



INDIANA COMMISSION *for* HIGHER EDUCATION

AGENDA

Thursday, August 11, 2022

101 West Ohio Street, Suite 300
Indianapolis, IN 46204-4206

www.che.in.gov



INDIANA COMMISSION *for*
HIGHER EDUCATION

AGENDA

Indiana Commission for Higher Education Meeting

Thursday, August 11, 2022

Call to Order – 9:00 A.M. ET

Ball State University

2800 West Bethel Avenue

Muncie, IN 47306

Alumni Center

Parking available in adjacent lot

Join on your computer or mobile app:

[Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)

-or-

Join on your phone (audio only):

DIAL: +1 317-552-1674

PHONE ID: 706 745 771#

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**Requires Commission Action*

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None

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IV. 2022 Officer Slate

Old Business

New Business

V. Adjournment

The next meeting of the Commission will be on **September 8, 2022, in Bloomington, Indiana.**

**State of Indiana
Commission for Higher Education**

Minutes of Meeting

Thursday, June 9, 2022

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Commission for Higher Education met in regular session starting at 1:00 p.m. ET at Indiana State University, 200 North 7th Street, Terre Haute, IN 47809, with Chairman Mike Alley presiding.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Members Present: Mike Alley, Dennis Bland, Anne Bowen, Jud Fisher, Bill Hanna, Chris LaMothe (virtual), Pepper Mulherin, Beverley Pitts, John Popp (virtual) and Erika Steuterman

Members Absent: Edward Berger, Al Hubbard, Chris Murphy and Dan Peterson

CHAIR'S REPORT

Good afternoon and thank you everyone for joining us today. I would like to invite President of Indiana State University, Dr. Deborah Curtis, to offer welcoming remarks.

President Curtis provided remarks.

Thank you, President Curtis, for your welcoming remarks, and many thanks to you and your staff for your hospitality and hosting our meeting today.

I must report that we have three key members of our board departing this month. Our longest-serving member of the Commission, Chris Murphy, has indicated that he will not be seeking reappointment for his term that concludes at the end of this month. In addition, Dr. Beverley Pitts will also not be seeking reappointment. And, as you know, Anne Bowen's term as our student member also concludes at the end of June. Each of these members have been tremendous contributors to the Commission. We have resolutions honoring each of them for their service.

Jud Fisher offered the resolution for Chris Murphy.

R-22-03.1 RESOLVED: That the Commission for Higher Education hereby approves the Resolution honoring Chris Murphy. (Motion – Fisher, second – Bland, unanimously approved)

Dennis Bland offered the resolution for Dr. Beverley Pitts. Beverley provided remarks in response to the resolution.

R-22-03.2 RESOLVED: That the Commission for Higher Education hereby approves the Resolution honoring Dr. Beverley Pitts. (Motion – Bland, second – Fisher, unanimously approved)

Pepper Mulherin offered the resolution for Anne Bowen. Anne provided remarks in response to the resolution.

R-22-03.3 RESOLVED: That the Commission for Higher Education hereby approves the Resolution honoring Anne Bowen. (Motion – Mulherin, second – LaMothe, unanimously approved)

Chairman Alley and Chris LaMothe provided remarks on the resolutions.

I want to reference your agenda books that two articles that have been in the newspaper recently—one article by Michael Hicks and another by David Ricks. They really set the stage for the dilemma we have in our state. I encourage you to read those articles if you have not done so already.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Thank you, Chairman Alley. I am pleased to report on my first six weeks (or first 50 days, counting weekends). Some have asked, has it been busy? I prefer to think of it as full. Guiding the work, beyond the key areas of strategic focus, have been keeping in mind grace and gratitude. With gratitude in mind, thank you to President Curtis and the team at ISU, especially Greg Goode, for serving as such great hosts for this meeting. Thank you to the commission members for trusting the leadership of this work to exceptional team. Thank you to our university partners and others of whom we will ask a great deal and to whom we will commit deeply. Thank you to the incredible staff at the CHE for your efforts during these past 50 days.

Our focus over the past 50 days has been, and will continue to be in word and action, on key priorities are the higher education value proposition, the college-going rate, the adult workforce and population and the retention of college graduates in Indiana. We will also be focusing very intently on the value proposition, as many Hoosiers are not seeing the value and the opportunities that come with it. We have many challenges, but also many bright spots including 21st Century Scholars, Frank O'Bannon and the Indiana College Core, making Indiana one of the top states in the nation around dual credit and leveraging opportunities for high school students take advantage of those opportunities.

Lastly, we will be making key staff changes to our team. Charlee Beasor will be leading a comprehensive and robust approach to our marketing, communications and advertising. We will be hiring an Associate Commissioner of K12 Strategy, who will lead our incredible K12 outreach team and work closely with Secretary Jenner and the team at DOE, superintendents, principals, and others focusing on schools and students needing the most help, such as community and youth-oriented organizations. We will also be hiring an Associate Commissioner for Adult Strategy, who will be working closely with employers and organizations like the Indiana Chamber of Commers, DWD and WorkOne Leaders,

community and faith-based organizations, veteran’s organization, and other organizations reaching and serving adults.

Thank you, again. We will work tenaciously to fulfill this mission because our fellow Hoosiers deserve it. The economic and social prosperities that come from a postsecondary education are immense, and we will deliver on it.

CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 2022 COMMISSION MEETING

R-22-3.4 RESOLVED: That the Commission for Higher Education hereby approves the Minutes of the March 2022 regular meeting. (Motion – Fisher, second – Mulherin, unanimously approved)

II. BUSINESS ITEMS

A. Proficiency Benchmarks

Josh Garrison presented this item.

R-22-3.5 RESOLVED: That the Commission for Higher Education hereby approves the resolution setting the proficiency benchmarks. (Motion – Fisher, second – Mulherin, unanimously approved)

B. Outcomes-Based Funding Model

Seth Hinshaw presented this item.

Commission action on this item was tabled until the August meeting.

C. 2022-2023 Frank O’Bannon Grant Schedule of Awards

Josh Garrison presented this item.

R-22-3.6 RESOLVED: That the Commission for Higher Education hereby approves the 2022-2023 Frank O’Bannon Grant Schedule of Awards. (Motion – Bland, second – Steuterman, unanimously approved)

D. Academic Degree Programs for Expedited Action

1. Indiana University South Bend – Parkside Hall
2. Purdue University West Lafayette – Mackey Arena

R-22-3.7 RESOLVED: That the Commission for Higher Education hereby approves the following academic degree programs, in accordance with the background information provided in this agenda item. (Motion – Hanna, second – Steuterman, unanimously approved)

E. Capital Projects for Full Discussion

1. Ivy Tech Community College East Chicago

Mary Jane Michalak presented this item. Seth Hinshaw provided the staff recommendation.

R-22-3.8 RESOLVED: That the Commission for Higher Education hereby approves the following capital project, in accordance with the background information provided in this agenda item. (Motion – Mulherin, second – Bland, unanimously approved)

2. Purdue University West Lafayette Zucrow Lab

Alecia Nafziger presented this item. Seth Hinshaw provided the staff recommendation.

R-22-3.9 RESOLVED: That the Commission for Higher Education hereby approves the following capital project, in accordance with the background information provided in this agenda item. (Motion – Fisher, second – LaMothe, unanimously approved)

3. Purdue University Ross-Ade Stadium

Alecia Nafziger presented this item. Seth Hinshaw provided the staff recommendation.

R-22-3.10 RESOLVED: That the Commission for Higher Education hereby approves the following capital project, in accordance with the background information provided in this agenda item. (Motion – Mulherin, second – Bowen, unanimously approved)

F. Capital Projects for Expedited Action

1. Indiana University South Bend – Parkside Hall
2. Purdue University West Lafayette – Mackey Arena

R-22-3.11 RESOLVED: That the Commission for Higher Education hereby approves the following capital projects, in accordance with the background information provided in this agenda item. (Motion – Pitts, second – Mulherin, unanimously approved)

III. INFORMATION ITEMS

- A. Academic Degree Programs Awaiting Action
- B. Academic Degree Program Actions Taken by Staff
- C. Media Coverage
- D. Schedule of Upcoming Meetings of the Commission

**IV. OLD BUSINESS
NEW BUSINESS**

There was none.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:27 P.M. ET

Mike Alley, Chair

Anne Bowen, Secretary

COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Thursday, August 11, 2022

DISCUSSION ITEM A:

2022 College Completion Report

Background

The Commission for Higher Education’s annual College Completion Report provides a comprehensive picture in order to advance Indiana’s collective efforts to boost educational attainment.

The Commission’s annual Completion Report measures the proportion of learners who complete their degree or certificate by campus, providing trends for each public institution and highlighting progress and challenges as we continue to increase college completion in Indiana.

The state measures college completion in two ways: on-time completion (students graduate within two years for an associate degree or four years for a bachelor’s degree) and extended-time completion (students graduate within six years of beginning any degree program). The 2022 Indiana College Completion Report reveals upward trends for on-time and extended completion rates for Indiana’s two- and four-year campuses in 2021.

