



Tindley Schools Drops Its ‘College or Die’ Motto

July 31, 2022 by Educator Barnes

Tindley Schools have been known for academic excellence, strict discipline, and its “College or Die” motto. During the upcoming school year, the motto is going away.

Years ago, former Tindley principal Marlon Llewellyn shared his pride in the motto and the high number of Tindley graduates accepted into college. At the time, the focus was on preparing every student for college and ensuring they got accepted.

Now, the focus has shifted. Many school districts like IPS focus on the three Es: enrollment into college, enlistment into the military, or employment at a job. The shift does not mean Tindley Schools are shifting to adopt models like the three Es. The shift is an effort to be responsive to its student population’s needs.

Former Tindley Summit principal David McGuire shared his thoughts on the shift and said, “While controversial to many, the ‘College or Die’ motto blazed the trail for the charter movement in Indianapolis. The Tindley that exists now is a different Tindley than the one that was based on ‘College or Die.’”

Only two percent of students at Tindley schools are not Black. This shift acknowledges that being accepted into college is great, but it isn’t enough. The focus is now on students completing college. Getting into college might be challenging for some; however, finishing college has been a goal some students accepted into college have not been able to accomplish.

Time will tell if this shift has the impact Tindley Schools desires.