INDIANA PARTNERSHIP PENTAGON

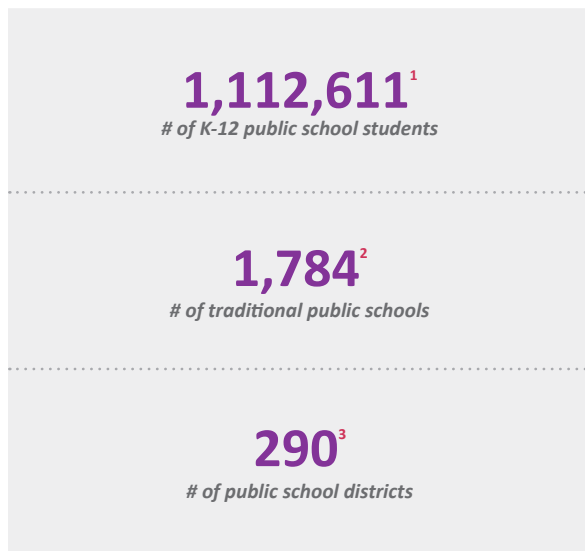## THE ROLE OF K-12 IN HIGHER EDUCATION ACCESS AND COMPLETION

Indiana prioritized postsecondary attainment as a strategy for cultivating a robust economy. To that end, the state set a postsecondary attainment goal that 60 percent of working-age adults will attain a quality credential or degree by 2025. While Indiana has made significant strides in non-degree credentialing, it is ranked 43rd at the bachelor's degree and higher level attainment, with only about 31% of the population aged 25 and older holding at least a bachelor's degree.

In the United States, a large disconnect persists between institutions of higher education (IHEs) and K-12 systems which leads to a lack of preparation for many students as they enter college or pursue a career. To increase preparation, K-12 systems should consider equity in dual credit and dual enrollment that leads to credentials of values, increasing academic support and career coaching for students, enhance teacher development, and prioritize accountability and evaluation to further promote higher education access and success.

OVERVIEW OF K-12 INDIANA EDUCATION & STUDENT POPULATION

Indiana's K-12 system serves over one million students annually across nearly 2,000 schools. While Indiana ranks in the bottom half of the nation in per pupil expenditure and student-teacher ratio, the state ranks above average in National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) math and reading scores. Additionally, with an 87 percent graduation rate for high school students, Indiana ranks 20th in the nation. However, while 76 percent of high school graduates intend to pursue higher education, just 53 percent of graduates enroll. Indiana must improve its college-going rate to increase postsecondary attainment and ensure an educated workforce for the state's economy.

Indiana's K-12 system serves a diverse group of students. Over 30 percent of Indiana K-12 students identify as Asian/Pacific Islander, Black, Hispanic/Latino, or two or more races. Nearly half of students qualify for free and reduced lunch, and 31 percent of students attend school in a city, compared to 27 percent in suburbs, 14 percent in towns, and 28 percent in rural areas.
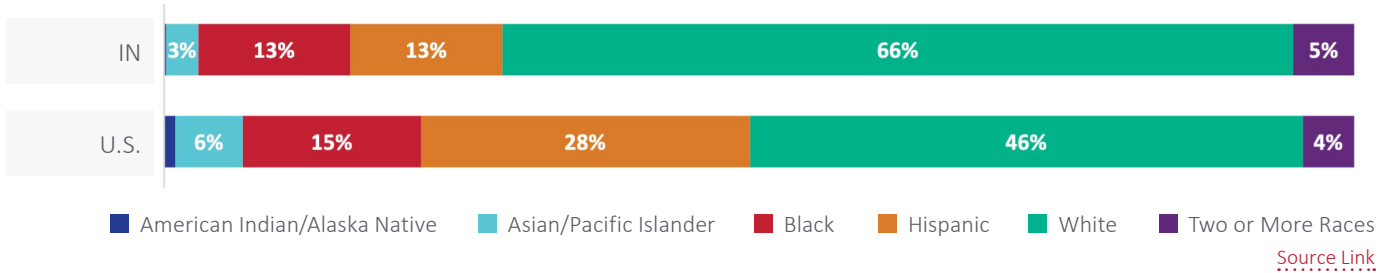
1,112,611[1]
# of K-12 public school students

1,784[2]
# of traditional public schools

290[3]
# of public school districts

Source Link[1] Source Link[2] Source Link[3]

