

HOME REUNION DEDICATIONS 175TH 5K WALK/RUN 175TH EVENTS HISTORY CONTACT

175th Events 2018-2019 Calendar

Dedication Ceremony
Dedicating two building by renaming in honor of William & Elizabeth Willard and Dr. Laurene Simms.

175th 5K Walk/Run
Running for 175 years and still running... Come and celebrate running into the future.

National Deaf Cross-Country Meet
Special Meet
View Flyer

September 28, 2018
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Can you make it?



September 29, 2018
Time: 9:30 a.m.



September 29, 2018
Time: 11:00 a.m.



Cemetery Service
William & Elizabeth Willard Memorial Dedication

Bilingual Deaf Education Celebration
In honor of Bilingual Committee

Homecoming ISD vs MSSD
Chili Cook-Out served by Indiana School for Deaf Alumni Association

September 29, 2018
Time: 2:00 p.m.- 4:00 p.m.



September 29, 2018
Time: 5:00 p.m.- 7:00 p.m.



October 13, 2018
Time: 7:00 p.m.



PTCO Day!

Flyer coming soon

May 5, 2019
Time: 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



175th Reunion



June 20-23, 2019



For Questions / Contact 175th@isd.k12.in.us



History



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[Vision & Mission](#)

[History](#)

[Donations](#)

[Museum](#)

In February of 1843, the state of Indiana, even though nearly bankrupt, recognized its responsibility to educate its Deaf residents by levying a tax of two mills (1/1000) of each hundred dollars worth of property. Money generated from this tax was appropriated for a school for Deaf children. The state also rewarded the efforts of James McClean, a Deaf man from New York, with a payment of \$200 in recognition of his attempt to establish a school in Parke County, Indiana. While his efforts lasted only a year, they served to draw the attention of the General Assembly to the need for education of Deaf children in Indiana.

William Willard, a Deaf man teaching at the Ohio School for the Deaf in Columbus, traveled to Indianapolis in May 1843 and presented himself with his credentials to the General Assembly proposing the establishment of a school for Deaf children in Indiana. On May 30, 1843, the General Assembly enacted a resolution endorsing William Willard's interest in opening schools for the Deaf.

Willard, a graduate of the American School for the Deaf in Hartford, Connecticut, had been a student of the great Laurent Clerc, "the Father of Deaf Education" in America. His wife, Eliza Young Willard, was an alumna of the Ohio School for the Deaf. Together, they advertised throughout the state of Indiana for potential students. Willard traveled the state on horseback that summer demonstrating his methods and recruiting students for the school. On October 1, 1843, the Willard School opened with twelve pupils. William and Eliza both served as instructors with Willard being responsible for the boys' general care and his wife responsible for the girls' general care.

The school prospered and in December of that same year, the state passed a law that established the Willard school as a state institution. Willard was appointed principal of this school which, after a law passed in January 1846, became the sixth state school for the Deaf in the nation and the first state school to provide free education to Deaf children. In 1850, after being located in three different rented quarters in the downtown area of Indianapolis, the state built a spacious new school east of the city on the National Road.

The Indiana School for the Deaf, at that time named the Indiana Asylum for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb, remained at this location on the corner of State and Washington Streets for many years. Willard continued as a teacher at the school until his retirement in 1860. Across the street from the school, Willard had a beautiful Greek Revival home built. There, he and his family resided in what was considered one of the finest homes in Indianapolis. After much wear and decay on the State Street campus, the state approved the construction of a new campus for the school on East 42nd Street on the north side of Indianapolis.

The construction and opening of this campus was delayed from 1907 until 1911 due to the cost overruns and faulty construction. Much public debate was held about the cost of such magnificent buildings of monumental stature that became the present day campus of the Indiana School for the Deaf. Located on 80 acres in a beautiful campus setting, the school's main buildings are registered as historic landmarks. The Indiana School for the Deaf is a fully accredited school and a national resource center. It is recognized nationally for its leadership in education, its advocacy of American Sign Language and being the first state Deaf school to adopt a Bilingual/Bicultural Philosophy.