

# Rethinking High School: The Future of the Indiana Diploma

March 2024

# LEARNER-CENTERED, **FUTURE-FOCUSED**

Forbes

Towards A Creative Future: Rethinking Schools For The 21st Century

Reinventing High School with a Focus on Industry-driven Design Projects and It's Influence on Students as they Enter College

High School Transformation is Necessary and Possible

How High School Should Change for an Era of AI and Robots

America's chip moonshot should take aim at its education system

Rethinking High School: Upending Traditional Subject Structure in Indiana

Opinion US economy

To build a domestic industry, the US must reform how it teaches its workforce

# CURRENT DATA: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

**76%** of Hoosier high school graduates said they intend to go on to some form of higher learning...

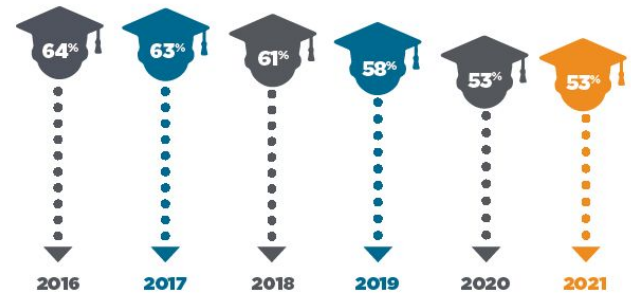
**53%** actually do.

**99%** of jobs created since the Great Recession go to Americans with some education beyond high school

Overall, **53.3%** of Hoosiers between the ages of 25 and 65 have a postsecondary credential or high-value industry certification beyond high school.

## HIGH SCHOOLERS GOING STRAIGHT TO COLLEGE

Four hundred fewer Indiana high school graduates from the class of 2021 enrolled in some form of education and training beyond high school compared to the class of 2020.



## CURRENT DATA: CREDENTIALS IN HIGH SCHOOL

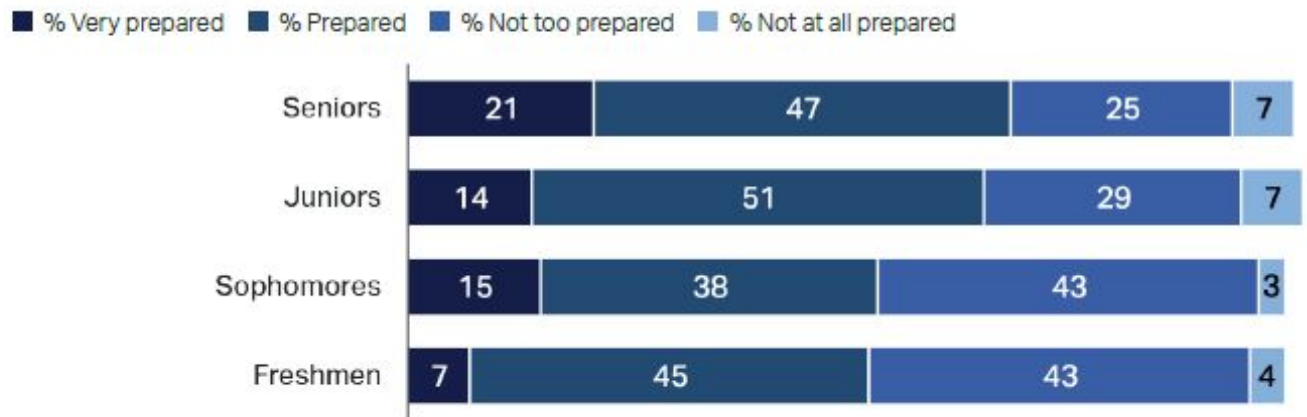
- Indiana ranks **#1 nationwide** in terms of students *completing at least one college course* in high school.\*
- **64% of Indiana high school students** earn college credit.
  - These students graduate with an average of **13.5 college credits**.
  - A short-term credential in Indiana can be earned with **15-18 credits**, placing *thousands of students* just a few credits away from earning a credential...and many aren't even aware!
- Almost **5% of these students** earn a college or career credential before graduation, *opening doors of future opportunity*.

\*Source: [NACEP Report](#)



# PARENT DATA: PERCEPTIONS OF FUTURE PREPAREDNESS

According to parents: How prepared, if at all, is your child for life after high school?



Note: Due to rounding, percentages may sum to 100%, ±1 percentage point. Totals of combined categories presented in this report may also differ by ±1 percentage point due to rounding.

Source: 2022 Gallup Survey, Indiana Parents

# WHY ACCESS TO CREDENTIALS MATTERS

A Student's Increased Educational Attainment =



Better quality of life



Increased wages



Healthier life

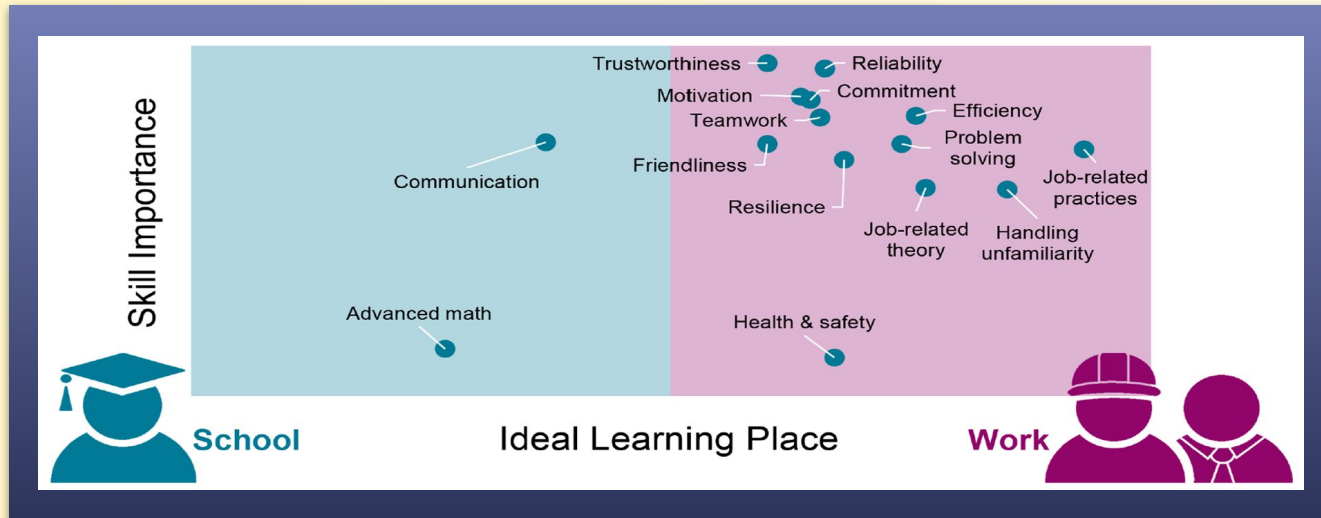


Better jobs



# WHY ACCESS TO WORK-BASED LEARNING MATTERS

Schools play a key role in preparing students for their future, including helping them to develop employability skills. This work is enhanced through **high-quality work-based learning opportunities**, which help students apply and hone their skills.



Source: Renold, U., Boli, T., Caves, K. M., & Bürgi, J. (2017). Training for Growth: Skills shortage and companies' willingness to train in Colorado. *KOF Studies*, 94. [https://www.research-collection.ethz.ch/bitstream/handle/20.500.11850/164859/1/No\\_94\\_Training\\_for\\_Growth.pdf](https://www.research-collection.ethz.ch/bitstream/handle/20.500.11850/164859/1/No_94_Training_for_Growth.pdf)

# PATHWAYS & *OPPORTUNITIES*

It's about the entire **education to workforce continuum**.

Finding the right fit for **everyone**. Creating **smooth** transitions.  
Positively **impacting** Hoosier lives.

PREK-GRADE 2



Expanding quality,  
affordable, and accessible  
early learning

GRADES 3-8



Delivering educational  
fundamentals: emphasis on  
reading and STEM

GRADES 9-12



Providing seamless  
transitions for Indiana  
students

GRADUATION AND BEYOND



Supporting Indiana  
students for a brighter  
future

# Indiana's Opportunity to Lead

Stakeholders often say, “*if*” high school approached learning differently for students, “*then*” **we could better connect them to what’s next.**



The current structure of the American high school experience **has not changed for most students** in over a century.

