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EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Investing in Opportunity: From Foundations to the Future of Postsecondary Affordability

Indiana Commission for Higher Education's 2025 H. Kent Weldon Conference

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Our Mission

At Strada Education Foundation, we're focused on one goal: helping clear the path between education and work, especially for those with the most standing in their way.

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Is College Affordable?

Hours of Work to Pay Annual Net Price

Cost of Attendance — Grant/Scholarship Aid = Net Price*

- Tuition
- Fees
- Non-tuition expenses
  (i.e., books, supplies,
  housing, food, transportation)

- Grants
- Scholarships

https://www.strada.org/state-opportunity-index

* 2021 annual costs for in-state, full-time, first-time, degree- or certificate-seeking students who receive Title IV aid and are enrolled at a public institution.
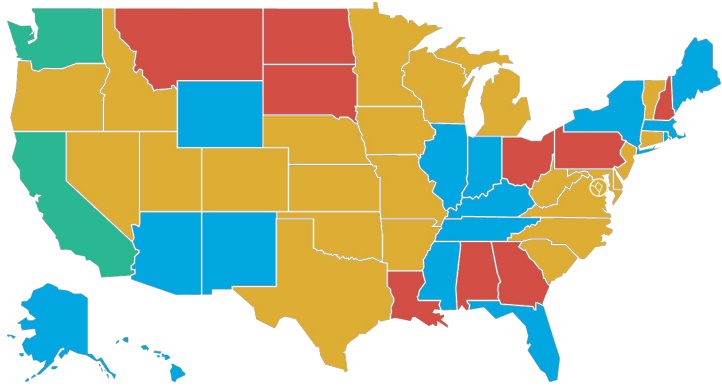
HOURS OF WORK AND EARNINGS

- Typical wage based on state-specific median hourly wage for college students working part time
- Categorization assumes 40 weeks of employment
  - 10 weeks full-time summer
  - 30 weeks part- or full-time while enrolled

**AFFORDABILITY OF
A COLLEGE EDUCATION BY
STATE (ALL DEGREES)**

https://www.strada.org/state-opportunity-index

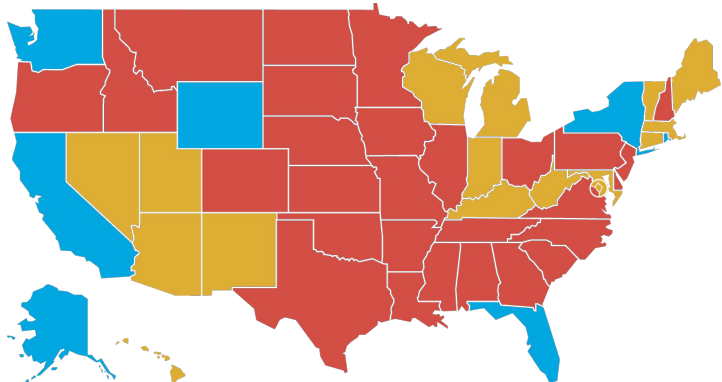| **Leading**	**Advanced**	**Developing**	**Foundational**
Fewer than 10 hours of work per week during the school year, full time during the summer.	10-20 hours of work per week during the school year, full time during the summer.	20-30 hours of work per week during the school year, full time during the summer.	More than 30 hours of work per week during the school year, full time during the summer.

**AFFORDABILITY OF
PUBLIC FOUR-YEAR
INSTITUTIONS BY STATE**

https://www.strada.org/state-opportunity-index

Leading	**Advanced**	**Developing**	**Foundational**
Fewer than 10 hours of work per week during the school year, full time during the summer.	10-20 hours of work per week during the school year, full time during the summer.	20-30 hours of work per week during the school year, full time during the summer.	More than 30 hours of work per week during the school year, full time during the summer.

**AFFORDABILITY OF
PUBLIC TWO-YEAR
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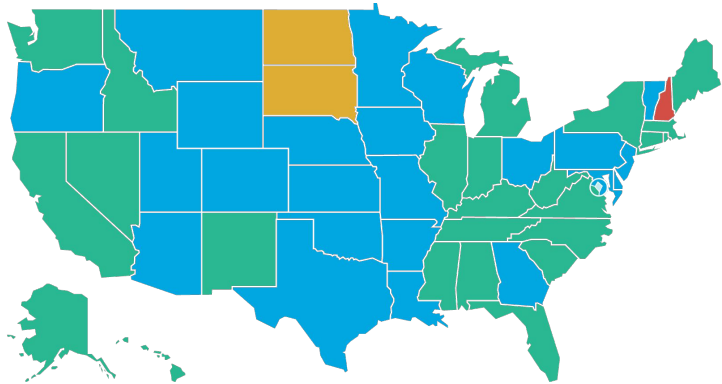| Leading	Advanced	Developing	Foundational
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Indiana University: Bloomington (College Scorecard)

https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/

Average Annual Cost ⓘ

$15,878

Cost includes tuition, living costs, books and supplies, and fees minus the average grants and scholarships for federal financial aid recipients.

