

PERCEPTIONS & REALITIES OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIANA

Importance of Parent/Guardian Engagement

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Emily Price, Communications Director

April 16, 2025

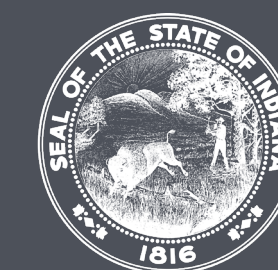


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53%

COLLEGE-GOING RATE

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AUDIENCE DEFINITIONS



HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Students currently enrolled in a high school in Indiana



YOUNG ADULT STUDENTS

Individuals ages 19-24 who are either enrolled in college, enrolled in but withdrew from college, or never enrolled in college



ADULT STUDENTS

Individuals ages 25-64 who either have some college but no degree or certificate, considered enrolling in college but never did, or are actively considering enrolling in college



GENERAL POPULATION

Individuals between the ages of 25-65 who never planned to pursue college



PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Individuals who are currently parenting middle and high school student(s)



FAMILY OF ADULT STUDENTS

Immediate relatives of adult students (see audience number 3 for a definition of “adult students”)



HIGH SCHOOL STAFF

High school teachers, school counselors and additional school personnel. Staff members who are employed at Indiana-based organizations



YOUTH-SERVING ORGANIZATIONS

Youth-serving community-based organizations. Organizations that serve individuals under the age of 18



HIGHER EDUCATION STAFF

Representatives from Indiana’s higher education institutions



EMPLOYERS

Employers from various industries in the state of Indiana



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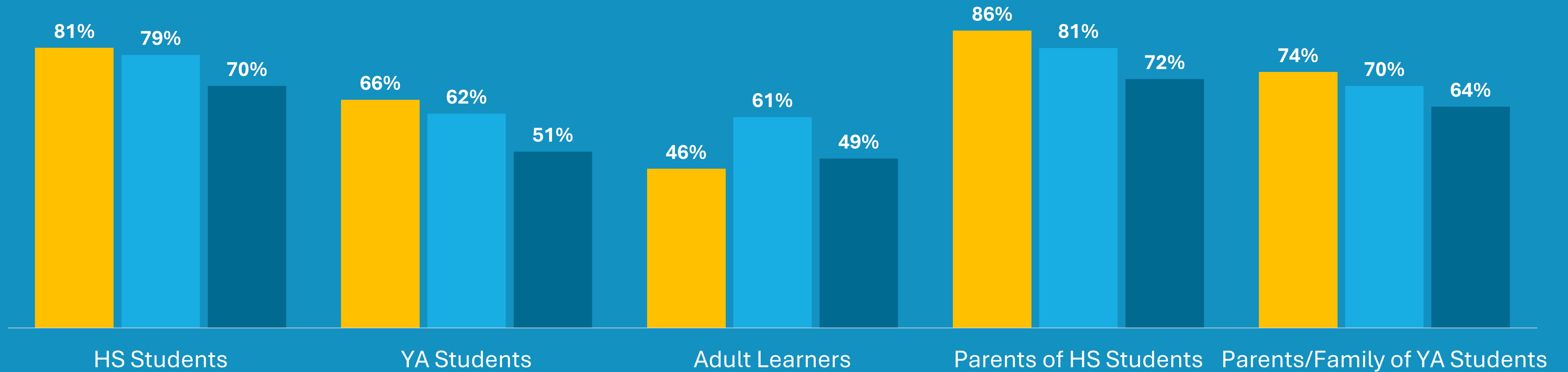
HOOSIERS ACROSS AUDIENCES BELIEVE EDUCATION BEYOND HS IS IMPORTANT AND WORTH THE INVESTMENT: 'COST' CHANGES THIS

Continuing Education Beyond High School is...

Important

Worth the Investment

Worth the Cost



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VARIATION IN BELIEF OF THE ROI OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDES A WAY TO FOCUS/TARGET

Goal: Embracing the ROI of training/education

26%
SKEPTICS

47%
PERSUADABLES

27%
CHAMPIONS

Enhance Interest to
Grow Importance

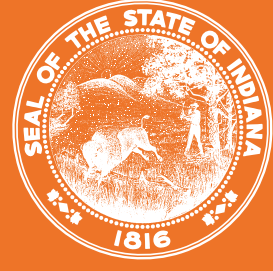
Inform + Persuade

Solidify
Perceptions

More YA + Adult Learners
Low/very low income
Unemployed

Mix of audience types
Leans Moderate Income

More HS students/parents
Higher income
Employed



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ORIENTATIONS VALIDATE QUALITATIVE LEARNINGS, WITH SOME IMPORTANT NUANCES BY AUDIENCE