VALUE	CATEGORY	STATE RANKING*
$11,554[6]	Per Pupil Expenditure	#40
17:1[7]	Student-Teacher Ratio	#39
47%[8]	NAEP 4th Grade Math	#8
37%[9]	NAEP 4th Grade Reading	#14
37%[10]	NAEP 8th Grade Math	#13
37%[11]	NAEP 8th Grade Reading	#12
87%[12]	Public High School Graduation Rate	#20

*Includes D.C.   Source Link[6]   Source Link[7]   Source Link[8]

Source Link[9]   Source Link[10]   Source Link[11]   Source Link[12]

◼ K-12 RACE & ETHNICITY

IN	3%	13%	13%	66%	5%
U.S.	6%	15%	28%	46%	4%

◼ American Indian/Alaska Native ◼ Asian/Pacific Islander ◼ Black ◼ Hispanic ◼ White ◼ Two or More Races

Source Link

◼ FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE LUNCH ELIGIBILITY | 2018-2019

IN	49%	51%
U.S.	52%	48%

◼ Free and Reduced-Price Eligible ◼ Not Eligible

Source Link

◼ K-12 ENROLLMENT BY LOCALE | 2018-2019

IN	31%	27%	14%	28%
U.S.	30%	40%	11%	19%

◼ City ◼ Suburban ◼ Town ◼ Rural

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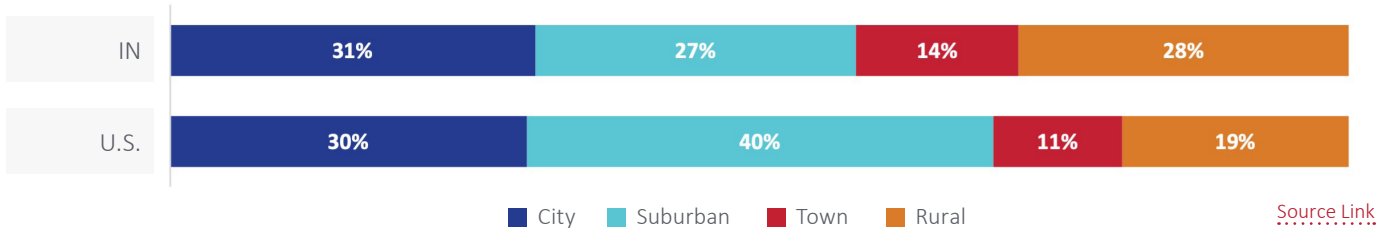
In Indiana, high school graduation rates have been slightly above the U.S. average over the past ten years. However, these graduation rates vary greatly based on race, income, and other characteristics. For example, while Indiana's high school graduation rate was 87 percent in 2021-2022, Asian/Pacific Islander and White students graduated at higher rates (92 and 89 percent, respectively) than their Black, Hispanic/Latino, and American Indian counterparts (77, 84, and 82 percent, respectively). Finally, 84 percent of economically disadvantaged students, 86 percent of English-language learners, and 76 percent of students with disabilities graduated in 2021-22, which were all above the national average for their respective student subgroups.
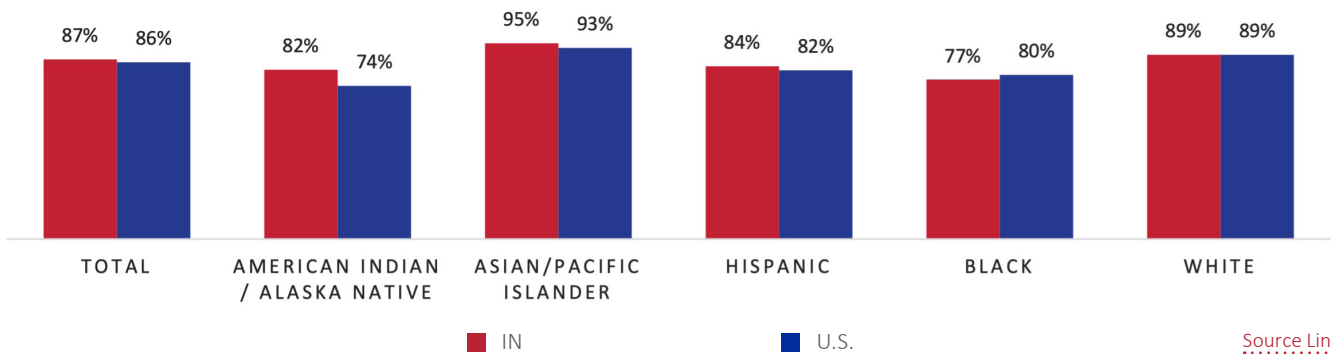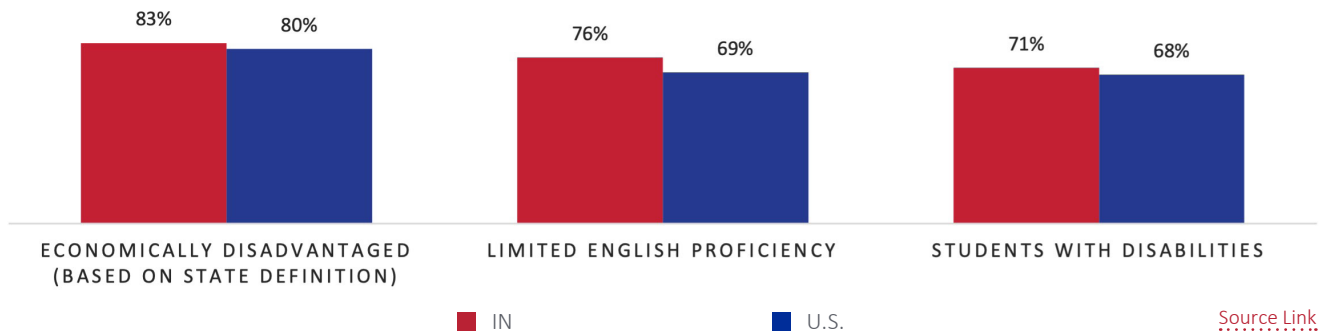
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE | 2010-2019

