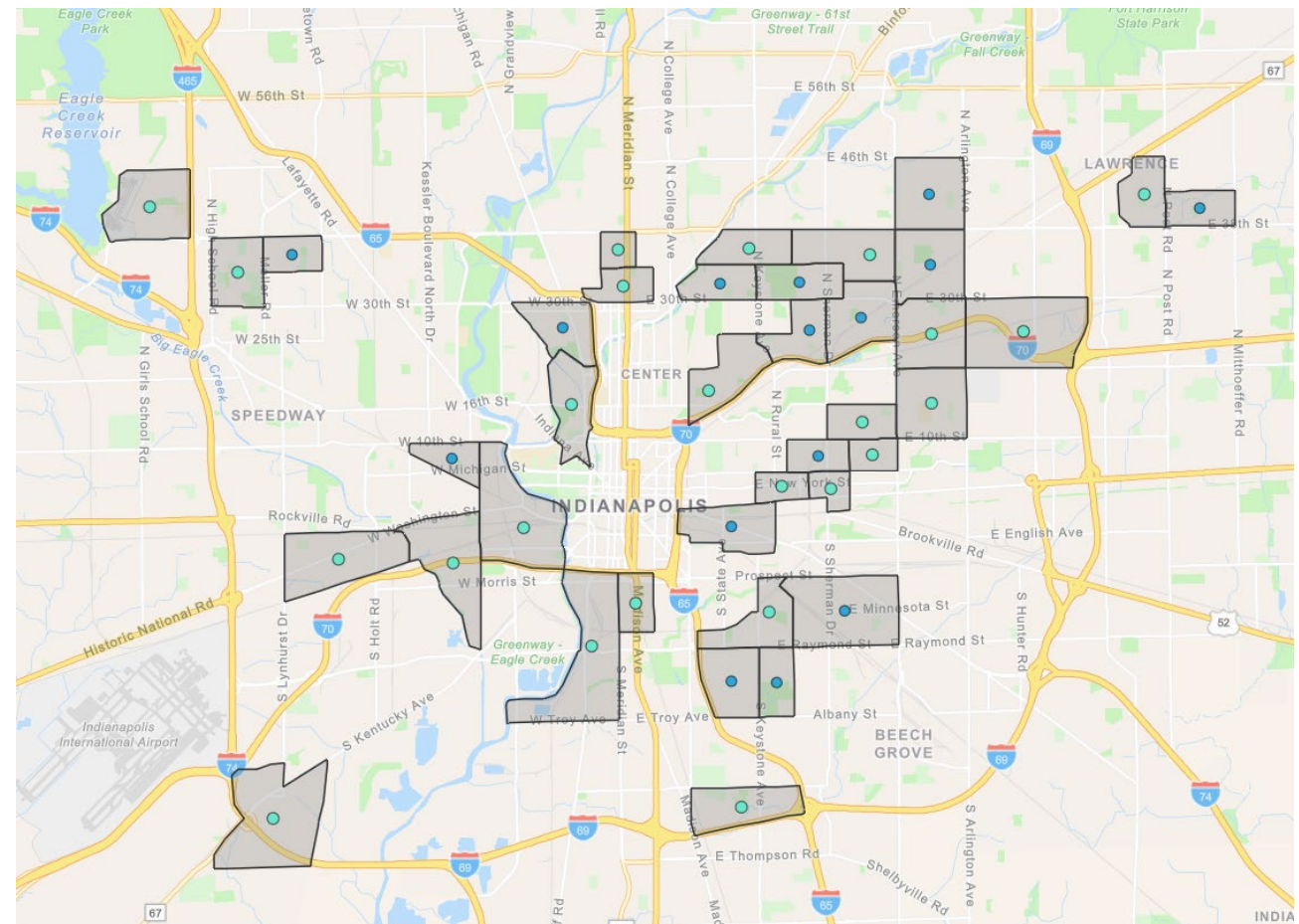
Indianapolis (39 tracts)

Location of high barrier tracts:

- Martindale-Brightwood
- Near Eastside
- Near Southeastside
- Garfield Park
- Near Westside
- Northwestside

In tract 18097352100 in Riverside, fewer than 18% of young children are enrolled in preschool, just 21% of students are proficient in math, and the college-going rate is only 27%.

39 tracts in Marion County scored in the worst 10% for **three** or **four** out of seven socioeconomic and educational measures.