ALTRUISM

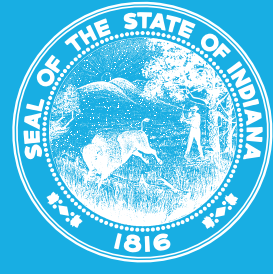
Sets a good example for others

PERSONAL GROWTH

Broadens and expands my horizons
Helps me think more critically
Helps me be more self sufficient

FINANCIAL

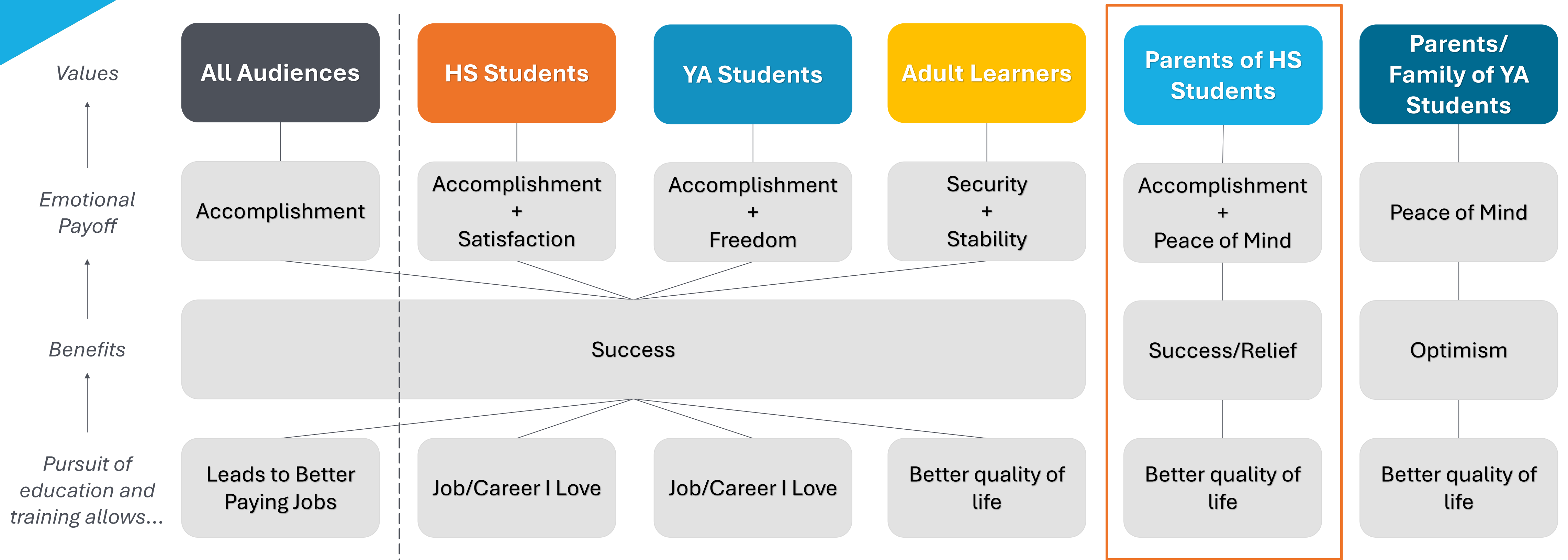
Leads to better paying jobs
Helps me find a job/career I love
Provides a better quality of life
Provides more career options and possibilities
Provides more possibilities and opportunities in my life
Provides more opportunities for career growth



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FEELING SUCCESSFUL IS DERIVED FROM A CAREER ONE LOVES, BETTER PAY AND ENHANCED QUALITY OF LIFE

Success taps into desired feelings of Accomplishment, Freedom, Security and Peace of Mind.