IN values: 86%, 86%, 87%, 88%, 87%, 87%, 85%, 88%, 87%

U.S. values: 79%, 80%, 81%, 82%, 83%, 84%, 84%, 85%, 86%

Years: 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, 2015-2016, 2016-2017, 2017-2018, 2018-2019
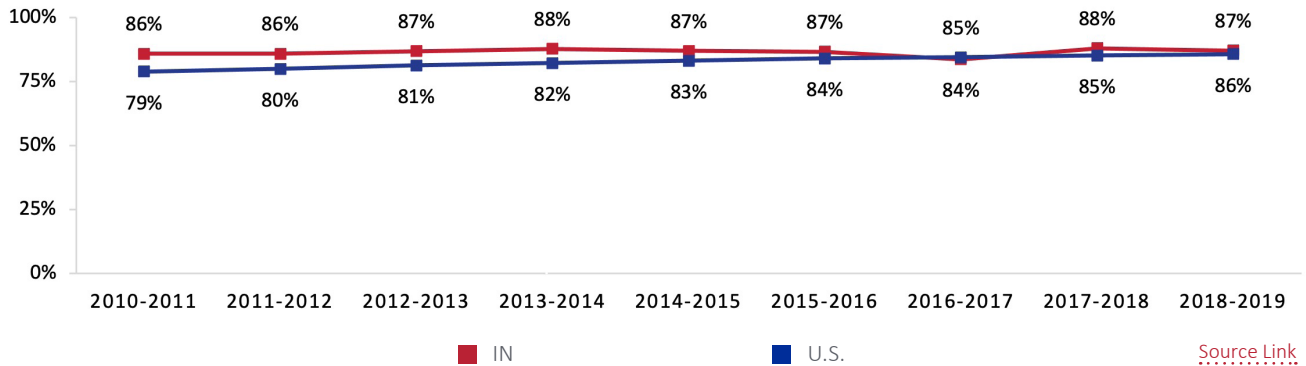
IN   U.S.   Source Link

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE BY RACE/ETHNICITY | 2018-2019

	TOTAL	AMERICAN INDIAN / ALASKA NATIVE	ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	HISPANIC	BLACK	WHITE
IN	87%	82%	95%	84%	77%	89%
U.S.	86%	74%	93%	82%	80%	89%

IN   U.S.   Source Link

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE BY OTHER SUBGROUPS | 2018-2019

	ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED (BASED ON STATE DEFINITION)	LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY	STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
IN	83%	76%	71%
U.S.	80%	69%	68%

IN   U.S.   Source Link

THE IMPORTANCE OF EARLY EXPOSURE TO POSTSECONDARY AND CAREER PATHWAYS

High-quality career coaching and career readiness education allow all K-12 students to meaningfully navigate to their postsecondary plans through exploration, engagement, and experience activities inside and outside the classroom. Career coaching and career readiness education should empower students to directly enter skilled positions in the workforce, pursue a postsecondary pathway, or enlist

in the military after graduation. At the postsecondary level, career-related experiences and coaching create a bridge between the classroom and the workforce, while also providing opportunities for adult learners to re-skill, up-skill, or attain a postsecondary degree or credential.