Show Midpoint For:

4-yr Schools   All Schools

$0 $100,000
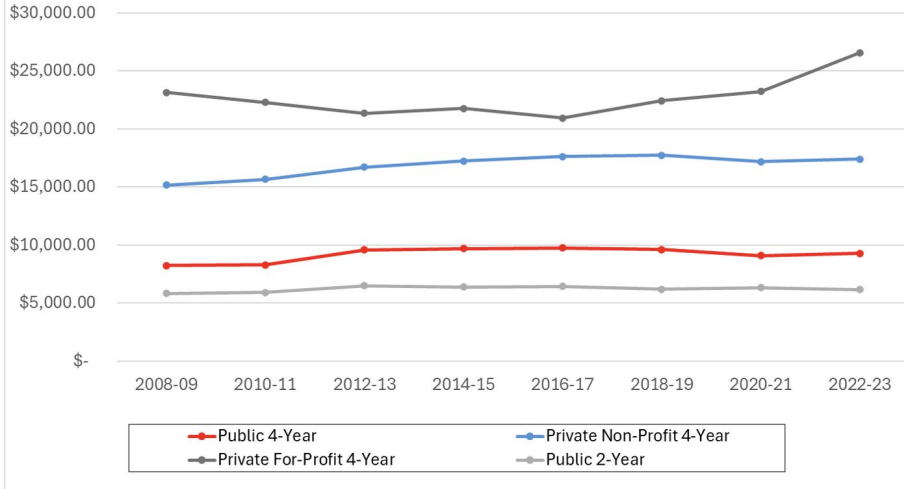
$15,878
Midpoint: $19,519

By Family Income

Depending on the federal, state, or institutional grant aid available, students in your income bracket may pay more or less than the overall average costs.

Family Income	Average Annual Cost
$0-$30,000	$6,874
$30,001-$48,000	$7,636
$48,001-$75,000	$12,849
$75,001-$110,000	$21,394
$110,001+	$24,388

🖩 Calculate your personal net price ⧉

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Net Price Over Time: Family Incomes Between $0-30,000

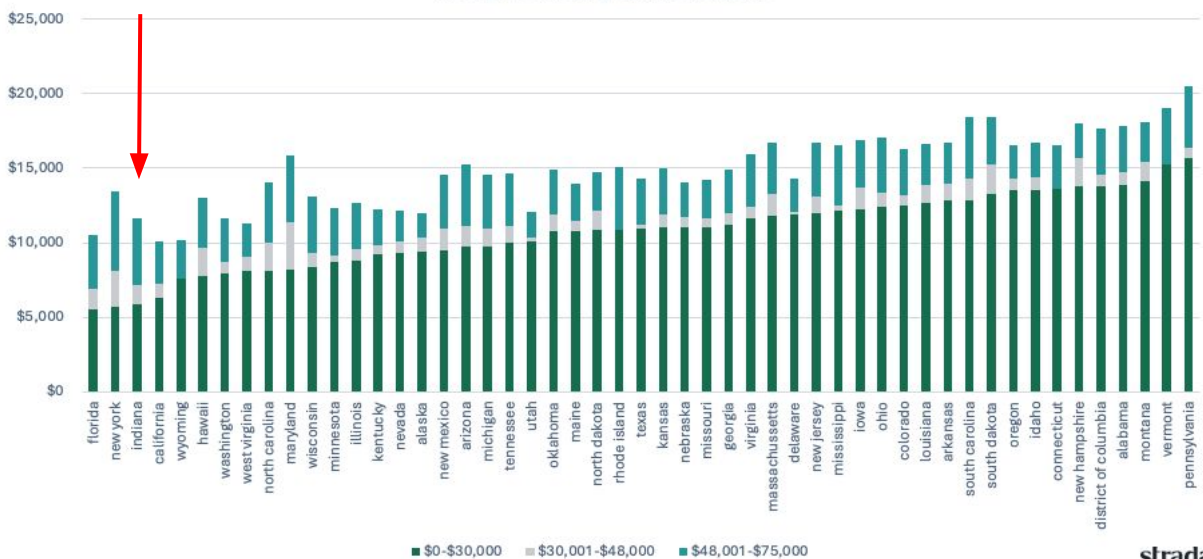Source: IHEP analysis of IPEDS Institutional Characteristics and Student Financial Aid. Data include full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates with family incomes between $0-$30,000 and enrolled at Title IV institutions operating on an academic year calendar system.