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COST LEADS BUT IS NOT THE FULL BARRIER STORY



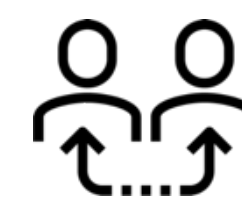
HS Students



YA Students



Adult Learners



**Parent of HS
Student**



**Parents/Family
of YA Students**



Most Impactful

COST of tuition,
books, other
expenses

COST of tuition,
books, other
expenses

COST of tuition,
books, other
expenses

COST of tuition,
books, other
expenses

COST of tuition,
books, other
expenses

2nd Most Impactful

Knowing what
career path to
pursue

COST of
housing

Time away from work
/ Earning less

Knowing what
career path to
pursue

Knowing what
career path to
pursue

3rd Most Impactful

Personal anxiety
or fears

Knowing what
career path to
pursue

Personal anxiety
or fears

Personal anxiety
or fears

Personal anxiety
or fears

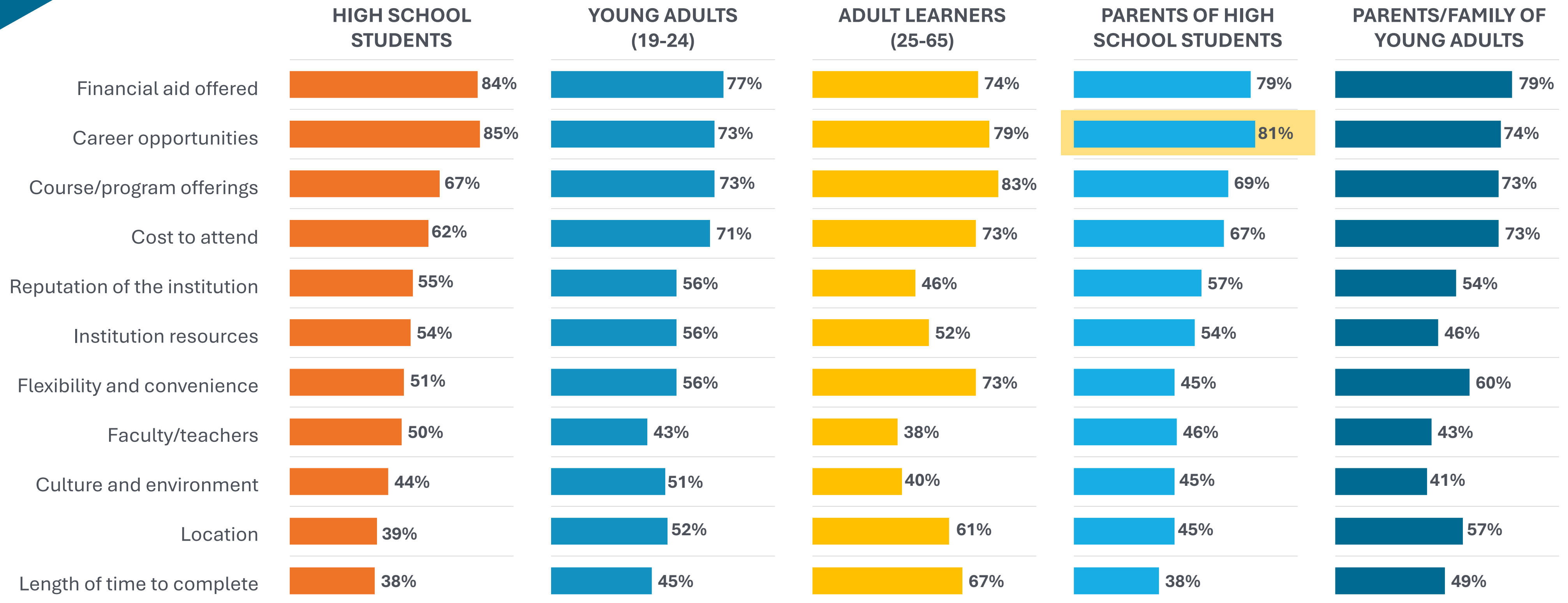
Base: All Respondents
Weighted: HS Students (n=817); YA Students (n=497); Adult Learners (n=301); Parents of HS (n=798); Parents and Family of YA (n=298)
Q505. Which of the following do you think will be the biggest barrier for you in pursuing additional training and education beyond a high school diploma?



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DETERMINING FACTORS TO CHOOSE EDUCATION AND TRAINING HEIGHTENS CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND COURSE OFFERINGS AHEAD OF COST

Determining Factors TB: Very Important



Base: Students With TE Path

Weighted: HS Students (n=705); YA Students (n=339); Adult Learners (n=132); Parents of HS (n=687); Parents and Family of YA (n=228)

Q299. TB. There are many different reasons that people choose the additional training and education option beyond high school that they do. As you think about your plans for additional TE please rank order which is most important to you?