Career readiness programs have also gained traction with voters. In a study conducted as part of the Institute's Across the Aisle: Bridging the Education Divide initiative, research found that nearly half of voters (48 percent) believe that not teaching real-world skills for the future workforce is a very big problem in public education today. Additionally, voters strongly favored proposals that call for teaching critical workplace skills in schools (65 percent) and increasing job skills and workforce training opportunities in high school, such as apprenticeships and internship opportunities (64 percent).

As employers struggle to fill open positions, career readiness education plays a critical role in addressing the disparity between jobs available and the skillsets of job seekers—also known as the skills gap—and helps prepare job seekers for open positions. Middle-skill jobs—jobs that require more than a high school diploma but less than a four-year degree—make up roughly 52 percent of the labor market. However, only 43 percent of the workforce have access to the skills training needed to fill those jobs, creating a worker shortage. Additionally, low-skill workers outnumber the available low-skill jobs, creating a disproportionately high unemployment rate for low-skill workers and the imperative to provide upskilling and reskilling for these workers to fill in-demand jobs and participate in higher paying careers.

Career readiness education programs serve as a multifaceted solution to this problem. Programs can integrate dual enrollment credits, which allow high school students to enroll in college courses and earn both high school and college credits, or develop "stackable" credentials that allow students to improve their skills, with the opportunity to earn additional credentials and degrees throughout their career by

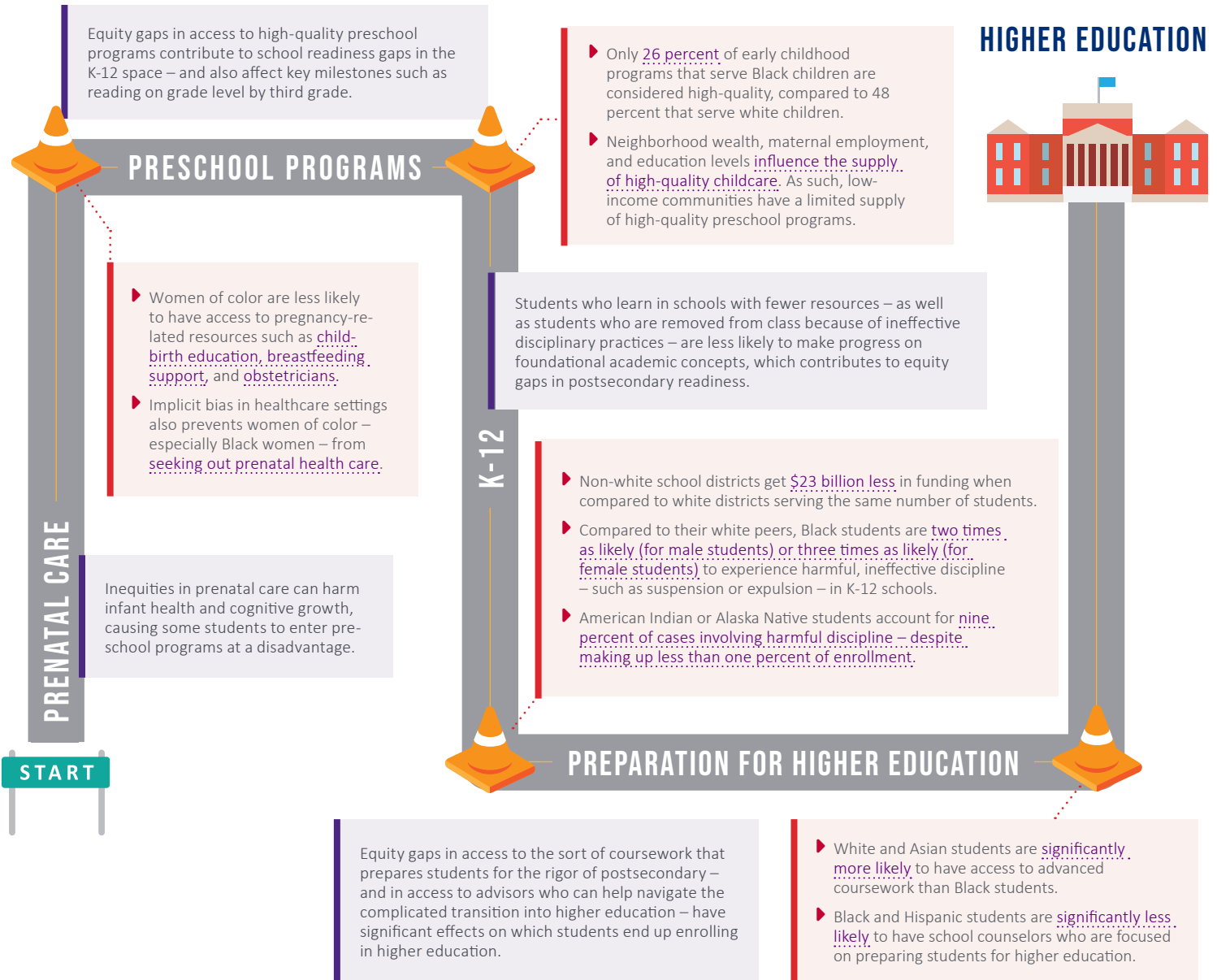"stacking" experiences and coursework completed at various times throughout their life.

According to Indiana's Early College Credit Report, of the Indiana 2018 graduating high school cohort:

- 64% earned dual credit or Advanced Placement (AP) credit.

- On average, dual credit students have a semester of college completed.

- Dual credit earners are less likely to stop out of college and more likely to complete on time or early.

- Disparities remain when it comes to who earns dual credit, as 65 percent of white students earn dual credit, compared to 38 percent of Black students and 50 percent of Hispanic/Latino students. Students who are eligible for free or reduced lunch are also less likely to have dual credit opportunities.

- Dual credit provides significant cost savings to students and taxpayers, as it reduces time to degree and exposes students to postsecondary-level rigor at an earlier age.

Closing the skills gap benefits employees, as workers who have a college degree typically earn higher wages in the long run. On average, bachelor's degree holders earn 31 percent more than those with an associate's degree and 84 percent more than those with whose highest educational attainment is a high school diploma. However, many individuals experience barriers to traditional higher education, making career coaching and career readiness education a critical pathway for economic mobility.

Removing Silos Across the Education Continuum

Creating partnerships between education preparation programs (EPPs), K-12 leaders and systems, and IHEs are important to making education more equitable and accessible. However, to create these relationships, policymakers must work with stakeholders to create more equitable practices across the education continuum. As state leaders consider policies related

HIGHER EDUCATION

Equity gaps in access to high-quality preschool programs contribute to school readiness gaps in the K-12 space – and also affect key milestones such as reading on grade level by third grade.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

▶ Only 26 percent of early childhood programs that serve Black children are considered high-quality, compared to 48 percent that serve white children.

▶ Neighborhood wealth, maternal employment, and education levels influence the supply of high-quality childcare. As such, low-income communities have a limited supply of high-quality preschool programs.

▶ Women of color are less likely to have access to pregnancy-related resources such as child-birth education, breastfeeding support, and obstetricians.

▶ Implicit bias in healthcare settings also prevents women of color – especially Black women – from seeking out prenatal health care.

Students who learn in schools with fewer resources – as well as students who are removed from class because of ineffective disciplinary practices – are less likely to make progress on foundational academic concepts, which contributes to equity gaps in postsecondary readiness.

K-12

▶ Non-white school districts get $23 billion less in funding when compared to white districts serving the same number of students.

▶ Compared to their white peers, Black students are two times as likely (for male students) or three times as likely (for female students) to experience harmful, ineffective discipline – such as suspension or expulsion – in K-12 schools.

▶ American Indian or Alaska Native students account for nine percent of cases involving harmful discipline – despite making up less than one percent of enrollment.

PRENATAL CARE

Inequities in prenatal care can harm infant health and cognitive growth, causing some students to enter preschool programs at a disadvantage.

START

PREPARATION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Equity gaps in access to the sort of coursework that prepares students for the rigor of postsecondary – and in access to advisors who can help navigate the complicated transition into higher education – have significant effects on which students end up enrolling in higher education.

▶ White and Asian students are significantly more likely to have access to advanced coursework than Black students.