Annual net price by family income
Net price: four-year institutions

$0-$30,000 $30,001-$48,000 $48,001-$75,000

Annual net price by family income
Net price: two-year institutions

Legend: $0-$30,000 | $30,001-$48,000 | $48,001-$75,000

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Do Students and Families Think College is Affordable?

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College Cost Perceptions & Realities of Affordability

- **Most Americans (77%) say college is not affordable** (no difference across voters and non–voters, or between Trump and Harris voters) (*Strada. 2024 VoterView Survey Results. Publication Pending.*)

- **A large majority of Americans (86%) think a four–year degree is too expensive** (inclusive of tuition, fees, books, meals, and housing) (*Strada. 2024 VoterView Survey Results. Publication Pending.*)

- **Most Americans (55%) also overestimate the cost of higher education** (1 in 5 ***vastly overestimate*** the cost of higher education, believing that a four–year degree costs more than $50,000 per year, when the average actual cost per year is $21,000, according to the College Board) (*Strada. 2024 VoterView Survey Results. Publication Pending.*)

- **Cost is the #1 leading reason why Americans have stopped out** of a postsecondary pathway (in fact, 5 of the top 8 related reasons people stop–out of PSET are related to costs or not having enough money) (*Lumina Foundation–Gallup 2024 State of Higher Education Study*)

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Issue Statements | Most people believe that going to college is not about how much "grit" you have... They believe it's simply too expensive

35% of Americans Agree with the Following Statement: "Smith believes that **anyone who truly wants to attend college can figure out** an affordable way to get the education they desire."

- *Baby Boomers, Men, and Trump voters are more likely to support this (39%, 38%, and 44%, respectively).*

65% of Americans Agree with the Following Statement: "Jones believes that **no matter how much someone wants to attend college, it has become too expensive** and too many students can't find an affordable way to get the education they desire."

- *Millennials, women, and Harris voters are more likely to support this (68%, 68%, and 71%, respectively).*

Strada Education Foundation. (2024). VoterView Survey Conducted November 2024.

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What do students and families want?

- **Less Debt:** "crippling debt," "massive burden," "lifetime debt," "suffocating debt."

- **Clear and Transparent Pricing:** people eliminate schools based on published cost.

- **Predictability:** families want fixed pricing, clear aid, and no surprises.

- **ROI Focus:** students want to know what they're getting for the money.

- **Want to Trust their Institution:** sometimes feel some colleges prioritize revenue over students.

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How many of you would rebuild our current system exactly as it is today?

Rebuilding the system with students in mind

At the 30,000 Foot Level:

- Clear outcomes
- Quality coaching
- Postsecondary affordability
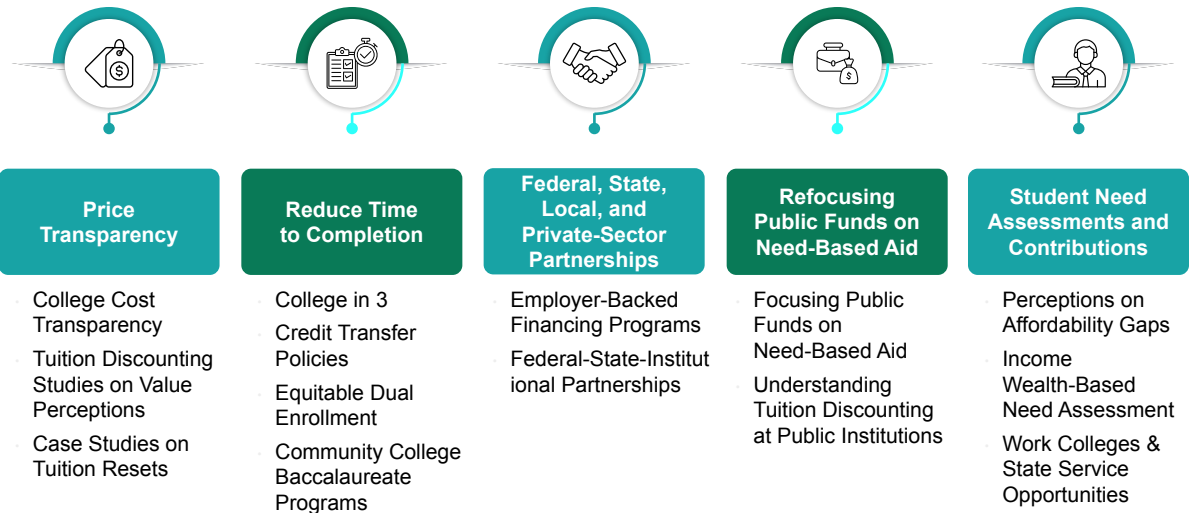- Work-based learning
- Employer alignment