Narrowing the High Barriers Areas (Madison)

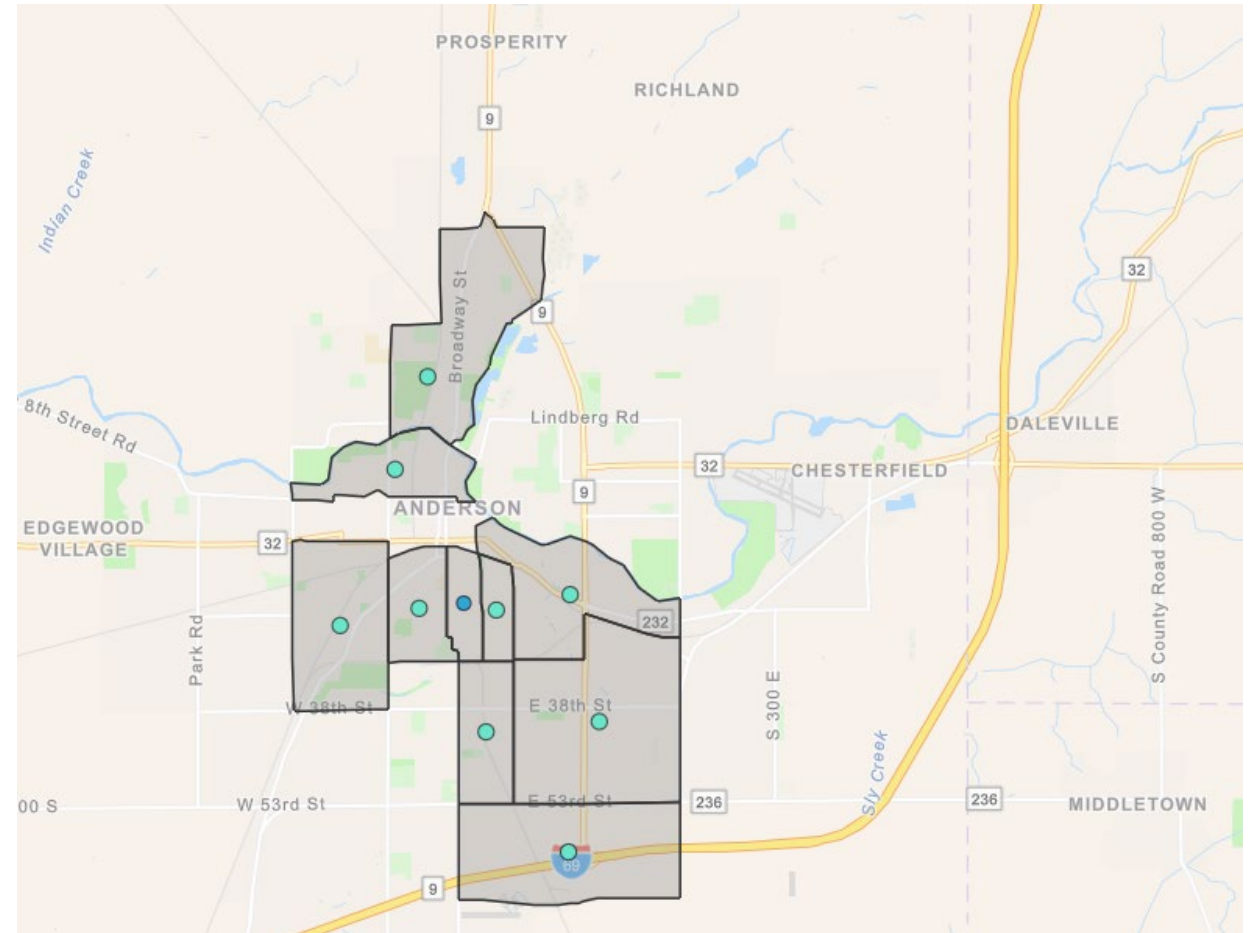
Anderson (10 tracts)

Location of high-risk/worse outcomes tracts:

- Woodlawn Heights
- Downtown Anderson
- Prosperity & Richland
- Lindberg Road corridor
- Edgewood Village
- Chesterfield

In tract 18095000800 on the south side of Anderson, only 15% of young children are in preschool, math proficiency is below 20%, and youth poverty exceeds 25%.

10 tracts in Madison County scored in the worst 10% for **three** or **four** out of seven socioeconomic and educational measures.