▶ Black and Hispanic students are significantly less likely to have school counselors who are focused on preparing students for higher education.

to attainment, it is important to remember that every student arrives at the doorstep of higher education with distinct lived experiences and educational backgrounds. This is especially true for those from historically excluded populations, including Black, Indigenous, Hispanic/Latino, low-income, disabled, and adult learners. Inequities begin well before a student enters the education system, and the infographic

below highlights the various barriers that exist .

While numerous barriers to equity exist along the education continuum, states and IHEs are innovating to try to address these roadblocks. Above are some examples of policies and programs that are designed to break down the barriers to equity that currently exist across the education continuum:

Indiana Specific Examples

- **21st Century Scholars** | The 21st Century Scholars program is the preeminent state-based early-commitment promise program in the country. Beginning with the 2023-24 academic year, all eligible students will be automatically enrolled in the program.

- **Indiana College Core** | The Indiana College Core consists of 30 semester hours of credit that is guaranteed to transfer to all public institutions and some private institutions.

- **Next Level Programs of Study (NLPS)** | NLPS aims to improve consistency, quality, and intentionality of career and technical education (CTE) instruction across Indiana.

- **Dual Credit: Ivy Tech Community College** | Dual enrollment offers credit for both high school and college graduation at no cost to students.

- **Center of Excellence for Leadership and Learning (CELL)** | Schools across the state of Indiana can adopt an Endorsed Early College High School Model to ensure every student has the opportunity to realize their full potential. Teachers can also be certified to teach dual credit course through Teach Dual Credit and STEM Teach.

- **Indiana University School of Medicine** | The School of Medicine offers many recruitment and retention programs to help build a pipeline of talented and diverse health care professionals and scientists, starting in K-12 education through graduate medical education.

State Examples

- **Career Connect Washington** | Career Connect Washington partners schools and employers across the state to ensure all K-12 students and workers up to age 30 have meaningful, real-world job experiences.

- **Missouri Career Pathways** | Statewide, collaborative initiative that supports the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Show-Me Success program goal that all Missouri students will graduate ready for success.

- Massachusetts Commonwealth Dual Enrollment Partnership | Provides opportunities for Massachusetts high school students to take college-level courses for free or at a discounted price and earn credit toward high school completion and their future college degrees.

- North Carolina Cooperative Innovative High Schools | Cooperative Innovative High Schools target students who are at risk of dropping out of high school, first-generation college students, and/or students who would benefit from accelerated learning opportunities.

- Virginia' The Bridging Communities Governor's STEM Academy | Bridging Communities Governor's STEM Academy provides opportunities for students to acquire STEM literacy and other critical skills, knowledge, and credentials that will prepare them for post-secondary education and high-demand, high-wage, and high skill careers.

- Next Steps Idaho | Next Steps Idaho is a direct admissions program that proactively admits all public high school seniors to IHEs in Idaho using high school grade point average (GPA).

Institutional/Community Examples

- University of North Carolina C-STEP Program | Through C-STEP, talented low- and moderate-income high school and community college students are guaranteed admission to Carolina. After being admitted to C-STEP and successfully completing their work at a partner community college, students come to North Carolina - Chapel Hill.

- Ohio State University: Upward Bound | The Upward Bound Program has been instrumental in helping Columbus City high school students achieve their goals. Federally funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Upward Bound offers students the opportunity to excel in high school, in college, and beyond. (Upward Bound is a TRIO program. See Indiana TRIO.)

- Project MALES | A collaboration between the University of Texas at Austin, Texas A&M University, and numerous community colleges and high schools across the state. Their work focuses on mentoring young men of color, sharing research, and disseminating best practices to improve educational outcomes.

- NYC: Career-Connected Learning | Academic excellence is integrated with real-world skills and experience—giving students a head start on college and career and helping them build a strong plan toward a path to a rewarding career.

Established in 2001, The Hunt Institute honors the legacy of James B. Hunt, Jr., the former governor of North Carolina who distinguished himself as an ardent champion of education.

The Hunt Institute brings together people and resources to inspire and inform elected officials and policymakers about key issues in education, resulting in visionary leaders who are prepared to take strategic action for greater educational outcomes and student success.

In 2016, The Hunt Institute became an independent, nonprofit entity and joined forces with Duke University's Sanford School of Public Policy to pursue research, educational partnerships, and events related to improving education policy.

Learn more at www.hunt-institute.org.

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