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PARENTS DOMINATE STUDENT CIRCLES OF INFLUENCE, AND THEY RELY ON EDUCATIONAL EXPERT SUPPORT



HS Student

YA Student

Parent of HS Student

Parents/Family of YA Students



Most Relied Upon

Parents

72% Extremely/very influential

Parents

47% Extremely/very influential

Counselors
Teachers/Coaches

Their parents

2nd Most Used

Teachers/Coaches
Counselors

Teachers/Coaches
Friends
Counselors

Their parents
Reps: training
& educational
institutions

Teachers/Coaches
Counselors

3rd Most Used

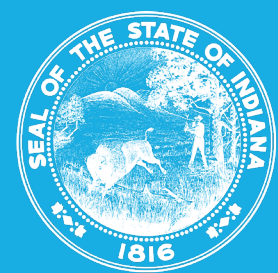
Community orgs
Faith communities
Social media

Reps: training &
educational institutions

Community orgs
Faith communities
Employers

Reps: training
& educational
institutions
Employers

Base: All Respondents
Weighted: HS Students (n=817); YA Students (n=497); Adult Learners (n=301); Parents of HS (n=798); Parents and Family of YA (n=298)
Q705. How often do you rely upon the following people and institutions when it comes to providing guidance and advise about additional training and education beyond a high school diploma? [Always, Sometimes, Never]
Q710. How influential are your parents/guardians in your decision of your chosen path and direction after high school? [Extremely, Very, Somewhat, Not Very, Not at All]

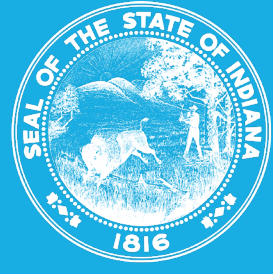


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FOCUS GROUP MESSAGING FEEDBACK

High School Parents

BETTER PAYING JOBS	JOB/CAREER I LOVE	SELF SUFFICIENT	ROLE MODEL
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Immediately raises questions about if trade certifications are included▶ Want more clarity on array of education & training options.▶ Raises need for more information on possible career paths.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ “Even if you didn’t pursue ...’ seen as condescending.▶ Positive reaction to guide and support.▶ ”Indiana can help” – raises many questions and concern about ‘the state’ being involved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Thriving has more flexibility, preferred over prosperous and fulfilling▶ Self sufficiency, not independence, is the goal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Doesn’t resonate; goal is their child’s future not to be an example▶ Language focus on encouraging seen as positive.



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BRIGHTBOARDSM FEEDBACK

High School Parents

HIGH SCHOOL PARENTS | BETTER PAYING JOBS

- ▶ Positives: includes specificity on all educational options, reinforces what they believe the role of education is
- ▶ Acknowledges the role of parents in encouragement and support. Call to action resonates.
- ▶ Some mistrust of link between education and higher pay (have seen those who succeed without additional education)

HIGH SCHOOL PARENTS | JOB/CAREER I LOVE

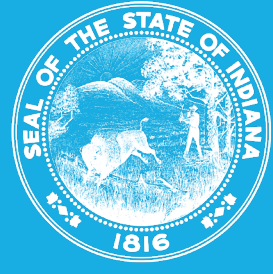
- ▶ Positives: speaks to their end goals for their children, highlights different educational and career paths, particularly inclusion of trade certificates
- ▶ Some mistrust of link between education and satisfaction and overall well-being

HIGH SCHOOL PARENTS | SELF SUFFICIENT

- ▶ Positives: goal of 'independent adult' resonates as does what is gained from additional training and education
- ▶ 'Empowering their ability to stand on their own' is how parents see their role in terms of support
- ▶ 'Real world challenges' can feel condescending as many students are already doing so

HIGH SCHOOL PARENTS | ROLE MODEL

- ▶ Being a role model to others far less important than other benefits of training and education. They understand and agree with how the community can benefit, but that isn't their priority.
- ▶ Strong belief in establishing a foundation
- ▶ Language about support, nurturing and encouragement strongly resonate



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BRIGHTBOARDSM FEEDBACK

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MESSAGES TO MOTIVATE

High School Parents

Encourage your child's future.

As a parent, one of your greatest rewards is seeing your child grow into an independent adult. Encouraging training and education after high school is a powerful way to help them amplify their talents and become truly self-sufficient.

Here's how:

- ✓ Practical skills: Further training and education equips them with tools to navigate adult challenges.
- ✓ Career readiness: Training provides the experience and connections to employers that fuels passion for a career.
- ✓ Decision-making abilities: Learning builds confidence to make informed choices without having to rely on someone else.
- ✓ Financial stability: Advanced skills lead to better job prospects and economic security.