Over 45 percent of all Hoosier college students graduated on time. Nearly two-thirds (66.1percent) of all students graduate within six years, an improvement of 2.5 percentage points. Along with one-year increases, the data show five-year gains of almost 11 percentage points in on-time graduation and 12 percentage points in extended-time completion.

While there has been improvement in these numbers over time, the state’s overall education attainment is exacerbated by other challenges such as the declining college-going rate, a staggering number of adults without a credential beyond a high school diploma, and too many college graduates leaving the state.

Supporting Documents

To be distributed.

COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Thursday, August 11, 2022

BUDGET ITEM A:

Outcomes-Based Funding Model

Staff Recommendation

That the Commission adopt the recommended outcomes-based funding model changes. These recommendations were reviewed by the Budget and Productivity Committee on August 4, 2022.

Background

Outcomes-based funding awards operating funds to Indiana’s public higher-education institutions based on improvement in core metrics. These metrics have evolved over the last two decades to reflect the changing needs of Hoosier students, businesses, and institutions.

Supporting Document

To be distributed.

COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Thursday, August 11, 2022

BUDGET ITEM B:

**Commission for Higher Education Fiscal Year 2023
Spending Plan**

Staff Recommendation

That the Commission for Higher Education approve by consent the Commission for Higher Education Fiscal Year 2023 Spending Plan.

Background

Article VIII Section 1 of the Commission for Higher Education’s Bylaws require the Commissioner to present a recommended budget showing anticipated revenues from all sources and expenditures for the next fiscal year no later than the first month of each fiscal year. The Commissioner has delegated this responsibility to Finance staff. Staff have developed a spending plan that reflects appropriations made by the Indiana General Assembly in addition to other sources of revenue. The annual operating budget is functionally characterized by program: administration, outreach, student financial aid, private grants and federal grants. The Budget & Productivity Committee reviewed this spending plan on August 4, 2022. Staff requests authorization to work with the State Budget Agency to implement necessary management reserves and other budget policies for Fiscal Year 2023.

Supporting Documents

Previously distributed.

COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Thursday, August 11, 2022

BUDGET ITEM C-1:

Purdue University West Lafayette - Aspire Purchase

Staff Recommendation

That the Commission for Higher Education recommends approval to the State Budget Agency and the State Budget Committee of the following projects:

- Purdue University West Lafayette Aspire Purchase

Background

By statute, the Commission for Higher Education must review all projects to construct buildings or facilities costing more than two million dollars (\$2,000,000), regardless of the source of funding. Each repair and rehabilitation project must be reviewed by the Commission for Higher Education and approved by the Governor, on recommendation of the Budget Agency, if the cost of the project exceeds two million dollars (\$2,000,000) and if any part of the cost of the project is paid by state appropriated funds or by mandatory student fees assessed all students. Such review is required if no part of the project is paid by state appropriated funds or by mandatory student fees and the project cost exceeds two million dollars (\$2,000,000). A project that has been approved or authorized by the General Assembly is subject to review by the Commission for Higher Education. The Commission for Higher Education shall review a project approved or authorized by the General Assembly for which a state appropriation will be used. All other non-state funded projects must be reviewed within ninety (90) days after the project is submitted to the Commission.

Supporting Document

Aspire at Discovery Park Purchase

Purdue University West Lafayette – Aspire Purchase

Thursday, August 11, 2022

B-1-23-3-02 Purdue University West Lafayette – Aspire Purchase

The Purdue University Board of Trustees requests authorization to proceed with the purchase of Aspire at Discovery Park on the West Lafayette Campus. This project includes the purchase of 4.8 acres of land and a three story, 387 square foot housing complex from the Purdue Research Foundation. This purchase will eliminate an existing lease agreement for \$5M for the 2022-2023 academic year.

Funding: The estimated cost of this project is \$155,000,000 and will be funded with non-fee replaced debt (\$125M), auxiliary funds (\$25M), and gift funds (\$5M).

Additional Staff Notes: Staff recommends approval of the project.

PROJECT COST SUMMARY

Purchase Aspire at Discovery Park Property from Purdue Research Foundation

Institution:	Purdue University	Budget Agency Project No.:	B-1-23-3-02
Campus:	West Lafayette	Institutional Priority:	N/A
Previously approved by General Assembly:	No	Previously recommended by CHE:	No
Part of the Institution's Long-term Capital Plan:	Yes		

Project Size:	387,000 GSF (1)	274,736 ASF (2)	0.71 ASF/GSF
Net change in overall campus space:	387,000 GSF	274,736 ASF	

Total cost of the project (3):	\$ 155,000,000	Cost per ASF/GSF:	\$ 400.52 GSF
Total cost of the demolition:	\$ -		\$ 564.18 ASF
Funding Source(s) for project (4):	Amount	Type	
	\$ 125,000,000	Non-Fee Replaced Debt – Auxiliary Housing/Dining	
	\$ 25,000,000	Auxiliary Funds – Housing/Dining	
	\$ 5,000,000	Gift Funds	
Estimated annual debt payment (6):	\$6,000,000		
Are all funds for the project secured:	Yes		

Project Funding:
 The purchase is being funded primarily by Non-Fee Replaced Debt – Auxiliary Housing/Dining. The University intends to use a combination of Auxiliary Funds - Housing/Dining and Gift Funds to supplement the transaction.

Project Cost Justification
 The purchase value was determined through a competitive bidding process. Purchasing this property allows the University to provide more of its growing undergraduate population the opportunity to live on-campus, and the purchase will eliminate a lease expense of \$5M for this property for the current fiscal year.

Estimated annual change in cost of building operations based on the project:	\$ 2,276,232
Estimated annual repair and rehabilitation investment (5):	\$ 2,250,000

(1) Gross Square Feet (GSF)- Sum of all area within the exterior envelope of the structure.
 (2) Assignable Square Feet (ASF)- Amount of space that can be used by people or programs within the interior walls of a structure. Assignable square feet is the sum of the 10 major assignable space use categories: classrooms, laboratories, offices, study facilities, special use facilities, general use facilities, support facilities, health care facilities, residential facilities and unclassified facilities. For information on assignable space use categories, see Space-Room Codes tab.
 (3) Projects should include all costs associated with the project (structure, A&E, infrastructure, consulting, FF&E, etc.)
 (4) Be consistent in the naming of funds to be used for projects. If bonding, note Bonding Authority Year (1965, 1929, 1927, etc.)
 (5) Estimate the amount of funding the institution would need to set aside annually to address R&R needs for the project. CHE suggests 1.5% of total construction cost
 (6) If issuing debt, determine annual payment based on 20 years at 4.75% interest rate
 - If project is a lease-purchase or lease, adjust accordingly. Note the total cost of the lease in the project cost, and annual payments in project description

PROJECT DETAILED DESCRIPTION - ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Purchase Aspire at Discovery Park Property from Purdue Research Foundation

Institution:	Purdue University	Budget Agency Project No.:	B-1-23-3-02
Campus:	West Lafayette	Institutional Priority:	N/A

Description of Project

The proposed acquisition of 4.8 acres at 1245 W. State Street, West Lafayette, from the Purdue Research Foundation includes a three-building, four-story, 387,000 square foot housing complex featuring 831 beds in one-bedroom, two-bedroom, and four-bedroom apartment configurations. Aspire at Discovery Park was constructed in 2019. This property includes 8,000 SF of retail space, occupied by Folletts book store, and a small service parking lot for staff. Additionally, there are resident community areas including a gym, social room, conference room and courtyards.

Balfour Beatty-Walsh Housing, LLC placed Aspire at Discovery Park on the market in a competitive bidding process in April 2022. The Purdue Board of Trustees approved a resolution of support on June 10, 2022 for the Purdue Research Foundation (PRF) to undertake a project to acquire the Aspire at Discovery Park development from Balfour Beatty-Walsh Housing, LLC. PRF had a ground lease with Balfour Beatty-Walsh Housing, and the University intends to purchase the buildings and land from PRF in one transaction.

Need and Purpose of the Program

The University has leased a portion of Aspire at Discovery Park since its construction in 2019. Near term, this acquisition allows Purdue to increase housing capacity instead of waiting for the construction of a new facility, which could not be online until Fall 2025 at the earliest.

In recent years, the University has seen unprecedented enrollment growth. In fall of 2021, 10,191 freshman were admitted, the largest ever freshman class for Purdue and the largest class in any Big Ten school since at least 2005. Another indicator of the growth in demand for a Purdue degree is the steady increase in applications over the last several years. Purdue received a record 59,173 applications for the 2021-22 school year.

Overall undergraduate enrollment has increased from 29,255 in 2014 to 37,101 in 2021, a 27% increase. The acquisition of Aspire will provide more students with the opportunity to live in on-campus housing, which in turn enhances their academic experience. Students who live on campus achieve greater academic success and graduation rates than their off-campus peers. Increasing the amount of on-campus housing aligns with the Purdue Moves Transformative Education initiative.