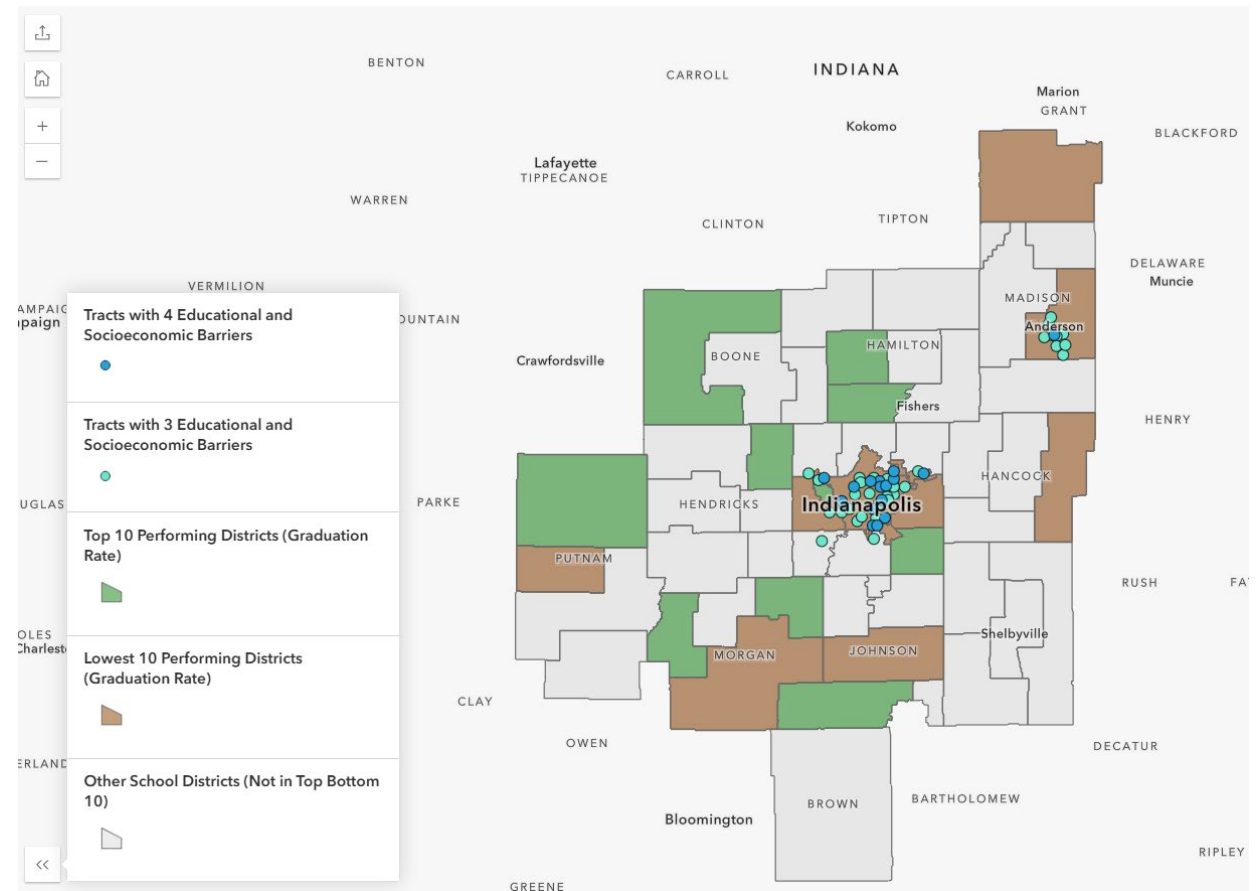


Where You Live Matters: Areas with Overlapping Barriers to Educational Success

Scored in the worst 10% for **three** or **four** out of seven measures

Many of the lowest performing school districts (brown areas) are in or near clusters of tracts with 3 or 4 barriers.

Top-performing districts (green) tend to be in suburban or rural areas with fewer or no tracts marked with barriers.



Summary

In Central Indiana, preschool access and quality remain uneven—shaped more by income, race, and geography than by need alone.

Districts with higher rates of preschool enrollment tended to have slightly better math outcomes by elementary school, pointing to the long-term value of early childhood learning.

On average, private schools outperformed both public and charter schools, with median proficiency rates about 10–15 points higher than public schools in both math and English Language Arts.

Graduation rates across Central Indiana school districts reveal stark differences in student outcomes depending on where students attend high school.





Questions?

Discussion Questions

1. What surprised you the most about the data we shared?
Why?



Discussion Questions

2. Do these outcomes reflect what you have seen or experienced in your own school or communities?



Discussion Questions

3. Which of these outcomes do you think we should prioritize addressing first – and why?





SAVI



Thank you!

