



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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As Dennis Piron Retires From Teaching, Batavia Moves to Endow a Scholarship in His Name — Permanently

Nearly 700 students came through his INCubator class in ten years. The Dunham Foundation will now match the community's first \$50,000 dollar-for-dollar toward a \$100,000 endowment that funds a Batavia senior every year.

BATAVIA, Ill. — August 7, 2026 — As Dennis Piron retires from teaching at Batavia High School, a group of Batavia business leaders and former mentors has launched a campaign to permanently endow a scholarship in his name — honoring the decade he spent turning students into entrepreneurs through the school's INCubator program.

Piron is not leaving Batavia. He remains **head football coach through the coming season**, and continues with INCubator as a **community champion** alongside Bob Hubbard. The program's new teacher is **Alexandra Piron** — a Batavia High graduate who joined the school's mathematics department last year and was selected from a field of candidates for the role. She will teach INCubator alongside mathematics, a dual-specialty role much like the one her father held. She is also his daughter.

By the program's own estimate, **nearly 700 students** came through the class across those ten years.

The Dennis Piron Legacy Scholarship will be awarded annually to a graduating Batavia High School senior. Because the fund is endowed rather than raised year to year, the award continues indefinitely without further fundraising.

The campaign has a \$100,000 goal, structured as two halves. The Dunham Foundation has approved a **\$50,000 dollar-for-dollar matching grant**, which is released once the community raises and delivers the first \$50,000. More than **\$36,000 has already been committed** by an initial group of lead donors — roughly 72 percent of the community's half.

The scholarship is held and administered by the **Batavia Foundation for Educational Excellence**, an IRS-registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit.

“Every one of us on this committee has witnessed the positive impact that Dennis has had on Batavia High School students – especially those in the INCubator program. While there is no replacing Dennis, endowing the Piron Legacy Scholarship means Batavia students will benefit from his efforts forever.”

— **ROB HOLLIS, PIRON LEGACY SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE**

A decade of building entrepreneurs

Through the Batavia High School INCubator program, Piron has guided students as they turn raw ideas into real businesses — coaching them through everything from pro-forma financials to Pitch Night, where teams present to a room full of investors.

The program's results are visible around town. This spring, a Windmill Weekly team of Batavia High students built a large-type newspaper for residents of care centers and assisted-living facilities, took the top donation prize at INCubator's Pitch Night, and held a Batavia Chamber of Commerce ribbon-cutting in July. The idea began with a student's grandmother, who missed her newspaper while living in a care center.

“What good people children are. Given the opportunity to serve, to help in a community, to be part of something special — how willing they are to do it.”

— DENNIS PIRON

In March, supporters gathered at Penrose Brewery to mark the program's tenth year and raised more than \$12,500 for student teams.

How to give

Donations can be made at pironlegacy.org. Gifts are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Because the Dunham match is released only after the community's \$50,000 is received, fulfilled gifts are what unlock the matching funds.

The effort is organized by a volunteer steering committee of Batavia business leaders and former INCubator mentors: Dave Brown, Bob Hansen, Dominic Hansen, Rob Hollis, Bob Hubbard, Tyler Piron, Gary Ricke and Bob Vaughan.

ABOUT THE BATAVIA FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

The Batavia Foundation for Educational Excellence is an IRS-registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit that holds and administers funds supporting education in Batavia, Illinois.

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