For 2022-23, Purdue has 400 master leased beds and Aspire directly leased the remaining 431 beds. The 2022-23 Purdue/Aspire rates and lease durations (9-month academic year for Purdue master leased and 12-month for Aspire direct leased) will be honored. Following the 2022-23 lease term, it is likely that Purdue will opt to densify the number of beds in certain apartment configurations. The specific number of beds and the associated rates are still being finalized. As always, rates will be approved by Purdue's Board of Trustees prior to their finalization. The University anticipates offering the majority of beds in Aspire at rates that are less than or equal to current Aspire rates.

This purchase allows the University to own a property at an important strategic location adjacent to current residential and dining facilities. The University is in the process of updating the Housing and Dining Master Plan, based on enrollment growth, the success of living/learning communities and residential/retail dining strategy. The update will evaluate and plan for new residence halls, the demolition of select residence halls, strategic renewals and replacements and dining facilities.

Space Utilization

The space is used today as a mixed-use residential facility with modern amenities such as a game room, social areas, study areas, workout room, computer labs, outdoor green spaces, a large conference room and a first floor retail store. There is a small office and mailroom that services the site. The majority of the space, approximately 93%, is classified as residential facility space. The University plans to use the space "as-is" moving forward with minimal changes.

The retail service provider, Follett's Purdue Bookstore, signed a 5 year lease agreement in Spring 2022 prior to the sale of the facility. The lease includes a 5 year extension option at tenant's discretion.

Comparable Projects

- This project to purchase residential apartments is unique to Purdue University and higher education in general. Unique aspects of this project are:
- (1) immediate availability to add beds to the University on-campus housing portfolio instead of waiting a projected 3 year build lead-time
 - (2) the added beds are located adjacent to current university housing and dining (approximately 200 feet from the nearest residence hall)
 - (3) the added beds are a differentiated typology (apartment-style) than most of the current University inventory. Currently, the University inventory is 93% traditional, semi-suite/suite, or pod styles and 7% apartment style. The University master leases approximately 10% or 1,577 additional supplemental apartments. By having this typology within on-campus inventory, it decreases this reliance on master leasing long-term.
 - (4) the University reviewed comparable investment sales from 2020/2021 at similar institutions for buildings of similar construction built in 2014 or newer. 5 comparable sales had an average cost/bed of \$136,000/bed.
 - (5) the University has considered densification at the facility, which would increase capacity to 1,000-1,200 beds. The densification could ultimately bring the average cost/bed to \$127,000/bed.
 - (6) knowing this is a unique opportunity, the University spent considerable efforts financial modeling its purchase justification prior to bidding. The University is confident in the purchase price based on both densified and undensified scenarios.

Background Materials

CAPITAL PROJECT REQUEST FORM
INDIANA PUBLIC POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION
INSTITUTION CAMPUS SPACE DETAILS FOR PURCHASE ASPIRE AT DISCOVERY PARK PROPERTY FROM PURDUE RESEARCH FOUNDATION

(INSERT PROJECT TITLE AND SBA No.)	Current Campus Totals			Capital Request		Net Future Space
	Current Space in Use	Space Under Construction (1)	Space Planned and Funded (1)	Space to be Terminated (1)	New Space in Capital Request (2)	
A. OVERALL SPACE IN ASF						
Classroom (110 & 115)	336,164	-	-	336,164		336,164
Class Lab (210,215,220,225,230,235)	751,199	72,943	-	824,142		824,142
Non-class Lab (250 & 255)	1,660,307	20,156	29,217	1,709,680		1,709,680
Office Facilities (300)	2,376,323	15,275	8,007	2,399,605	1,445	2,401,050
Study Facilities (400)	392,685	14,337	-	407,022	664	407,686
Special Use Facilities (500)	1,218,100	-	12,709	1,230,809		1,230,809
General Use Facilities (600)	998,733	14,520	2,921	1,016,174	18,469	1,034,643
Support Facilities (700)	2,874,905	(917)	-	2,873,988		2,873,988
Health Care Facilities (800)	216,011	-	-	216,011		216,011
Resident Care Facilities (900)	2,489,928	-	-	2,489,928	254,158	2,744,086
Unclassified (000)	27,603	-	-	27,603		27,603
B. OTHER FACILITIES (Please list major categories)						
TOTAL SPACE	13,341,957	136,314	52,854	13,531,125	274,736	13,805,861

Notes:

- Space/Room codes based on Postsecondary Ed Facilities Inventory and Classification Manual (2006)

(1) Identify in a footnote the specific facilities that are included in the data in these columns. Do not include pending approval, non-submitted projects or non-funded projects

Space under construction includes:

- Gateway Complex
- Hypersonics Building
- Secure Data Research Project
- Child Care Center Building
- Schleman/Stewart Renovation

Space planned and funded includes:

- Whisler Mechanical Project
- Life Sciences Phenotyping Greenhouse Building
- Mackey Locker Rooms Renovation
- Ross-Ade Stadium Renovation

Space to be terminated includes:

N/A

CAPITAL PROJECT COST DETAILS

Purchase Aspire at Discovery Park Property from Purdue Research Foundation

Institution:	Purdue University	Budget Agency Project No.:	B-1-23-3-02
Campus:	West Lafayette	Institutional Priority:	N/A

ANTICIPATED CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE

	<u>Month</u>	<u>Year</u>
Bid Date	N/A	N/A
Start Construction	N/A	N/A
Occupancy (End Date)	N/A	N/A

ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COST FOR PROJECT

	Cost Basis (1)	Estimated Escalation Factors (2)	Project Cost
<u>Planning Costs</u>			
a. Engineering	N/A	N/A	N/A
b. Architectural	N/A	N/A	N/A
c. Consulting	N/A	N/A	N/A
<u>Construction</u>			
a. Structure	N/A	N/A	N/A
b. Mechanical (HVAC, plumbing, etc.)	N/A	N/A	N/A
c. Electrical	N/A	N/A	N/A
<u>Movable Equipment</u>	N/A	N/A	N/A
<u>Fixed Equipment</u>	N/A	N/A	N/A
<u>Site Development/Land Acquisition</u>	N/A	N/A	N/A
<u>Other (Please list)</u>	N/A	N/A	N/A
TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COST	\$ -	\$ -	N/A

(1) Cost Basis is based on current cost prevailing as of: (INSERT MONTH AND YEAR)

(2) Explain in the Description of Project Section of the "Cap Proj Details" schedule the reasoning for estimated escalation factors

CAPITAL PROJECT OPERATING COST DETAILS
Purchase Aspire at Discovery Park Property from Purdue Research Foundation

Institution:	<u>Purdue University</u>	Budget Agency Project No.:	<u>B-1-23-3-02</u>
Campus:	<u>West Lafayette</u>	Institutional Priority:	<u>N/A</u>

					GSF OF AREA AFFECTED BY PROJECT	387,000
ANNUAL OPERATING COST/SAVINGS (1)						
	Cost per GSF	Total Operating Cost	Personal Services	Supplies and Expenses		
1. Operations	\$ 1.07	\$ 412,750	\$ 252,750	\$ 160,000		
2. Maintenance	\$ 0.76	\$ 295,000	\$ 255,000	\$ 40,000		
3. Fuel	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		
4. Utilities	\$ 2.46	\$ 950,346	\$ -	\$ 950,346		
5. Other	\$ 1.60	\$ 618,136	\$ 506,416	\$ 111,720		
TOTAL ESTIMATED OPERATIONAL COST/SAVINGS	\$ 5.88	\$ 2,276,232	\$ 1,014,166	\$ 1,262,066		

Description of any unusual factors affecting operating and maintenance costs/savings.

(1) Based on figures from "Individual Cap Proj Desc" schedule

COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Thursday, August 11, 2022

BUDGET ITEM D:

Capital Projects for Expedited Action

Staff Recommendation

That the Commission for Higher Education recommends approval to the State Budget Agency and the State Budget Committee of the following projects:

- Indiana University – Regional Deferred Maintenance Phase V

Background

Staff recommends approval to the State Budget Agency and the State Budget Committee of the following capital projects in accordance with the expedited action category originated by the Commission for Higher Education in May 2006. Institutional staff will be available to answer questions about these projects, but the staff does not envision formal presentations.

Supporting Document

Background Information on Capital Projects for Expedited Action, Thursday, August 11, 2022

Capital Projects for Expedited Action

Thursday, August 11, 2022

A-0-21-2-03 Indiana University Regional Deferred Maintenance

The Indiana University Board of Trustees requests authorization to proceed with addressing deferred maintenance at each of the five regional campuses: IU East, IU Kokomo, IU Northwest, IU Southeast, and IU South Bend. These projects include replacing or updating roofs, mechanical systems and restrooms, and renovating classrooms and labs for a total cost of \$8,100,000.

COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Thursday, August 11, 2022

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS ITEM A:

School Finder Tool and Credential Transparency

Background

The School Finder Tool, initially developed several years ago and located on Learn More Indiana, is a resource for Hoosiers to easily find certificate and degree programs based on their career interests, school size, and many other factors. Students can access a wealth of information about programs, including average annual earnings of graduates, see side-by-side comparisons of multiple programs, and supply contact information, should they want additional information directly from the institution.

This enhanced version of School Finder is made possible through data published to the Indiana Credential Registry (the “Registry”), a repository of information from a variety of Indiana institutional and state sources, which had been previously siloed, but can now be linked using national technical data standards that promote credential transparency.

The Registry enables consistent data to be supplied to other student-serving applications, such as the Career Explorer tool, which is licensed statewide through the Indiana Department of Workforce Development.

Supporting Documents

To be distributed.

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ACADEMIC AFFAIRS ITEM B:

Credit for Prior Learning Clearinghouse

Background

Adults seeking additional education to advance their career goals often have years of experience, training, and certifications in various industries and fields. Credit for Prior Learning (CPL), also called Prior Learning Assessment (PLA), can help in this quest by recognizing the knowledge and skills these individuals have already mastered. By assessing these learning experiences, credit can be awarded for courses with similar learning outcomes and applied toward a related degree.

In April 2021, the Indiana General Assembly passed HEA 1549, outlining new requirements for CPL data collection, reporting, and publication through an online Clearinghouse. To this end, Indiana launched a CPL Restart Project to help students get better paying jobs by leveraging CPL opportunities and aligning credentials in high demand occupations. In partnership, the Commission, Thomas P. Miller and Associates (TPMA), the Council for Adult Experiential Learning (CAEL), and higher education representatives researched existing policies and best practices. Based on that research, TPMA released the *Policy Recommendations Report – Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Restart Statewide Assistance* in December 2021.

On March 29, 2022, the Statewide Transfer and Articulation Committee (STAC) discussed development of the CPL Clearinghouse. The Commission and STAC Leadership agreed that each public college and university would publish CPL information on a well-structured webpage, easily locatable by users, on or before July 1, 2022. Additionally, information will be regularly updated and provided to the Commission each July 1st for purposes of publishing on TransferIN.net.

Supporting Documents

To be distributed.

COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

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ACADEMIC AFFAIRS ITEM C:

SAT/ACT Admissions Requirements at Indiana Public Institutions

Background

At the June 9, 2022 Commission meeting, during the SAT College Ready Benchmarks section of the College Proficiency Benchmarks presentation, a discussion arose surrounding the use of SAT scores in admissions at Indiana’s public institutions. Chairman Alley suggested that the Academic Affairs and Quality Committee discuss the status of institutional use of SAT scores in the admissions process.

In response to this request, the Academic Affairs staff conducted a brief survey of the institutional practices for both SAT and ACT scores, which was discussed by the Academic Affairs and Quality Committee on July 25, 2022.

Supporting Documents

To be distributed.

COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

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ACADEMIC AFFAIRS ITEM D:

Academic Degree Programs for Expedited Action

Staff Recommendation

That the Commission for Higher Education approve the following degree programs, in accordance with the background information provided in this agenda item:

- Bachelor of Science in Sustainability to be offered by Purdue University Global
- Bachelor of Science in Aviation Management to be offered by Purdue University Global

Background

The Academic Affairs and Quality Committee discussed these programs at its July 25, 2022, meeting and concluded that the proposed programs could be placed on the August 11, 2022 agenda for action by the Commission as expedited action items.

Supporting Document

Academic Degree Programs on Which Staff Propose Expedited Action July 25, 2022

Academic Degree Programs on Which Staff Propose Expedited Action

July 25, 2022

CHE 22-10 Bachelor of Science in Sustainability to be offered by Purdue University Global

Proposal received on April 14, 2022

CIP Code: 30.3301

Total, National Projections:

Fifth Year Projected Enrollment: Headcount – 25, FTE – 71

Fifth Year Projected Degrees Conferred: 10

Subtotal, Indiana Projections:

Fifth Year Projected Enrollment: Headcount – 3, FTE – 8

Fifth Year Projected Degrees Conferred: 1

The proposed Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Sustainability will be offered 100 percent online through the School of General Education at Purdue University Global. The curriculum in this interdisciplinary program covers topics such as energy use, conservation, pollution reduction and management, and environmental justice, preparing students to identify environmental issues, develop sustainable practices, and implement mitigation strategies to solve real-world problems. This program utilizes Purdue Global's Course Level Assessment (CLA) model, permitting outcome-by-outcome determination of student achievement.

The B.S. in Sustainability requires 180 quarter credit hours equivalent to 120 semester hours to complete, thus meeting the standard credit hour expectation for baccalaureate degrees. There is a Transfer Single Articulation Pathway (TSAP) that aligns with the proposed degree program at Purdue University Global. Students who graduate from Ivy Tech Community College with a Business Administration TSAP (A.S. in Business Administration) can transfer all 60 semester hours of credit into the B.S. in Sustainability. Additionally, students from Ivy Tech Community College who complete the A.S. in Agriculture can transfer all 60 semester hours of credit into the proposed degree program.

Students from Vincennes University who complete the A.S. in Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences or A.S. in Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences – Sustainable Foods and Farming Systems can transfer all 60 semester hours of credit into the proposed degree program. Additionally, there are 2 concentrations that students can pursue. Students who complete the A.S. in Supply Chain Logistics Management can transfer into the Supply Chain Management and Logistics concentration. Students who complete the A.S. in Liberal Arts – Economics can transfer all 60 semester hours of credit into the Economics concentration. Students are encouraged to work closely with their advisors to ensure they are meeting as many course-specific requirements as possible.

CHE 22-11 Bachelor of Science in Aviation Management to be offered by Purdue University Global

Proposal received on April 22, 2022
CIP Code: 49.0104

Total, National Projections:
Fifth Year Projected Enrollment: Headcount – 19, FTE – 42
Fifth Year Projected Degrees Conferred: 3

Subtotal, Indiana Projections:
Fifth Year Projected Enrollment: Headcount – 5, FTE – 10
Fifth Year Projected Degrees Conferred: 1

The proposed Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Aviation Management will be offered 100 percent online through collaboration between the School of Aviation and the School of Business Administration and Information Technology at Purdue University Global. Purdue Global also offers a B.S. in Professional Flight, which the Commission approved in September 2019. This program first began enrolling students in FY2021 and the University reports that the program enrolled 40 students and had two graduates in FY2022.

As part of the major requirements, the curriculum for this program includes a number of aviation related topics, such as aviation operations, safety, law, management, finance, and aerospace business statistics, as well as business-related topics, such as management, human resources, marketing, and information systems. The University has also built into many of its courses career readiness competences as defined by the National Association of College and Employers (NACE). The elective portion of the curriculum also allows for the possibility of students earning two micro-credentials, such as Business Development or Diversity, from among about two dozen possibilities. This program also utilizes Purdue Global's Course Level Assessment (CLA) model, permitting outcome-by-outcome determination of student achievement.

The University will seek specialized accreditation for this program from the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP).

The B.S. in Aviation Management requires 180 quarter credit hours equivalent to 120 semester hours to complete, thus meeting the standard credit hour expectation for baccalaureate degrees. There is a Transfer Single Articulation Pathway (TSAP) that aligns with the proposed degree program at Purdue University Global. Students who graduate from Ivy Tech Community College with the Business Administration TSAP (A.S. in Business Administration) can transfer all 60 semester hours of credit into the B.S. in Aviation Management. Additionally, students who complete the Business Administration TSAP (A.S. in Business Management) at Vincennes University can transfer all 60 semester hours of credit into the B.S. in Aviation Management.