In Indiana - our current diploma has not been significantly updated since the late 1980s.



While *some aspects* of our **current high school experience** *work*, there is a *need to modernize* many other aspects which are *long outdated*.

This is our opportunity to **lead** and ultimately, **lift all our citizens to better lives through education.**



# Transforming Education

Indiana is the **first state in the nation** to significantly redesign diplomas... which means, **there is no roadmap**. This will not be perfect, but **we must start somewhere**.



We will **learn** lessons, and we will **iterate to continuously improve education** for the betterment of our students, state, and country.



We all have a role to play in making this successful, including **educators, business/industry, families, and communities**.



# Thoughts on Rethinking High School: Industry Leaders



# HOOSIERS **ENGAGED** IN PROCESS

To inform our efforts to rethink K-12 education in Indiana, IDOE continues to conduct extensive stakeholder outreach and engagement to seek feedback. These stakeholders represent:

- educators
- community organizations
- other state agencies
- colleges and universities
- philanthropy
- students
- parents
- advocacy groups
- business and industry
- Indiana General Assembly
- policy experts





## MAJOR THEMES IN STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

Make the high school experience more **learner-centric** and **relevant**.

Streamline the overall number of diplomas while maximizing flexibility to **personalize pathways** and **experiences**.

Rebrand the diploma and consider a “**diploma plus**” **approach** that goes beyond a checklist of requirements.

Increase focus on **skills** and **competencies** that matter most to current and future employers, as opposed to just courses (i.e, the Carnegie unit).





## MAJOR THEMES IN STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK CONTINUED

Consider several **applied math course sequences** aligned to learner pathways, including data science.

Prioritize access to **experiential** and **work-based learning**.

Ensure credentials have **value** and **relevance** for students, as well as connect them to **market-driven careers**.

Evaluate and align existing policies and supports to **help schools** and **teachers** transition to a more learner-centric approach (diploma redesign is one part of rethinking high school).





# Thoughts on Rethinking High School: Students



**Share Your  
Feedback  
Here!**



## Timeline & Next Steps

**March**

SBOE approval of request to initiate rulemaking

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# The *Future* of Indiana's Diplomas

# BEGINNING WITH THE END IN MIND

**Graduation:** Every student is prepared for personal and professional success, regardless of their future path.



**Employment**



**Enrollment**



**Enlistment Leading to Service**







# *FUTURE* INDIANA DIPLOMA TYPES

BEGINNING WITH THE CLASS OF 2029

Option  
1

Indiana GPS Diploma

Option  
2

Indiana GPS Diploma *Plus*

These options are in addition to the federally-required **alternate diploma**, designed for students with the most significant cognitive disability.

*(1% or less of special education students)*



# ALIGNMENT TO GRADUATION PATHWAYS

1

Component

**Required Courses**  
(and/or competencies)

2

Component

**Employability Skills**

3

Component

**Postsecondary-Ready  
Competencies**

Through Graduation Pathways, Indiana's class of 2023 was the first to individualize their graduation requirements to align to their future goals. This includes **three components**.



# ALIGNMENT TO INDIANA GPS (INDIANA'S PROFILE OF A GRADUATE)

**For the first time ever,  
Indiana's diplomas will:**

- Be aligned to the characteristics stakeholders consistently agree are essential for our graduates.
- Affirm that each graduate possesses the five key characteristics.
- Consider competencies...not just a checklist of courses and credits.

ACADEMIC MASTERY

CAREER & POSTSECONDARY READINESS: CREDENTIALS & EXPERIENCES

COMMUNICATION & COLLABORATION

WORK ETHIC

CIVIC, FINANCIAL & DIGITAL LITERACY

# Option 1: Indiana GPS Diploma



# INDIANA GPS DIPLOMA

(A MORE FLEXIBLE APPROACH TO THE CORE 40)

## COMPONENT 1

***Required Courses  
(and/or competencies)***

### **FLEX 40**

- Foundational courses and competencies (grades 9-10)
  - Includes flexible options in courses and course levels
- Additional courses and competencies (i.e., “points”), aligned with the student’s graduation plan (grades 11-12)

## COMPONENT 2

***Employability Skills  
Ready Competencies***

- Project-Based Learning
- Service-Based Learning
- Work-Based Learning

*\*Same as current Component 2 requirements*

## COMPONENT 3

***Postsecondary-  
Ready Competencies***

- SAT
- ACT
- ASVAB
- Industry-Recognized Certification
- CTE Concentrator
- AP/IB/Dual Credit/Cambridge International/CLEP
- Locally-Created Pathway

*\*Same as current Component 3 requirements*

# INDIANA GPS DIPLOMA - FLEX 40

- In addition to the foundational courses and competencies for all students, those pursuing the Indiana GPS Diploma will also complete a minimum of 20 additional courses and competencies (“points”) during their 11th and 12th grade years.
  - **Points** are a way to measure **academic mastery and skill development**, whether that learning occurs through credit attainment or competency-based education.
  - At least **two** of these points must come from *Math* and **four** must come from *English*.
- Students will use their **individual graduation plan**, completed in middle school, to determine course sequences.



# INDIANA GPS DIPLOMA - FLEX 40 CONTINUED

\*At least **two** of these points must come from *Math* and **four** must come from *English*.

Grades 11-12: Students may choose any combination of the following -

- Math credits (1 point each)\*
- English credits (1 point each)\*
- Science credits (1 point each)
- Social Studies credits (1 point each)
- World Language credits (1 point each)
- Fine Arts/Creative credits (1 point each)
- Elective credits (organized toward the intended pathway) (1 point each)
- Work-Based Learning - (1 point for every 60 hours; up to 2 points)
- Dual Credit (1 additional point per course)
- AP (1 additional point per course)
- SAT/ACT College-Ready Qualifying Score (3 points)
- JROTC or other military experience (4 points)
- One of the following:
  - Credential of Value (4 points)
  - CTE Concentrator (4 points)
  - Locally-Created Pathway (4 points)

# Employment - Flex 40

- **Grades 9 - 10: Foundational courses and competencies**
- **Grades 11 - 12: Flexibility and Personalization (aligned to student's graduation plan)**
  - English 11 & 12 (4 points)
  - Chemistry (2 points)
  - Quantitative Reasoning (2 points)
  - Critical Thinking and Argumentation (2 points)
  - Debate (2 points)
  - Technical Communication (2 points)
  - Plumbing Internship (2 points)
  - Plumbing and Pipefitting CTE Concentrator (4 points)
    - i. Principles of Plumbing and Pipefitting
    - ii. Plumbing and Pipefitting Fundamentals
    - iii. Advanced Plumbing and Pipefitting
    - iv. Plumbing and Pipefitting Capstone

**EXAMPLE**

# Enrollment - Flex 40

- **Grades 9 - 10: Foundational courses and competencies**
- **Grades 11 - 12: Flexibility and Personalization (aligned to student's graduation plan)**
  - AP Chemistry (science) (2 points)
  - Physics I (science) (2 points)
  - Journalism (ELA) (2 points)
  - Digital Media (ELA) (2 points)
  - Ceramics (fine arts) (2 points)
  - WBL Internship - Abbott Labs: Marketing (72 hours – 1 point)
  - Spanish I (world language) (2 points)
  - Spanish II (world language) (2 points)
  - Spanish III (world language) (2 points)
  - Algebra II (math) (2 points)
  - AP Pre-Calculus (math) (2 points)
  - AP Psychology (social studies) (2 points)

**EXAMPLE**

# Enlistment - Flex 40

- **Grades 9 - 10: Foundational courses and competencies**
- **Grades 11 - 12: Flexibility and Personalization (aligned to student's graduation plan)**
  - Analytical Algebra II (2 points)
  - Probability and Statistics (1 point)
  - Principles of Biomedical Science (2 points)
  - Human Body Systems (2 points)
  - English 11 (2 points)
  - American Literature (2 points)
  - World History and Civilization (2 points)
  - Citizenship and Civics (1 point)
  - JROTC (4 points)
  - National Guard Split Training (WBL) (2 points)

