



What Will Happen to Indianapolis Schools Slated to Exit State Takeover?

By Shawnta S. Barnes – January 10, 2019

Emma Donnan Middle School, Howe High School, and Manual High School were taken over by the state in 2011 for being failing schools for several years. The state chose Charter Schools USA (CSUSA) to turn the schools around. Unfortunately, all of the schools did not improve.

School	State Grade 2017	State Grade 2018	Federal Grade 2018
Emma Donnan Middle School	F	C	D
Thomas Carr Howe Community High School	F	F	F
Emmerich Manual High School	C	C	D

Note: This is the first year where schools were given a state and federal grade. Click [here](#) to learn more.

In March, the State Board of Education will only determine the fate of the high schools. Plans are already in motion for the middle school. According to a [WFYI article](#), “Emma Donnan Middle School, is on course to become part of the IPS district as an “innovation school” in mid-2020 and remain under CSUSA management.” This transition seems logical. [After Charter Schools USA took over Emma Donnan Middle School, they decided to open an innovation elementary school to feed into the middle school.](#) Emma Donnan Elementary School earned an A rating for its 2017 and 2018 state grade and 2018 federal grade. For the high school, the State Board of Education can:

- close the schools
- seek a merger between the schools and a highly rated school
- allow the turnover manager CSUSA to seek a charter to keep the schools
- return the schools to IPS

Personally, I hope returning the schools to IPS is not chosen as an option. Based on IPS closing three high school campuses at the end of last school year, I believe the district would close both of these schools if they are returned. I don’t want any more students to be displaced and forced to seek a new school. Based on the inability to raise achievement at Howe, I believe the state should seek a merger with another school. I believe CSUSA should be able to pursue a charter to keep Manual since academic outcomes improved. Maybe they will improve even more if CSUSA has one less high school to manage.

If you want to have your voice heard, there are a few more community meetings to give your input. You can also follow and like the [School Transition Task Force Facebook page](#) where you can find updates and take a survey.

Upcoming Community Meetings

January 29, 2019 at 8 p.m.

Brookside Park

3500 Brookside Parkway South Drive

Indianapolis, IN 46201

February 6, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.

Burello Family Center

345 Pagoda Drive

Indianapolis, IN 46203