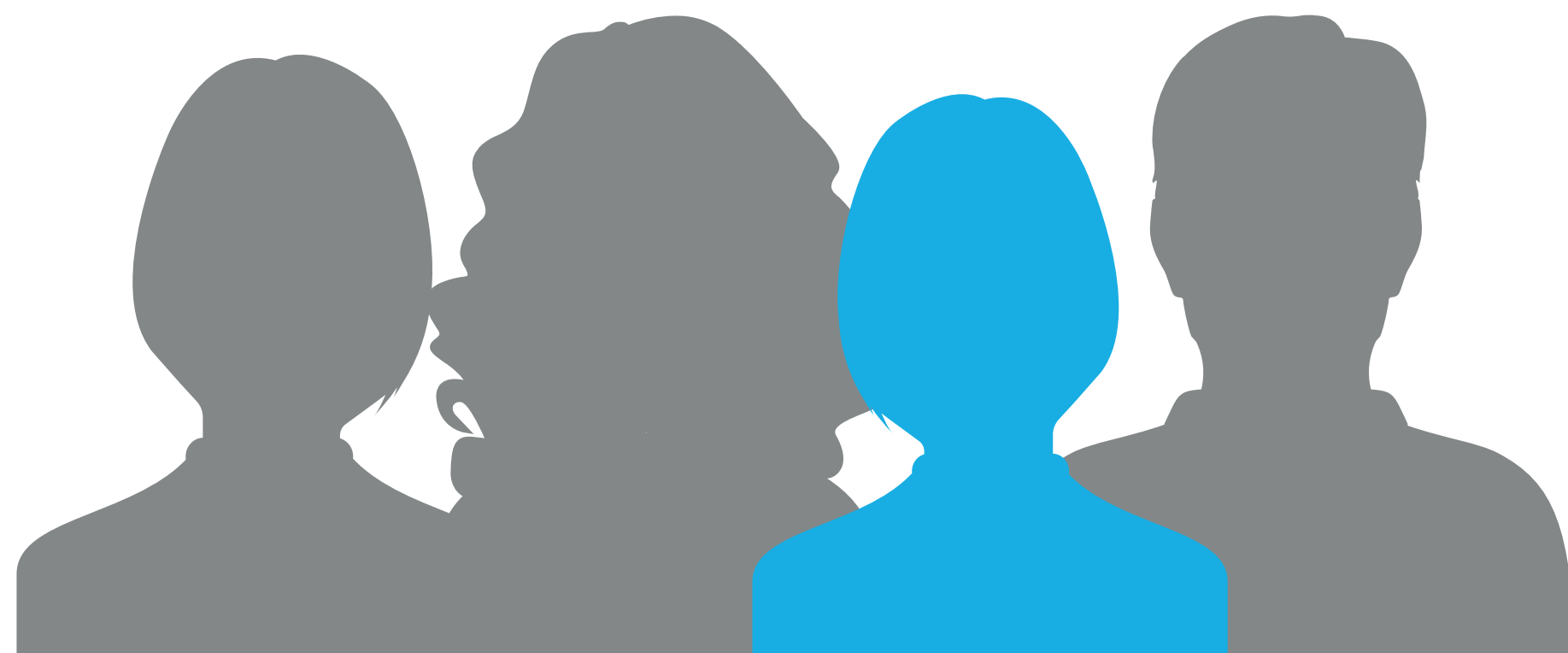
By encouraging post-high school learning - whether through training in a skilled trade, professional certifications, or college degrees - you're empowering their ability to stand on their own.

Start the conversation with your child about their educational options and help set the foundation for a lifetime of independence and success.