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INFORMATION ITEM A: Academic Degree Programs Awaiting Action

	<u>Title of Program</u>	<u>Institution/Campus/Site</u>	<u>Date Received</u>	<u>Status</u>
01	Associate of Science in Professional Flight	Purdue University Global	7/12/2019	Under Review
02	Master of Science in Ballet	Indiana University Bloomington	2/18/2022	Under Review
03	Bachelor of Science in Sustainability	Purdue University Global	4/14/2022	On CHE Agenda for Action
04	Bachelor of Science in Aviation Management	Purdue University Global	4/22/2022	On CHE Agenda for Action
05	Bachelor of Science in Actuarial Science	Indiana University East, IUPUI, Northwest, South Bend, Southeast	7/11/2022	Under Review
06	Bachelor of Science in Accounting	Indiana University East, Kokomo, Northwest, South Bend, Southeast	7/11/2022	Under Review
07	Bachelor of Science in Applied Statistics	Indiana University East, Northwest, South Bend, Southeast	7/11/2022	Under Review
08	Master of Science in Management	Indiana University East, Kokomo, Northwest, Southeast	7/11/2022	Under Review

<u>Title of Program</u>	<u>Institution/Campus/Site</u>	<u>Date Received</u>	<u>Status</u>
09 Master of Science in Strategic Finance	Indiana University East, Kokomo, Northwest, South Bend, Southeast	7/11/2022	Under Review
10 Master of Arts for Teachers in German	Indiana University - IUPUI, South Bend, Southeast	7/11/2022	Under Review
11 Associate of Applied Science in Occupational Therapy Assistant	Ivy Tech Community College – Anderson and Bloomington	7/22/2022	Under Review

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INFORMATION ITEM B: Academic Degree Program Actions Taken By Staff

	<u>Title of Program</u>	<u>Institution/Campus/Site</u>	<u>Date Approved</u>	<u>Change</u>
01	Associate of Applied Science in Entrepreneurship	Ivy Tech Community College - Evansville, Marion	7/25/2022	Adding locations
02	Bachelor of Social Work	Ball State University	7/25/2022	Adding distance education
03	Master of Arts/Master of Science in Athletic Coaching Education	Ball State University	7/25/2022	Adding distance education
04	Associate of Science in Optometric Technology/Opticianry	Indiana University Bloomington	7/25/2022	Eliminating a program
05	Bachelor of General Studies	Indiana University Bloomington	7/25/2022	Eliminating a program
06	Bachelor of Science in Education in Biology	Indiana University Bloomington	7/25/2022	Eliminating a program
07	Bachelor of Science in Nursing (Pre-Licensure)	Indiana University Bloomington	7/25/2022	Eliminating distance education
08	Graduate Certificate in Learning Sciences, Media, and Technology	Indiana University Bloomington	7/25/2022	Adding distance education
09	Graduate Certificate in Data Science	Indiana University Bloomington	7/25/2022	Changing the name
10	Master of Arts for Teachers in Biology	Indiana University Bloomington	7/25/2022	Changing the name

	<u>Title of Program</u>	<u>Institution/Campus/Site</u>	<u>Date Approved</u>	<u>Change</u>
11	Master of Social Work	Indiana University Bloomington	7/25/2022	Changing credit hours
12	Master of Arts for Teachers in Social Studies	Indiana University Bloomington	7/25/2022	Eliminating a program
13	Master of Science in Cell, Molecular and Cancer Biology	Indiana University Bloomington	7/25/2022	Changing credit hours
14	Master of Science in Computational Linguistics	Indiana University Bloomington	7/25/2022	Changing credit hours
15	Master of Science in Criminal Justice and Public Safety	Indiana University Bloomington	7/25/2022	Changing credit hours
16	Doctor of Philosophy in English	Indiana University Bloomington	7/25/2022	Changing credit hours
17	Doctor of Philosophy in Pathology	Indiana University Bloomington	7/25/2022	Eliminating a program
18	Master of Liberal Studies	Indiana University Northwest	7/25/2022	Changing credit hours
19	Bachelor of Science in Nursing (Pre-Licensure)	Indiana University South Bend	7/25/2022	Eliminating distance education
20	Master of Liberal Studies	Indiana University South Bend	7/25/2022	Changing credit hours
21	Bachelor of Science in Education in Biology	Indiana University Southeast	7/25/2022	Eliminating a program
22	Bachelor of Science in Nursing (Pre-Licensure)	Indiana University Southeast	7/25/2022	Eliminating distance education
23	Graduate Certificate in Reading	Indiana University Southeast	7/25/2022	Changing credit hours
24	Master of Interdisciplinary Studies	Indiana University Southeast	7/25/2022	Changing credit hours
25	Master of Science in Biomedical Engineering in Biomedical Engineering	Purdue University West Lafayette	7/25/2022	Adding distance education

	<u>Title of Program</u>	<u>Institution/Campus/Site</u>	<u>Date Approved</u>	<u>Change</u>
26	Certificate in Data Analytics	Ivy Tech Community College - Hamilton County	7/25/2022	Adding locations
27	Associate of Science/Associate of Applied Science in Data Analytics	Ivy Tech Community College - Hamilton County	7/25/2022	Adding locations
28	Associate of Science/Associate of Applied Science in Informatics	Ivy Tech Community College - Hamilton County	7/25/2022	Adding locations
29	Certificate in Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning	Ivy Tech Community College – Anderson	7/25/2022	Adding locations
30	Certificate in Building Construction Management Specialist	Ivy Tech Community College – Anderson	7/25/2022	Adding locations
31	Certificate in Electrical Specialist	Ivy Tech Community College – Anderson	7/25/2022	Adding locations
32	Certificate in Aviation Manufacturing-Electrical Assembly	Ivy Tech Community College - Indianapolis	7/25/2022	Eliminating locations
33	Certificate in Carpentry Specialist	Ivy Tech Community College – Anderson	7/25/2022	Adding locations
34	Master of Science in Human Resource Management	Purdue University West Lafayette	7/25/2022	Changing credit hours
35	Graduate Certificate in Aviation Safety Management	Purdue University West Lafayette	7/25/2022	Adding distance education
36	Certificate in Organizational Leadership and Supervision	Purdue University Polytechnic Statewide	7/25/2022	Eliminating a program

	<u>Title of Program</u>	<u>Institution/Campus/Site</u>	<u>Date Approved</u>	<u>Change</u>
37	Certificate in Medical Office Administration	Ivy Tech Community College - Hamilton County	7/25/2022	Adding locations
38	Associate of Science in Human Services (Social Work)	Ivy Tech Community College - Hamilton County	7/25/2022	Adding locations
39	Doctor of Philosophy in Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methodology	Indiana University Bloomington	7/25/2022	Changing the name
40	Bachelor of Science in Computer Information Systems	Indiana University Northwest	7/25/2022	Changing the CIP Code
41	Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Computer Information Systems	Indiana University Northwest	7/25/2022	Changing the CIP Code
42	Master of Business Administration	Indiana University Southeast	7/25/2022	Changing credit hours
43	Post-MSN Graduate Certificate in Family Nurse Practitioner	Indiana University South Bend	7/25/2022	Adding a certificate
44	Certificate in Digital Humanities	Purdue University West Lafayette	7/25/2022	Changing the CIP Code
45	Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Digital Humanities	Purdue University West Lafayette	7/25/2022	Changing the CIP Code
46	Certificate in Digital Photography and Video Art	Indiana University Southeast	7/25/2022	Adding a certificate
47	Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science in Journalism, Media and Strategic Communication	Indiana University Southeast	7/25/2022	Changing the name
48	Certificate in Software Bots for Cognitive Automation (IU)	IUPUI	7/25/2022	Adding a certificate
49	Professional Focus + Google IT Support Certificate	Purdue University Global	7/25/2022	Adding a certificate

	<u>Title of Program</u>	<u>Institution/Campus/Site</u>	<u>Date Approved</u>	<u>Change</u>
50	Cisco Network Postbaccalaureate Certificate	Purdue University Global	7/25/2022	Suspending a program
51	Post-baccalaureate Certificate in Computer Forensics	Purdue University Global	7/25/2022	Suspending a program
52	Post-baccalaureate Certificate in Information Security	Purdue University Global	7/25/2022	Suspending a program
53	Post-baccalaureate Certificate in Microsoft Operating Systems	Purdue University Global	7/25/2022	Suspending a program
54	Programming and Software Development Post-baccalaureate Certificate	Purdue University Global	7/25/2022	Suspending a program
55	Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science in Behavioral Sciences	Purdue University Northwest	7/25/2022	Changing the name
56	Bachelor of Science in Biology	Purdue University West Lafayette	7/25/2022	Changing the name
57	Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Health Sciences	Purdue University West Lafayette	7/25/2022	Changing the name
58	Bachelor of Science in Natural Resources and Environmental Science	Purdue University West Lafayette	7/25/2022	Changing the name
59	Bachelor of Science in Pharmaceutical Sciences	Purdue University West Lafayette	7/25/2022	Changing the name
60	Bachelor of Science in Agriculture	Purdue University West Lafayette	7/25/2022	Changing the name
61	Bachelor of Science in Chemical Biology & Biochemistry	Purdue University West Lafayette	7/25/2022	Changing the name
62	Master of Science in Biomechanics	Ball State University	7/25/2022	Changing the CIP Code

	<u>Title of Program</u>	<u>Institution/Campus/Site</u>	<u>Date Approved</u>	<u>Change</u>
64	Master of Science in Aeronautics and Astronautics in Aeronautics and Astronautics	Purdue University West Lafayette	7/25/2022	Changing the name
65	Bachelor of Science in Accounting	Indiana University East	7/25/2022	Adding distance education
66	Master of Science in Management	Indiana University East	7/25/2022	Adding distance education
67	Bachelor of Science in Actuarial Science	Indiana University Northwest	7/25/2022	Adding distance education
68	Bachelor of Science in Actuarial Science	Indiana University South Bend	7/25/2022	Adding distance education
69	Master of Science in Management	Indiana University Southeast	7/25/2022	Adding distance education
70	Master of Science in Strategic Finance	Indiana University Southeast	7/25/2022	Adding distance education
71	Master of Arts in Teaching, Mathematics	Indiana University East	7/25/2022	Eliminating a program
72	Master of Science in Agricultural Sciences Education & Communication	Purdue University West Lafayette	7/25/2022	Changing the name
73	Master of Liberal Studies	Indiana University Southeast	7/25/2022	Changing credit hours
74	Indiana College Core Certificate	Indiana University East	7/25/2022	Adding a certificate
75	Indiana College Core Certificate	Indiana University Kokomo	7/25/2022	Adding a certificate
76	Indiana College Core Certificate	Indiana University Northwest	7/25/2022	Adding a certificate

	<u>Title of Program</u>	<u>Institution/Campus/Site</u>	<u>Date Approved</u>	<u>Change</u>
77	Indiana College Core Certificate	Indiana University South Bend	7/25/2022	Adding a certificate
78	Indiana College Core Certificate	Indiana University Southeast	7/25/2022	Adding a certificate
79	Bachelor of Science in Integrative Human Health	Purdue University Northwest	7/25/2022	Changing the name
80	Master of Science in Mathematical Sciences (PU)	IUPUI	7/25/2022	Changing the name
81	Master of Science in Computer Science (PU)	IUPUI	7/25/2022	Changing the CIP Code
82	Master of Science in Clinical Psychology (PU)	IUPUI	7/25/2022	Splitting a degree
83	Certificate in Professional Writing	Indiana University Kokomo	7/25/2022	Adding a certificate

COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

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INFORMATION ITEM C:

Media Coverage

Staff has selected a compilation of recent media coverage related to the Commission from June and July. Please see the following pages for details.

Chalkbeat Indiana
Rate of Indiana high school students headed to college drops to 53%
By Helen Rummel
June 10, 2022

Rate of Indiana high school students headed to college drops to 53%

College-going rates among high schoolers continue to fall — and not just because of the pandemic, the Indiana Commission for Higher Education said.

The number of Indiana high school students who are heading to college has fallen to 53%, a significant drop after years of declining enrollment, according to [data](#) released by state officials in a Thursday morning meeting.

The Indiana Commission for Higher Education data is for the state's 2020 high school class, the first to graduate during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The data shows the college-going rate has dropped 6 percentage points over the last year — 12 percentage points lower than five years ago — with widening gaps for students of color and students from low-income families.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused drops in college enrollment, but the commission stressed that enrollment saw a decline even before then. The commission cited the perceived cost of higher education and low unemployment rates as possible factors in the continued decline.

"I want to make clear, though, that we cannot just blame this on the pandemic," Sean Tierney, ICHE associate commissioner for policy and research, said at the meeting.

Dhanfu Elston, chief of staff and senior vice president for strategy at Complete College America, said a competitive job market often can force students to reconsider higher education plans.

"Whenever a student can potentially get a job paying well beyond minimum wage, in some cases, double and triple that amount, it's going to make them rethink everything," Elston said.

In order for higher education institutions to see students return, they will have to emphasize the long-term benefits, Elston added.

"There's also this recognition that institutions don't always do well, especially for minoritized populations — under-resourced students, first-generation students, rural students, community colleges — in letting them know: This is what you can do. These are the careers. Here's the demand in our particular field."

While college enrollment has decreased across the nation, Indiana's college-going rates have fallen further than most states. Currently, the college-going rate nationwide is 63%, with Indiana trailing 10 percentage points behind.

The college-going rate among Black students in Indiana fell by 7 percentage points, meaning the group now has the lowest college-going rate by ethnicity at 43%. Hispanic and Latino students' college-going rate also dipped considerably, with a 6 percentage point decrease to 44%. The trends also fell more steeply among low-income students, where only about 1 in 3 high schoolers pursues higher education.

However, 81% of the 2020 class of 21st Century Scholars, a program that pays some or all of the tuition for lower-income students, are going to college.

The education attainment rates in Indiana – working-age adults who have completed some form of higher education – are also low when compared to national averages. The state has set a goal for 60% of the adult population to complete some form of higher education by the year 2025, but currently Indiana stands at just 48%.

The report revealed that in 2020, 61% of women went to college while only 46% of men did. This is the first time in recent years where less than 50% of men sought some form of higher education. In keeping with national trends, the gender gap in higher education in Indiana has widened over the last 10 years.

“Men, in many cases, are working to try to figure out how do they support their families,” Elston said. “In many cases, the opportunities and the disparities in wages between men and women allow for more men to see opportunities than for women.”

Indiana Commissioner for Higher Education Chris Lowery said the data was startling and pushed the board to consider the next steps to increase higher education enrollment.

“Indiana’s sharp one-year college-going decline is alarming, and we have to treat it as such,” Lowery said in a statement Thursday morning. “We know individual lives and the state’s economy depend on and thrive with an educated society,”

A study presented by the commission found that while the majority of Hoosiers still feel favorably toward higher education, there are negative views motivated by its perceived cost. Currently, higher education is most frequently associated with four-year bachelor’s degrees, leaving out associate degrees and trade school certificates.

The Chronicle of Higher Education
Why Fewer High-School Graduates Are Going to College
By Brianna Hatch
June 16, 2022

Nationwide, fewer high-school seniors are choosing to enroll in college immediately after graduation. In some states, not even half of high-school graduates are pursuing higher education, according to the latest data available.

For many states, this shrinking number comes as [another grim sign](#) for [college-enrollment prospects](#) and for future work forces — especially since students who do not enroll right away are less likely to earn college degrees at all.

Students “have more options than ever before.”

Recent state reports in [Indiana](#), [West Virginia](#), [Arizona](#), [Kansas](#), and [Tennessee](#) highlighted significant declines in college-going rates, which reflect the percentage of public high-school graduates who enroll in college within a year. The drop is even larger across the board for low-income students, for Black and Hispanic/Latino students, and for men.

Last week, the Indiana Commission for Higher Education revealed that the college-going rate for 2020 high-school graduates declined six percentage points from 2019 — the sharpest one-year decline in at least a generation. Just over half of the class enrolled in college immediately after graduation, and less than half of men did, a first for the state.

These steep drops were also seen in Tennessee, where a report released in May found the college-going rate had decreased by nine percentage points, to 53 percent, between 2019 and 2021.

While college-going rates have been steadily declining over the past decade, the trend during the pandemic has been “unprecedented,” according to the [National Student Clearinghouse Research Center](#). The national college-going rate for 2020 graduates dropped by four to 10 percentage points, with high-poverty secondary schools experiencing more severe declines, from 55 percent to 45 percent between 2019 and 2020.

The Chronicle talked to enrollment experts, state higher-education officials, and college counselors to figure out why this drop is happening and what can be done. They pointed to barriers like cost, lack of support in high school, mental-health concerns, competing options, and a shifting perspective on the benefits of college — all of which disproportionately affect disadvantaged students.

“Too many individuals are being left out of the opportunities that accrue with some training and education beyond high school,” said Chris Lowery, Indiana’s higher-education commissioner.

Winners and Losers

David Strauss, enrollment expert and college consultant at the Art & Science Group, said colleges are facing a “triple whammy” when it comes to demand for higher education.

“The first whammy is that the number of students graduating from high school is down and has been going down for quite some time in most areas of the country,” Strauss said. “The double whammy is college-going rates: If the percentages go down, then the pool shrinks even more. And the triple whammy is the things that have been knocked off track by the pandemic, or have caused people to think of alternatives because of the pandemic.”

Enrollment is becoming a game of winners and losers, Strauss said. [Demand for elite institutions](#) continues to grow, while many in-state public universities and community colleges are losing students.

In Indiana, nearly the same number of high-school graduates went to private or out-of-state colleges in 2020 as in 2019 — meaning the drop in college-going was absorbed almost entirely by in-state public and community colleges.

In Kansas, community colleges are also taking the largest hit. Chair Cheryl Harrison-Lee of the Kansas Board of Regents said that indicates a larger equity issue.

Most of the students that higher education “has traditionally not served — our first-gen, our students of color, our rural students — their point of entry is at community college,” Harrison-Lee said. “So, we must make that community college entry point easier, and an easier path for them to move to the four-year degree.”

College counselors who work closely with high-school students report that pandemic-related stress is playing a role, said David A. Hawkins, chief education and policy officer at the National Association for College Admission Counseling.

“The sources of stress undoubtedly stem from the traumatic effects of the global pandemic, ranging from social isolation to financial hardship to academic burnout and more,” Hawkins wrote in an email. “All of these factors have combined with a difficult economy to make the transition to college more difficult and less feasible for many students.”

Bryan Pisetsky, a college counselor at Marana High School, in Arizona, has noticed that not as many of the students in his school’s 500-person graduating class are choosing to enroll in college immediately. The first barrier is money, he said. But the main factor, he believes, is that students “have more options than ever before.” Pisetsky’s school district offers robust technical-education programs, some in partnership with the local community college, and they have been gaining popularity in recent years.