**EXAMPLE**



# Option 2: Indiana GPS Diploma Plus



# INDIANA GPS DIPLOMA PLUS

## COMPONENT 1

### *Required Courses (and/or competencies)*

- Foundational courses and competencies (grades 9-10)
  - Includes flexible options in courses and course levels
- Additional courses and competencies necessary to complete a high-quality work-based learning opportunity and earn a credential of value, aligned with the student's graduation plan (grades 11-12)

## COMPONENT 2

### *Employability Skills Ready Competencies*

- Work-Based Learning
  - **Level 2: WBL Capstone** (75 hours)
  - **Level 3: State Pre-Apprenticeship/ Modern Youth Apprenticeship** (650 hours)
  - **Level 4: U.S. Department of Labor Registered Apprenticeship** (2,000 hours)

## COMPONENT 3

### *Postsecondary- Ready Competencies*

- Credential of Value
  - Market-driven credentials
  - Includes **core content** and **CTE** coursework; each credential will be reviewed to ensure rigor
- Apprenticeship
- Indiana College Core (ICC)
- AP Scholar with Distinction
- Cambridge AICE Diploma
- IB Diploma Programme



# Foundational Knowledge & Skills for All Students

## FOUNDATIONAL KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS (GRADES 9-10)

**20 credits, plus competencies** aligned to Indiana GPS characteristics

- Reflective of **priority coursework** many students already complete
- **Flexible options** to satisfy each requirement (ex. AP, IB, Cambridge, dual credit)
- Opportunities for students to demonstrate **competency mastery**

In addition to  
coursework  
aligned to  
student's future  
goals



***Streamlined*** and ***strategically focused*** on the knowledge and skills that really matter for students, thus allowing for **additional flexibility** and **personalization** in grades 11 and 12

Schools may **opt-in** beginning with completion of rule-making; effective for all students beginning with the **class of 2029** (current 7th graders).



# FOUNDATIONAL KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS (GRADES 9-10)

## Academic Mastery

English

Math

Science

## Career & Postsecondary Readiness

College/Careers

Career Aptitude Test

Job shadowing or skills boot camp

Attend at least one college or job fair

1 Dual Credit Course

*\*3 of 4 competencies*

## Communication & Collaboration

English

Verification of 4 competencies

*\*1 must be external*

## Work Ethic

PE, Health, or Co/Extracurriculars

94% attendance

Marked improved attendance

Two seasons of a co-curricular

3.0+ GPA cumulative at the end of grade 10

External, paid job

1 external verification of competency

## Civic, Financial, & Digital Literacy

U.S. History

Government

Personal Finance

Computer Science

1 verification of competency

In addition to coursework aligned to student's future goals



## Academic Mastery

English

Math

Science

# FOUNDATIONAL KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS (GRADES 9-10)

- **12 credits in Academic Mastery**
  - **4 English credits**
    - English 9, plus two additional ELA credits (Recommended examples - writing, speech, communications, theater, AP Seminar)
  - **4 Math credits**
    - Algebra 1, plus two additional math credits
    - If Algebra 1 is taken in middle school, student would take four additional math credits
  - **4 Science credits**
    - Includes Life Sciences and Physical Science
- **Students will have flexibility in how they satisfy these priority courses (ex. AP, IB, Cambridge, dual credit)**
- **For students pursuing the *Indiana GPS Diploma Plus*, any courses taken to achieve a credential of value will be applied to their additional core coursework.**

## Career & Postsecondary Readiness

College/Careers

Career Aptitude Test

Job shadowing or skills boot camp

Attend at least one college or job fair

1 Dual Credit Course

*\*3 of 4 competencies*

# FOUNDATIONAL KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS (GRADES 9-10)

- **1 credit in Career & Postsecondary Readiness**
  - Includes one course (5394 Preparing for College and Careers), with additional opportunities to show competency mastery
    - Schools may, and are encouraged, to offer 5394 Preparing for College and Careers in middle school.
- **Students will choose *three of the four* competencies shown in blue, and will have flexible options.**
  - Ex. students may take any dual credit course.
- **For students pursuing the *Indiana GPS Diploma Plus*, any courses taken to achieve a credential of value will be applied to their additional core coursework.**