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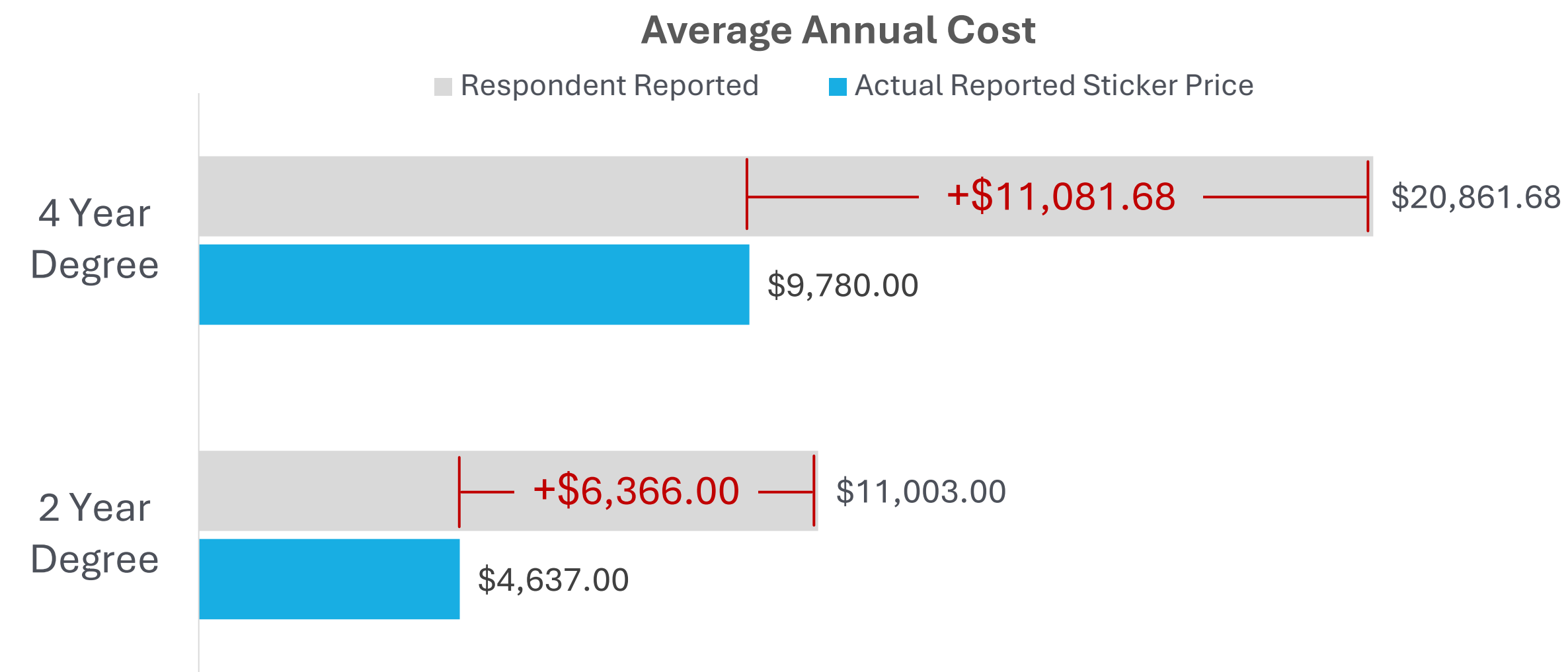
About 1 in 4 people surveyed who report cost as a barrier do not believe reported tuition numbers.



IN-STATE TUITION COSTS ARE OVER-INFLATED

Actual costs viewed with skepticism

While all tend to over inflate the cost of annual in-state tuition.



Base: All Respondents

Weighted: HS Students (n=817); YA Students (n=497); Adult Learners (n=301); Parents of HS (n=798); Parents and Family of YA (n=298)

Q805A/B. Indiana has both public and private colleges and universities. What do you believe the annual cost of tuition and fees for in-state residents at an Indiana college or university is? This is the cost that someone who does not receive any financial aid would pay. Do not include books or room and board in your response.

Base: Believe Cost Is Barrier

Weighted: HS Students (n=320); YA Students (n=151); Adult Learners (n=71); Parents of HS (n=307); Parents and Family of YA (n=84)

Q810_A. How believable is this information to you? "As of 2021-22, the average annual cost of in-state tuition to a 4-year public college or university in Indiana was \$9,780. During the same year, it was \$4,637 at a public 2-year institution. This is the cost that someone who does not receive any financial aid would pay."



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WHEN PRESENTED WITH ACTUAL TUITION COSTS, MOST BELIEVE THEY CAN FIND A WAY TO PAY



Over 80% of **HS Students and their parents** believe that they could find a way to pay for their/their student's choice of training and education.



Dropping to about 70% of **YA Students and their parents** believe that they could find a way to pay for their/their student's choice of training and education.

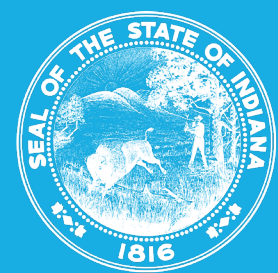


Dropping further to under 60% for **adult learners**.

Base: All Respondents

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Q810_B. Regardless of your choice for additional training and education beyond a high school diploma, do you believe that this is a cost that you are able to find a way to pay for (out-of-pocket and/or with financial aid)?



