



June 18, 2021

On Tuesday, I was honored to join local leaders from the [21st Century Scholars](#) Coalition on IUSB's campus. Together with Dr. Tessa Sutton, assistant superintendent of equity, diversity, and inclusion; Taylor Williams, family engagement and mentor coordinator; IUSB Chancellor Dr. Susan Elrod; Ivy Tech Community College Chancellor Dr. David Balkin; South Bend Empowerment Zone Director of Student Programs and Supports, Isa Solis, and others, we discussed the importance of 21st Century Scholars in our community, as the deadline for Indiana eighth-graders draws near. Thanks to Rose Meissner, president of the Community Foundation of St. Joseph County, for leading this outstanding event. Remember to help your eighth grader enroll by [Wednesday, June 30](#) at learnmoreindiana.org to secure free money for in-state college tuition.

Two-thirds of our eligible students at Jackson and Edison Middle Schools and Dickinson Fine Arts Academy, as well as the South Bend Empowerment Zone's Navarre Middle School, are already enrolled in the 21st Century Scholar program. Though only 40% of all eligible students in our area are enrolled, these schools are leading the way in securing funds for college tuition. Thank you to the teachers, principals, guardians, and parents for ensuring these students complete their registrations and for inspiring these learners to pursue affordable higher education. I especially thank Mr. Joe Sommers at Jackson, Mrs. Sherry Bolden-Simpson at Dickinson, and Mr. Michael Budzinski at Edison for their outstanding efforts and leadership.

On Wednesday evening, we celebrated 130 retirees from the past two years. I was honored to join them in person over dinner to celebrate their more than 3,000 combined years of service to our district and students.

On Thursday, the School Board and I met with Mayor Mueller and the South Bend Common Council for a joint meeting to discuss future collaborative opportunities for our district and city. Thanks to those of you who joined us and shared your concerns and ideas with us. This dialogue is a crucial part of our mission to create a community of academic excellence, equity, and meaningful resources for all students, families, and educators.

Please remember that our [School Resource Officer](#) survey as well as our [Return to Learn](#) survey are open for your input on our website. Thank you for taking the time to complete these and for helping us provide our students with the best possible learning environments and support services.

Tomorrow is Juneteenth. As we commemorate the end of slavery in the United States and honor the belated liberation of those persecuted and enslaved well after President Abraham Lincoln's proclamation, we also celebrate that this important day has now become our 12th federal holiday. We'll be at the Juneteenth Celebration at LaSalle Park from 12 p.m. - 6 p.m with CTE students, surveys, and applications for certified and non-certified positions. We look forward to seeing you.

As always, read a book, watch a classic film, or check out a new album.

Have a great weekend, everyone!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Todd Cummings".

C. Todd Cummings, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools