

# First Financial Bank Awards \$5,500 to Communities In Schools of Indiana

September 21, 2020

**Indianapolis, IN** – First Financial Bank awarded \$5,500 in support of Communities In Schools of Indiana. Communities In Schools is the largest evidence-based provider of comprehensive supports to meet the needs of both schools and individual students. Site coordinators are placed in school buildings to identify school and student needs, set goals, and coordinate resources to help schools and students succeed. Communities In Schools of Indiana serves over 37,000 students from 27 schools in 6 school districts around central Indiana.

CIS site coordinators have doubled their responsibilities to ensure student needs are met during the pandemic, including: increased home visits, home food deliveries, and overseeing food pantries. Staff also coordinate socially distanced small groups to assist students in coping with social and emotional challenges.

While the CIS model is crucial for many students every day, CIS becomes an especially invaluable resource for communities trying to learn a new normal. Darlene Vaughn, Executive Director, explains, “The CIS model is prepared for response. We coordinate with over 195 community organizations, and we are embedded in the schools and communities we serve. We work beyond school walls. We consistently identify students who need us the most and have been hit the hardest. We are so very grateful for the contribution of First Financial Bank. These resources will allow us to extend the breath and depth of the work we do each and every day.”

CIS coordinators are assigned a school site to collaborate with school leaders, teachers, and community providers to identify challenges students face in class or beyond school walls and coordinate community services. These efforts bring outside resources into schools and students’ homes. From immediate needs such as food and clothing to more complex ones such as life skills coaching, CIS does whatever it takes to help students succeed.

First Financial Bank is committed to seeking positive change in the community in which the bank operates. First Financial supports programs and organizations that enhance and develop the communities in which First Financial Bank does business, in particular low-income communities, focusing on the priorities of neighborhood development, workforce development and education, and culture and the arts.

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