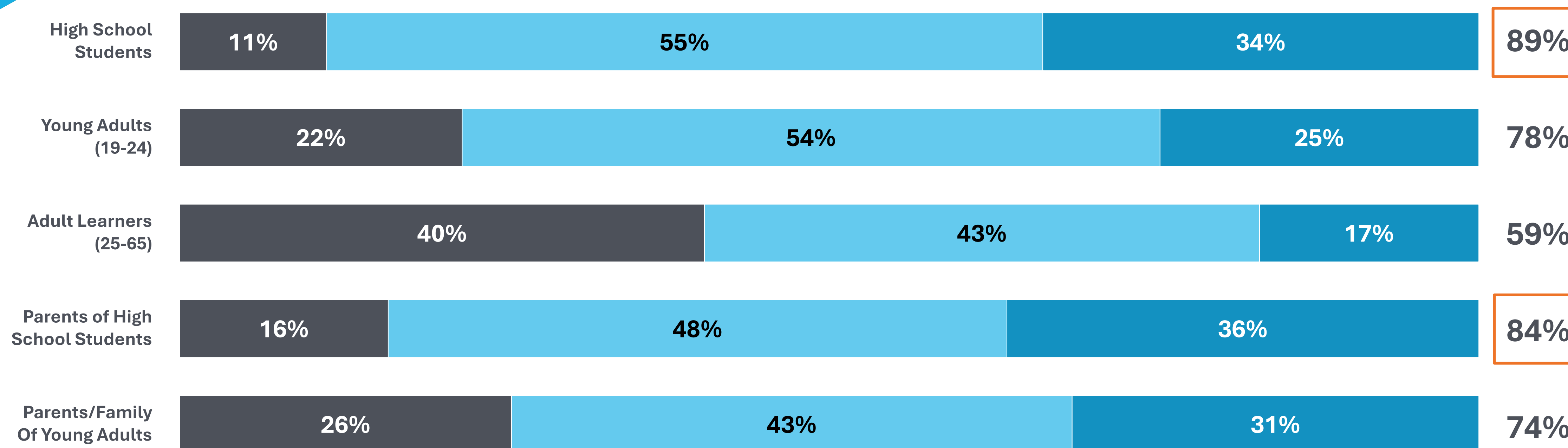
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HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS MORE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THEIR ABILITY TO AFFORD EDUCATION & TRAINING

Belief that I could find a way to pay for education and training

■ No, definitely could not find a way to pay ■ Yes, probably could find a way to pay ■ Yes, definitely could find a way to pay

T2B



Base: All Respondents

Weighted: HS Students (n=817); YA Students (n=497); Adult Learners (n=301); Parents of HS (n=798); Parents and Family of YA (n=298)

Q810_B. Regardless of your choice for additional training and education beyond a high school diploma, do you believe that this is a cost that you are able to find a way to pay for (out-of-pocket and/or with financial aid)?



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OPPORTUNITY TO ENHANCE AWARENESS OF CHE INITIATIVES

Percent unaware of IN programs that support additional education & training

	HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS	YA STUDENTS	ADULT LEARNERS	PARENTS OF HS STUDENTS	PARENTS/FAMILY OF YA STUDENTS
Frank O'Bannon Grant	48%	48%	71%	48%	55%
Learn More Indiana	44%	48%	69%	49%	50%
Indiana's Outreach Coordinators	43%	52%	63%	48%	50%
Indiana Pre-Admissions	39%	47%	65%	45%	45%
Workforce Ready Grant	43%	46%	55%	45%	44%
Indiana College Core	31%	44%	62%	36%	43%
Career and Technical Education	27%	39%	60%	28%	39%
21st Century Scholars Program	22%	23%	41%	21%	24%
FAFSA	19%	18%	21%	13%	9%

Base: All Respondents
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Q715. How favorable are you toward each of the following?



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KEY FINDINGS

Most Hoosiers high school students and parents, around **80%**, believe continuing education beyond high school is **worth the investment**.

HOOSIER PERCEPTIONS & REALITIES OF HIGHER EDUCATION



1. PARENT/GUARDIAN ENGAGEMENT

Parents/Guardians are more influential in their students' decisions than they perceive themselves to be, especially for male students.



2. CAREER COACHING AND NAVIGATION

Understanding and selecting a career path is a top challenge cited by students and parents, leading to a growing need for career coaching and navigation resources and work-based learning opportunities for students to explore career options earlier.

