

Indiana's Approach to Alignment

Indiana's Response to Low College Going Rates

In the late 1980's, Indiana was concerned with dismal college-going rate of high school graduates. As a response, business, higher education and K-12 leaders came together in 1994 to identify a core set of curricula for all kids to be prepared for college and the workforce—the **Indiana Core 40**. Indiana's Education Roundtable has continued this important work to further articulate and implement these college- and workforce-ready academic expectations. Currently, Indiana's college-going rate is above 60% and it has advanced from 34th to 10th in the nation.

Key Policy Strategies

- 1994:* Business, higher education, and K-12 come together to adopt **Indiana Core 40**, a solid set of high school academic course requirements
- 1998:* State begins voluntary **end-of-course assessments** to look at quality and consistency for high school Core 40 courses
- 1998:* Indiana's **Education Roundtable** is created
- 1999:* Legislature formalizes Education Roundtable; group is charged with making recommendations on improving student achievement.
- 2000:* Indiana adopts **new academic standards** noted as among the very best in the country.
- 2002:* Education Roundtable begins work on state education blueprint – *Indiana's P-16 Plan for Improving Student Achievement*. Plan includes strategies to ensure college and workforce success and calls for comprehensive review of current high school course requirements
- July 2004:* Following the comprehensive review, Roundtable passes resolutions calling for improvements to graduation requirements, including the Core 40 to be:
- **Required high school curriculum** for all students with an opt-out provision
 - Admissions requirement for all public 4-year universities
 - Requirement to receive state financial aid to attend 4-year universities
- Feb 2005:* State Board of Education adopts improvements to high school course and credit requirements.
- Apr. 2005:* Indiana General Assembly makes the Core 40 the **required curriculum** with an opt-out provision and a public university admission requirement.

Stakeholder Collaboration



Indiana’s Education Roundtable membership includes equal representation from K-12 and postsecondary institutions, as well as representation from the legislature, business and the community. Co-chaired by the governor and the superintendent of education, the Roundtable keeps alignment as a policy priority. This group of key stakeholders, recognizing the converging expectations for entry into college, the workforce, and apprenticeships, called for policy alignment.

Public Communication

Garnering public support has been a focus throughout the development and implementation of the Core 40. The Roundtable’s Core 40 policy resolutions that resulted in State Board and legislative action came about after eight months of public input and discussion. Involving the public on all levels—from teachers to technology workers to parents to business leaders—helped Indiana validate expectations and make the case for alignment.

External Partners

Indiana’s world-class academic standards were written collaboratively by K-12, higher education and business communities. The standards were benchmarked by Achieve and other outside experts. As one of five states in the first phase of Achieve’s American Diploma Project (ADP), Indiana completed an ADP alignment study to identify gaps between high school, college and workplace expectations. When reviewing high school course and credit requirements, Indiana again sought external benchmarking through Achieve, National Association of System Heads (NASH), and State Scholars. As a national frontrunner in alignment, Indiana has found that requiring external review has been an important step in the process.

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