“Our students are graduating with certificates in dental hygiene, medical assistance, automotive, culinary — so they go right into the work force with a certificate in hand and make really good money. Most of them can make more than I do,” Pisetsky said. “So that’s more appealing to them than, you know, graduating with thousands of dollars of debt.”

But technical-education programs can have long wait lists. Kelly Pietkiewicz, scholarship coordinator for the Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee and a former college counselor, said some students in Tennessee have to wait a full year to get into the automotive program.

And by the time a spot becomes available, going back to college is no longer an option.

“If you graduate and start working and your family is relying on that income, but then you get a spot into school, it’s very hard for you,” Pietkiewicz said. “They’re going to stay at one level with just the high-school degree and not be able to move up because they can’t take a break in their life at that point.”

‘Competing Priorities’

In the backdrop of high-school students’ choices is a larger debate about whether formal education after secondary school is economically necessary. Research suggests that a college degree leaves people better off, but young people aren’t so sure.

In Indiana, Lowery sees this doubt playing out. “One of the perceptions that individuals get is that all students walk away from college with a \$150,000 debt and the inability to find a job,” he said.

While students’ having more options is not inherently a bad thing, experts say, equity gaps could expand if fewer disadvantaged students go to college.

The high-school-graduate population is [diversifying](#), including more Hispanic and Latino students, Strauss said. But these students also face the largest barriers to enrolling in college. “The college-going rates are dropping just because of who’s now in the pool,” Strauss said.

In Indiana, for example, the decline in college-going for Black students in the Class of 2020 was the largest across all racial and ethnic groups, with a seven-percentage-point decrease. For Hispanic/Latino students, there was a six-percentage-point decrease. Low-income students’ college-going rate declined by six percentage points, compared with a four-percentage-point decline for higher-income students.

Disadvantaged students are left even further behind when they do not have a support system to help them through the college-admissions process, Pietkiewicz said. In Tennessee, Pietkiewicz examined

federal data and found that nearly all of the state’s public high schools have a student-to-counselor ratio above 250 to one.

College counselors are taking on more responsibilities, like supporting students’ mental health, so they have even less time to focus on college admissions. And as both parents and students continue to face the complex hardships caused by the pandemic — financial, social, health-related, and more — college falls to the back burner for them, too, Pietkiewicz said.

“Kids just have competing priorities, and if they don’t have someone to guide them through that process, why are you going to take on what seems impossible when you don’t have the confidence to take it on because you don’t have the knowledge of the system?” she said.

The primary way to increase college-going, experts said, is with better financial support.

In Indiana, Lowery said, officials are trying to increase enrollment in the state’s [21st Century Scholars program](#), which offers free or reduced tuition to low-income students and guides them through the college-application process beginning in middle school. Eighty-one percent of students involved in the program immediately enroll in college, but only about half of eligible students sign up. Lowery is pushing for an autoenroll system.

In Kansas, Harrison-Lee is pushing for streamlined general-education requirements that will give students a “clear path” to community college, and then on to a four-year degree. The state is expanding college-advising programs in high schools to ease that transition. Kansas colleges will also shift away from using standardized-test scores in admission decisions, she said.

Colleges hoping to stay competitive in a market with shrinking demand need to develop a distinct experience they can offer to students, Strauss said. And they need to figure out how to support an increasingly diverse pool of high-school graduates.

This will probably not raise the overall rate of college-going, or allow every college to succeed, Strauss said. “But it gives the institutions that do it successfully a greater chance at carving out a larger piece of a shrinking pie.”

ABC Action News
How college is helping keep the American dream alive
By Diane Duenz
June 23, 2022

A recent Pew Research study found that high school graduates represented the largest drop from the middle class in the last 50 years. This becomes particularly challenging in low-income environments where it's more attractive for high school graduates to find jobs immediately rather than pay for college.

In Indiana, it's become a major initiative statewide. At a robotics camp in Columbus, 30 kids in a town of 50,000 residents are trying to be part of the solution. Karen Camargo’s son Tomas attended the camp over the last four summers. Now, he is a counselor.

Karen grew up in Argentina. Her now-husband is from Brazil. Her twins, Tomas, and Maria were born in Mexico. They all moved to Columbus, Indiana for a job for her husband and the educational possibilities for the kids.

“They got here, and they didn’t speak any English. The first day at the school, I cried and cried and cried for leaving them at the school,” Camargo said. “I knew I wanted the best for them. For me, it’s the priority in my life.”

Chris Lowery is Indiana’s new head of the state’s commission for higher education.

“There’s this dichotomy of what people are thinking about higher education and then a whole stream of social data. Outcomes are generally just better with postsecondary attainment,” Lowery said.

In the fall of 2011, an estimated 20 million American high school graduates enrolled in college. In the decade that’s followed, that number has fallen every single year. More children are getting through high school, earning a diploma, and not taking the next step. Meanwhile, data shows that between Karen’s generation and her children’s, the middle class in America has gotten smaller. The largest group falling out is high school graduates who don’t continue to college.

The focus in Indiana has been to look within communities for trusted advocates. In Columbus, that’s Mariana Petraglia. She is one of the state’s padres Estrella’s, or star parents. She guides Hispanic and Latino parents through an often-intimidating process.

“It’s super-hard if you do not speak the language and you just come here without knowing how to make friends, how to understand the school process,” Petraglia said.

Lowery adds, “Is it tempting for someone who’s in high school who can make 15-20 dollars an hour doing something to say, ‘Why do I need to college?’”

Whatever the barrier, Petraglia and individuals across Indiana work to clear it. Sometimes that’s informing parents. Sometimes that’s showing what’s possible to the children.

Which leads us to camp. The Latino Lego robotics camp takes place on a college campus. It teaches a lucrative skill. Petraglia champions it. Tomas volunteers at it, all while his path continues.

“In the fall, he’s going to high school. It’s a new chapter of his life. And we are very proud of him,” Camargo said. “I think the most joy for parents is seeing your kids happy and realizing the dreams of their life. I think this gives us a huge peace in our heart.”

Indiana Capital Chronicle
Lawmakers plan response to boost Indiana college-going rate
By Casey Smith
June 28, 2022

Indiana lawmakers plan to propose legislative action in response to a new report showing only half of Indiana’s 2020 high school graduates pursued some form of college education beyond high school.

The drop marked the state’s lowest college-going rate in recent history.

But despite a Republican supermajority in the state legislature, reaching a consensus could prove challenging.

Data released this month by the Indiana Commission of Higher Education (ICHE) indicated that just 53% of Hoosier graduates furthered their education with certificate training, two-year program or at a four-

year college. That's a 6% drop from the class of 2019 – which represents about 4,000 fewer graduates – and 12% lower than in 2015.

Although there was an incremental drop in the percentage of students going directly from high school to some form of college in recent years, 2020 saw the “sharpest year-over-year decline,” according to the commission's latest [College Readiness Report](#).

The decline was absorbed “almost entirely” by Indiana's public colleges, the report said. Nearly the same number of Indiana high schoolers went to private or out-of-state colleges as in the previous year.

State officials said the increased drop is likely due to the “impact of the pandemic,” but cited the perceived cost of higher education and low unemployment rates as other possible factors.

“Indiana's sharp one-year college-going decline is alarming, and we have to treat it as such,” Indiana Commissioner for Higher Education Chris Lowery said in a statement. “We know individual lives and the state's economy depend on and thrive with an educated society.”

The drop represents an ongoing challenge for the state, which was already behind on educational attainment goals. Republican Gov. Eric Holcomb previously charged the state to equip at least 60% of the adult population with some form of higher education by 2025. Currently, that number is just over 48%.

“Nationally, the college-going rate has been impacted by the pandemic and the report reveals that Indiana isn't immune,” Erin Murphy, a spokesperson for Holcomb, said in a statement to Indiana Capital Chronicle. “Governor Holcomb and the rest of the administration continue to make workforce preparedness and education a priority because success is necessary to keep our state moving forward.”

Legislators contemplate responses

Democratic Rep. Ed DeLaney of Indianapolis said helping more Hoosiers attend college will be “critical” to Indiana's skilled workforce and statewide economic success. He plans to propose “a radical increase” in state support to state colleges and universities under the condition that those institutions lower tuition prices, “not freeze them.”

“If we can get (lawmakers) on board with this plan, we're going to make it so that if you are capable of college, we're going to help you,” said DeLaney, a member of the House education committee. “I don't have any more important tasks than this one. There will be a proposal – you can take that to the bank.”

DeLaney said his “core problem” is not whether Republicans could agree to his proposal, but if they will give it time on the floor: “We'll get nowhere without an open debate, except just fool around on the edges.”

Republican Rep. Bob Behning of Indianapolis, who chairs the House Education Committee, said “there are multiple plans” being discussed by the majority caucus.

While he said all ideas “should be considered,” Behning was hesitant to support DeLaney's tuition plan. Even if college rates are “relatively inexpensive,” he said students won't be driven to attend if they don't see any value in doing so.