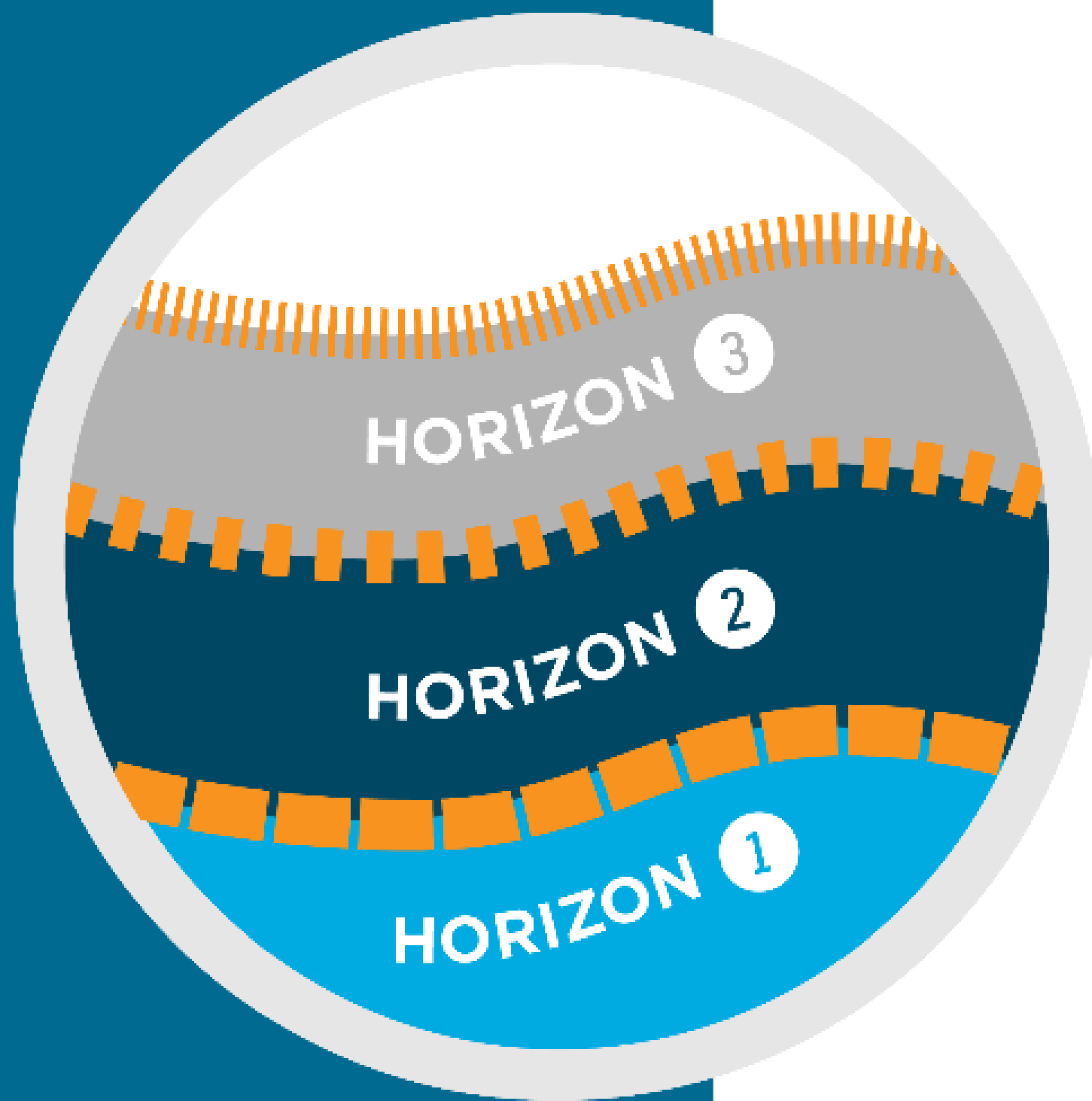


3. COST PERCEPTION AND INVESTMENT

While cost is still cited as the largest barrier to education beyond high school, students and parents over-estimated the cost of tuition by over 100%.

IMPLEMENTATION HORIZONS

The Commission has categorized each key finding into three horizon levels based on current and future opportunities for implementation.



- ▶ **HORIZON 1:** Initiatives are already implemented and are being evaluated for improvement opportunities.
 - ▶ Example: 21st Century Scholars
- ▶ **HORIZON 2:** Initiatives are either in the beginning stages of implementation or will be implemented soon.
 - ▶ Example: Career Discovery Meetings
- ▶ **HORIZON 3:** Concepts for new initiatives have been identified and the feasibility of their implementation is being discussed.
 - ▶ Example: parent outreach and marketing



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KEY FINDINGS HORIZONS

1 Parent/Guardian Engagement

HORIZON 1

Indiana Pre-Admissions: Your Path to College

HORIZON 2

Letters to 9th-11th grade students/families

HORIZON 3

Parent engagement in Partnership Pentagon and Learn More Indiana outreach

2 Career Coaching and Navigation

Career and Technical Education (CTE)

Career Coaching Grants
Career Discovery Meetings
Career Scholarship Accounts

Connection to employers and work-based learning opportunities

3 Cost Perception and Investment

Need-Based Financial Aid
Tuition Holding
FAFSA Completions

21st Century Scholars
automatic enrollment
Indiana College Core
FAFSA Requirement

Program Review
Standardized Aid Letter
Shifting from “cost” to “investment”

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