## Communication & Collaboration

### English

#### Verification of 4 competencies

*\*1 must be external*

# FOUNDATIONAL KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS (GRADES 9-10)

- **4 credits in Communication & Collaboration**
  - These are the same four English credits required under Academic Mastery.
- **Students must also demonstrate four examples of competency mastery.**
  - Three may be verified through coursework or other school-related activity (ex. debate team, school newspaper, FFA, student council)
  - One must be verified **externally** (ex. leading a boy/girl scout troop, church youth group, volunteering at a community organization, student-run enterprise)
- **For students pursuing the Indiana GPS Diploma Plus, any courses taken to achieve a credential of value will be applied to their additional core coursework.**



## Work Ethic

PE, Health, or  
Co/Extracurriculars

94% attendance

Marked improved  
attendance

Two seasons of  
a co-curricular

3.0+ GPA cumulative  
at the end of grade 10

External, paid job

1 external verification  
of competency

## FOUNDATIONAL KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS (GRADES 9-10)

- **2 credits in Work Ethic**
  - May be satisfied through a physical education course, health course, or through co/extracurriculars (ex. athletics, marching band, academic club)
    - This flexibility has existed for over a decade.
- **Students will choose *three of the six* competencies shown in blue, and will have flexible options.**
- **For students pursuing the Indiana GPS Diploma Plus, any courses taken to achieve a credential of value will be applied to their additional core coursework.**

## Civic, Financial, & Digital Literacy

U.S. History

Government

Personal Finance

Computer Science

1 verification  
of competency

# FOUNDATIONAL KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS (GRADES 9-10)

- **5 credits in Civic, Financial, & Digital Literacy**
- **Students will have flexibility in courses and course levels (ex. AP, IB, Cambridge, dual credit).**
- **Students must demonstrate competency mastery in one of the skill areas (civics, financial or digital literacy). Examples include:**
  - **Civic Literacy** - We the People, election poll worker, serving as a statehouse page
  - **Financial Literacy** - DECA, student-led business, entrepreneurship, developing a personal budget
  - **Digital Literacy** - Robotics team, computer science or IT credential or certification
- **For students pursuing the Indiana GPS Diploma Plus, any courses taken to achieve a credential of value will be applied to their additional core coursework.**

# Complementary Work to Rethink High School in Indiana

# REIMAGINING EDUCATION



Carnegie Foundation  
for the Advancement of Teaching

Last spring, the Carnegie Foundation and ETS announced a partnership designed to **transform education assessment** in the U.S. through a robust, scalable suite of assessment and analytic tools that captures the full range of skills needed to succeed in K-12 and beyond.

- Indiana is **1 in 4 states** selected to pilot this program.
- Indiana will be **engaged at each step**: developing, testing, implementation, determining impact
- Students, parents, employers, and educators will help to inform this work.

This collaboration will allow the nation to take a big leap forward in terms of what we assess, how we assess, and how the information is used to advance student learning.

## INDIANA'S APPRENTICESHIP FOCUS (iLab)



- Developing a plan for a statewide modern youth apprenticeship system
- Cross-sector partnership between business, philanthropy, non-profit, government, and K-12 and higher education
- Informed by experts in the highly-regarded Swiss apprenticeship model and leaders at ETH Zurich



# Ongoing Considerations & Timeline

## ONGOING CONSIDERATIONS

- How can we better utilize a student's time in **middle school**, including increasing career **exploration**, to allow for additional flexibility in high school?
- How might we **leverage career coaching** to best support students' unique paths?
- What supports are needed to help more schools shift the focus from courses to **competencies**?
- How might we **redesign student transcripts** to better reflect knowledge, skills, and experiences?



## ONGOING CONSIDERATIONS CONTINUED

- How could a student **best demonstrate proficiency in the five Indiana GPS characteristics** prior to graduation? (ex. capstone proficiency project)
- What role do **families, students, educators, and employers** play in the high school model of the future?
- How might we enhance our **student information systems** statewide in order to measure progress and ensure quality?
- How will we **define success** in five, 10, 15 years?



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