The Affordability Investment Blueprint:

- What it costs → Transparency
- How to pay → Aid plus family contributions
- What you get → Return on investment

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Executing the Strategy: Building a More Affordable Future

1. **Improve price transparency:** clear, consistent pricing to empower informed choices

2. **Reduce time to completion:** e.g., accelerated degree completion to lower costs, equitable dual enrollment, college in 3

3. **Reduce costs, especially for those with the most financial need:** focus cost reductions (and financial aid on those with the greatest financial need)

4. **Align funding systems across public and private sectors:** coordinate funding across federal, state, and local levels and employers to close affordability gaps

5. **Redefine student and family contributions** to reflect today's financial realities and ensure pathways for shared investment in education

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Investments in Action: Driving Real Change

Price Transparency	Reduce Time to Completion	Federal, State, Local, and Private-Sector Partnerships	Refocusing Public Funds on Need-Based Aid	Student Need Assessments and Contributions
• College Cost Transparency • Tuition Discounting Studies on Value Perceptions • Case Studies on Tuition Resets	• College in 3 • Credit Transfer Policies • Equitable Dual Enrollment • Community College Baccalaureate Programs	• Employer-Backed Financing Programs • Federal-State-Institutional Partnerships	• Focusing Public Funds on Need-Based Aid • Understanding Tuition Discounting at Public Institutions	• Perceptions on Affordability Gaps • Income Wealth-Based Need Assessment • Work Colleges & State Service Opportunities

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What we can learn from Indiana?

➜ **Reducing the cost of college**
   ◆ **21st Century Scholars Program:** This early college promise initiative provides income-eligible students with up to four years of undergraduate tuition and regularly assessed fees at approved public institutions in Indiana.

➜ **Reducing time to degree**
   ◆ **Degree in 3 (Senate Bill 8, 2024)**: Under this legislation, signed into law by Governor Eric Holcomb on March 13, 2024, each four-year public institution in Indiana is required to offer at least one baccalaureate degree program structured to allow a full-time student to complete the degree within three years by July 1, 2025.
   ◆ **Dual Enrollment:** More than a third of dual credit participants in Indiana are for low-income backgrounds and Indiana's Rural Early College Network is excelling at bringing early college opportunities to *all* students.

➜ **Maximizing financial aid support**
   ◆ **Universal FAFSA Requirement**: Beginning with the 2023–24 school year, Indiana mandates that all high school seniors complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by April 15 to qualify for state financial aid. Schools are required to provide information about the FAFSA, its benefits, Indiana's state financial aid programs, and labor market trends necessitating education beyond high school.
   ◆ **Best Practice – Submission Deadline Before Graduation**: Indiana has been recognized for implementing a submission deadline before high school graduation, ensuring students have adequate time to receive support in completing their FAFSAs while still in school. This approach helps move submitted FAFSAs to completed FAFSAs effectively.

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College Cost Transparency Initiative and the Public Trust

693
PARTNER INSTITUTIONS

6,756,828
STUDENTS SERVED

50
STATES REPRESENTED
INCLUDING PUERTO RICO & GUAM

Within 18 months, nearly **700 institutions** enrolling **6.7 million students** in all **50 states + Puerto Rico and Guam** have signed onto **9 transparency standards** when issuing financial aid offers to incoming students, with more signing on every week. The goal is to reach 10 million students by fall 2025.

www.collegeprice.org

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Indiana Schools in College Cost Transparency

- Butler University
- Hanover College
- Indiana University Bloomington
- Indiana University East
- Indiana University Kokomo
- Indiana University Northwest
- Indiana University South Bend
- Indiana University Southeast

- Indiana University Indianapolis
- Ivy Tech Community College
- Purdue University West Lafayette (Main Campus)
- Purdue University Global
- Saint Mary's College
- University of Indianapolis
- University of Southern Indiana
- Wabash College

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