



Perry Township Schools

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Perry Township Schools Invests \$30 Million in Students and Southside Community with State's First Innovation and Entrepreneurship Program Located on University Campus

Perry Township, IND – Beginning Wednesday July 29th, the first day of the school year, Perry Township Schools will redefine the high school experience by launching Indiana's first career-connected learning program housed on a university campus. Located at the University of Indianapolis, the entrepreneurship/innovation program will immerse students in real-world learning while preparing them for college and careers.

The trailblazing program will begin in its temporary home in Martin Hall as construction will soon begin at its permanent location. In a unique twist and learning opportunity, students will be responsible for creating the program's identity—developing its name, logo and brand from the ground up.

Students from Southport High School and Perry Meridian High School will spend part of their school day on UIndy's campus, where classroom instruction extends far beyond textbooks. Led by licensed teachers and enhanced by business leaders, entrepreneurs, and industry professionals, students will tackle real-world challenges, collaborate on projects, and explore careers.

Students will experience careers firsthand through project-based learning, mentorship opportunities, and direct engagement with professionals. The program is designed to help students discover their interests, develop in-demand skills, and graduate with a clearer vision for their future.

"Education should inspire students to discover what excites them while giving them the confidence to pursue it," said Perry Township Schools Superintendent Dr. Patrick Spray. "This partnership with the University of Indianapolis allows our students to learn in an environment that mirrors the real world. They'll solve authentic problems, work alongside professionals, and gain experiences that simply can't be replicated in a traditional classroom. As an added bonus, they may learn more about what they don't want to pursue, as well."

"The partnership with Perry Township Schools reflects what higher education should look like," said University of Indianapolis President Tanuja Singh. "By welcoming high school students to campus, we're creating opportunities for them to explore new ideas, interact with a university community, and discover possibilities they may never have imagined otherwise. We hope what begins here becomes a model that inspires others across Indiana and beyond to rethink what's possible when K-12 and higher education work together."

"Investing in opportunity for our city's students is an investment in the future of Indianapolis: a future of innovation, economic success, and sustained growth," said Indianapolis Mayor Joe Hogsett. "This program will provide a uniquely experiential curriculum, instilling in students the confidence and knowledge to succeed while preparing them for the workforce. I am extremely grateful for the Lilly Endowment, whose generous support for southside education will benefit both students and the Indianapolis community for years to come."

"As a new school year begins across Indiana, this innovative partnership between Perry Township Schools, the University of Indianapolis, and leaders across business and industry is another powerful example of what is possible when we work together to expand opportunities for students," said Dr. Katie Jenner, Indiana Secretary of Education. "When students can see more career pathways, they can imagine more for their future. By rethinking high school and expanding real-world learning opportunities, we can help more students ignite their fire of purpose and unlock their unique path. I am excited to watch this partnership take shape, and even more excited for the students whose futures will be transformed because of it."

Construction on the \$30 million permanent entrepreneurship and innovation center will begin this fall and is expected to be completed before the start of the 2028-29 school year. The 52,150-square-foot facility will serve as a hub for innovation, entrepreneurship, and workforce development. Designed to bring together students, educators, higher education, and industry partners, the center will feature state-of-the-art classrooms, makerspaces, collaborative studios, co-working spaces, and dedicated areas where students can design, prototype, test, and pitch their ideas.

Made possible through the generous support of Lilly Endowment Inc., the program represents a multi-million-dollar investment in the future of Perry Township students and the workforce of Central Indiana. Lilly Endowment is funding the building's construction costs, ensuring students have access to an innovative learning environment that will prepare them to thrive in an ever-changing economy.

By combining rigorous academics with authentic, hands-on experiences, Perry Township Schools is creating new pathways for students to graduate not only with knowledge, but with the confidence, skills, and professional experiences needed to succeed in college, careers, and life. Learn more by visiting: <https://www.perryschools.org/innovate/>.

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