

Three Schools, One building, and a Rich History

Broadcast prior to the start of the school day on Wednesday, May 26, 2021.

At this time I would like to take a moment for us to reflect on the significance of today for our school community.

Dyer Middle School welcomed its first students in the fall of 1959. The new, sleek, and modern limestone structure was built atop one of the highest points in Monroe County and enjoyed sweeping views of Bloomington. It was a “sister school” to Binford Middle School (now Binford Elementary). Both were constructed from a similar design and share many similarities. The clean lines and modern style of the building evoked the energy and youthfulness of the era. This mid-century style swept the nation at a time when black and white TVs still dominated the television industry. In a few short months after Dyer Middle School opened, President Kennedy would boldly capture this new era by famously proclaiming that the “Torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans”.

Dyer Middle School would witness many milestones. Students would enjoy cool winters sledding on the hill near the school and fun in the sun at Mills Pool when it opened in 1967. The new Dyer Middle School

would be just 10 years old when the first person walked on the moon. It's pristine views overlooked the construction of the IU library, Memorial Stadium, and Assembly Hall where the Hoosiers would bring home 3 National Championship Titles during the building's existence.

Over the years many students, including Ms. Allbright, passed through Dyer Middle School and still fondly remember their time in the school.

In 1984, Dyer Middle School, along with Binford Middle School and University Middle School, closed its doors. As part of a larger school consolidation effort, the three schools united and formed a new building called Tri-North to be housed on the Bloomington High School North Campus. Dyer Middle School became Dyer Elementary and enrolled students from the surrounding neighborhoods. The primary grades were housed in the upstairs hallway and the intermediate classrooms were downstairs. One day, students would gather to watch the first teacher travel to space. Tragically, the entire crew died in *The Challenger* explosion. President Reagan, while specifically addressing the students watching *The Challenger* liftoff on television that day, reminded young people that the "future doesn't belong to the fainthearted, it belongs to the brave."

After a handful of years as Dyer Elementary, young students would move to the brand-new Highland Park Elementary on the West side of

Bloomington in the fall of 1989. The orange and green “dragon” colors reflecting the Dyer mascot would give way to Trojan red and green that reflected the united colors of Binford, Dyer, and University. The old science wing at Dyer would be expanded to make way for a new library media center. The new wing, it currently houses the science and art hallways, would be added to the building in preparation for Tri-North moving off of the Bloomington High School North Campus and taking up residence in our current facilities.

Middle school students, including Ms. Bowman, Ms. Crane, Ms. Eads, Ms. Ratzburg, Ms. Whittaker, Mr. Williams and Ms. Zimmer along with several thousand other students would learn in the classrooms, pass through the hallways, perform in the auditorium, and compete in the gymnasium during these years. Teachers and students would learn of the tragic 9-11 attacks in the midst of ISTEP on September 11, 2001.

More recently, and for the first time in its sixty-one-year history, the building would stand eerily empty as learning moved online in response to the global pandemic in the spring of 2020.

Today, after sixty-two years in existence, this building will permanently close its doors to students as Tri-North moves next door to the world-class facility that awaits us. This year’s 8th graders, the class of 2025, will be the last class to be promoted to high school as 8th graders in the

old Tri-North. This year's 7th graders, the class of 2026, will be the only class to experience both the old and new Tri-North buildings during your middle school years.

Our physical building structure represents a very tangible, undeniable element of this school. However, as we close one chapter and open a new one, it is important to remember that what makes our school a truly remarkable place for teaching and learning is the collective spirit of the many people throughout the years who have contributed to our school community.

President Kennedy marked the "passing of the torch" to a new generation in the early days of our current building. Today, you are helping pass the torch to a new era of students in the history of Tri-North. Enjoy, reflect, and appreciate this important role you play in the school's history. Thank you!