



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Stronger Together: South Bend Education Foundation and the South Bend Alumni Association Unite to Amplify Student, Teacher, and Community Success

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After decades of serving the South Bend Community School Corporation, the South Bend Education Foundation and South Bend Alumni Association are proud to announce their official merger, creating a united organization committed to transforming lives through education, connection, and community pride.

Together, these two trusted institutions bring a shared legacy of impact: the Alumni Association celebrating 40 years of honoring extracurricular enrichment and student leadership, and the Education Foundation marking over 30 years of championing innovation and classroom excellence. This merger is both timely and deeply intentional.

By uniting efforts, this new chapter brings clarity, connection, and momentum to the work each organization has carried for decades.

“This is about legacy and vision,” said Kris Arizmendi Choinacky, Chief Executive Officer of the newly merged South Bend Education Foundation. “We’re building on decades of service to create a future-focused support system for our schools. One voice, one network, one unwavering commitment to public education.”

“Discussions of a merger between these two organizations have occurred on and off again for more than a decade,” explains Jory Fitzgerald, Board Chair, South Bend Education Foundation. “After a year and half of strategic discussions and planning by a task force comprised of members of both nonprofits board of directors, we’ve succeeded. There’s never been a time when public schools, students and teachers have more needed our support and we are unified in our determination to do just that.”

Signature programs like the South Bend Community Hall of Fame, student scholarships, teacher grants and wish lists, along with student-led enrichment projects, will not only continue but thrive. The merger streamlines operations, deepens community engagement, and focuses energy on a single, shared mission: supporting South Bend’s public schools with purpose and unity.

"This merger is about impact," said Miguel Salazar, Immediate Past Chair of the South Bend Education Foundation. "By bringing together our shared history and resources, we can better support teachers in their classrooms and students in their passions. Stronger together, we're ensuring public education in South Bend thrives for generations to come."

"The Alumni Association has always believed that learning extends beyond the classroom—through athletics, arts, and leadership experiences that shape the whole student," said Steve Luecke, Board Member of South Bend Alumni Association. "By joining forces with the Education Foundation, we are strengthening not only those opportunities, but also the community connections that make them possible. Together, we're building a stronger future for our students and our city."

"Our students succeed when our community stands behind them," said Mansour Eid, Superintendent, South Bend Community School Corporation. "This merger is a powerful example of collaboration in action, uniting to ensure every student has the support, opportunities, and encouragement they deserve."

The newly combined South Bend Education Foundation will debut its refreshed identity and expanded programming this fall, inviting the entire community to join in this bold, collaborative vision for South Bend's students and schools. To support the merged organization, visit [edfo.org](https://www.edfo.org).

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