“We want to make sure that whatever we do, we’re actually creating an atmosphere that Hoosiers see value in post secondary education and will pursue it to improve their earnings potential over time. We don’t just want to put money into something,” Behning said. “We have to convince policymakers that there’s a return on investment for the state, as well as students. I think that’s one of the struggles that some people see.”

Behning suggested “putting pressure” on higher education institutions to cut costs, rather than “dumping more money” into a system that he said could “squeeze better efficiencies.”

Equity gaps additionally widened for students of color and students from low-income families. Black students saw the largest decline in college-growing rates – a 7% decrease – before and during the pandemic compared to all other races and ethnicities followed by Hispanic and Latino students.

The report further indicated the first time in recent history that Indiana’s male college-going rate has dipped below half, recording at 46%. Women made up most college enrollees from the class of 2020 at 61%, according to the report.

Indiana’s data release comes on the heels of other states recording similar college-goer declines. In Tennessee, the college-going rate has trended down over the past five years, with the state seeing its sharpest drop to 52.8% for the class of 2021. In West Virginia, where the latest data shows college-going rates dropped to 46% for the class of 2020, state leaders say students have likely been hesitant to invest in an exclusively remote college experience, spurred by the pandemic.

Nationwide, enrollment across all sectors of higher education also continues to decline, according to new data from the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. First-time freshman enrollment is a bright spot, however, up by 4.2% compared to last spring.

Push to require FAFSA

To get more Hoosiers to college, the higher education commission recommended automatic enrollment for all eligible students into the 21st Century Scholars program, which provides up to four years of undergraduate tuition to income-eligible students at certain Indiana colleges or universities.

Currently, fewer than half of eligible students enroll in the program, despite its success – more than 80% of those who complete the program go to college.

Other recommendations included increasing funding for state financial aid programs and requiring all high school seniors file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to qualify for financial aid. The FAFSA mandate has been proposed at the Indiana Statehouse the last several years but failed again this past legislative session. Lawmakers scaled back the measure to only require that school officials provide high school seniors and their parents with more information about the FAFSA.

Only 50% of Indiana’s 2022 high school graduates completed a FAFSA form as of June 17, according to the U.S. Department of Education. Fewer than 60% of the state’s graduates completed a form in 2021.

Republican Sen. Jean Leising of Oldenburg, who sponsored three unsuccessful bills seeking to make FAFSA a requirement in Indiana, said that left at least \$65 million in potential federal aid unclaimed by Hoosier students.

“When you say the word mandate, everybody gets excited,” she said, referring to pushback from some members in her own caucus. “I think we need to make lemonade out of lemons. And right now, we’re just looking at lemons, because we’re not doing a good enough job.”

Similar measures have been adopted in Louisiana, Texas and Illinois. Leising said those laws have resulted in significant increases in FAFSA participation rates.

Behning said he would support another effort to mandate the FAFSA for Hoosier students – in addition to other ICHE recommendations – maintaining that doing so could make the benefits of postsecondary education “more attractive” to students.

DeLaney said he also supports many of the ICHE’s ideas, but cautioned that they could be used “as a distraction from the main point, which is making college more accessible.”

“We did very little in this last session. It was embarrassing how much of our time was spent fooling around,” he said. “I think we need to get serious, and I don’t think the majority party is serious at all. They see a problem, they address it in a way that generally doesn’t make much difference. I’m hoping they’ll join with me on these ideas so we can actually do something.”

Institute for Higher Education Policy
“It’s One Thing to Have Data. It’s Another to Have Data that Sparks Focused Action and Tangible Change to Improve Lives.”*

June 29, 2022

WASHINGTON, DC (June 29, 2022) – “Use data to create positive change.” “Collaborate with real data.” “Data that leads to action.” “Make data meaningful.” “Reduce riskiness for students.” “Fueling a movement!” These were some of the phrases data experts and advocates across the country shared when a group gathered earlier this month to launch an effort to leverage the best available postsecondary data in order to yield the best possible results for students, their families and communities, postsecondary institutions, our nation’s workforce, and our country as a whole.

Called the Postsecondary Value Data Collaborative (or “VDC”), the group includes participants from state agencies in Arkansas, Indiana, and Kentucky, who will work alongside experts at the Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP) to implement a cutting-edge framework to understand current higher education and workforce outcomes and better inform policymaking within each state. The Coleridge Initiative, which runs the Administrative Data Research Facility (ADRF), will provide the data infrastructure for the group, while Insight Policy Research (Westat Insight) will serve as the VDC’s analytic lead.

The state teams’ work and the research agenda will be supported by the Equitable Value Advisory Board, a group of postsecondary researchers, practitioners, and other experts who are at the forefront of the burgeoning equitable value movement. David Troutman, Chief Data Officer and Associate Vice Chancellor of Institutional Research and Analysis at the University of Texas System (UT System), will serve as the VDC’s inaugural Equitable Value Fellow to champion this work based on his experience leading similar efforts in the UT System. Based on their findings over the next seven months, participants in this voluntary effort may extend or refine the Postsecondary Value Framework, an evidence-based, consensus-driven measurement approach released last year with state- and credential specific thresholds that contextualize earnings outcomes while appropriately incorporating student investment.

“We are energized by the dedication and commitment of our state partners in Arkansas, Indiana, and Kentucky, and thrilled by their shared enthusiasm for using reliable data to make our nation’s system of postsecondary education the strongest and most equitable it can be,” shared Mamie Voight, IHEP’s president and CEO. “We know postsecondary education has the power to spur economic and social mobility for all students, but especially Black, Hispanic and/or Latinx, Indigenous, underrepresented Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) students, students from low-income backgrounds, and women. Together, VDC participants are galvanizing the Equitable Value Movement, a nationwide endeavor to ensure that postsecondary education lives up to its potential to deliver critical economic and non-economic benefits to individual students and their families, bolster our workforce, strengthen our communities, and build a just and fair future for all of us.”

“Arkansas is proud to be a member of the Postsecondary Value Data Collaborative. This collaborative will strengthen our existing strategic initiatives, the accuracy of those initiatives, and our ability to invalidate misconceptions about the value of higher education in Arkansas,” said Mason Campbell, Assistant Director for Policy and Student Success, Arkansas Division of Higher Education. “Our desired impact on underserved populations in Arkansas hinges on our ability to clearly identify challenges and reexamine policy and practice to promote change; the VDC will unquestionably enhance our success. We are excited to share the work we already have in motion to provide equitable access to quality programming that meets workforce demands and strengthens the economic value of all levels of credentialing across the state. It is a privilege to work alongside Indiana, Kentucky, IHEP, and The Coleridge Initiative to eliminate completion gaps and advance outcomes across the nation.”

“In Indiana, we know the importance of postsecondary education and the need to better understand college outcomes to ensure our students are served equitably,” said Sean Tierney, Associate Commissioner and Chief Economist, Indiana Commission for Higher Education. “The VDC will help us measure and monitor our data with these goals in mind, and guide us to drive meaningful change for the students in our state and for generations to come.”

“Rising skepticism about the value of higher education is occurring at exactly the wrong moment, when automation is eliminating rote jobs and the demand for knowledge workers is at an all-time high,” said Dr. Aaron Thompson, president of the Council on Postsecondary Education in Kentucky. “Kentucky is excited to participate in this effort to gain a deeper understanding of how college credentials affect future employment and earnings, and to translate these data into messages that will resonate with low-income and minoritized Kentuckians, especially.”

Over the past several years, the field of postsecondary education has shifted from a focus on college completion to a focus on completion and value. Through this shift, experts have grappled with ways to measure students’ return on investment, often in the context of a particular institution and a particular program. The VDC builds on these efforts by centering equity within its measurement framework, accounting for historical inequities in access to postsecondary education, the role of labor market discrimination in disparate outcomes, and the full cost to students of their postsecondary education. In 2021, the University of Texas (UT) System modeled this approach using data from the state and system. States participating in the VDC will build upon this foundational analysis, implement the approach with their state data to refine understanding in their context, and use the findings to inform student-centered improvements to postsecondary policy and practice.

IndyStar
Indiana's higher education commissioner on what people get wrong about college
By Arika Herron
July 11, 2022

In March, Chris Lowery was named Indiana's eighth commissioner for the Indiana Commission for Higher Education. The coordinating agency works closely with the state's public and independent colleges to define the educational missions, promote policies, review programs and administer the state's financial aid.

After two decades in the private industry and six years with Ivy Tech, the state's community college system, Lowery entered his post at one of the most difficult times in the commission's being. Indiana just reported the most dramatic drop in its college-going rate, while the state's economic needs continue to shift toward education beyond high school.

Lowery recently sat down with IndyStar to talk about his own educational experiences, the challenges ahead and what people get wrong about higher education.

IndyStar: So, you're from Indiana, correct?

Chris Lowery: I was born and raised in Anderson and went to then-Highland High School.

IndyStar: And then you went to IU. What did you study?

Lowery: Public affairs, which was interesting at the time. The school, which is now this massive, nationally-ranked O'Neill School of Environmental and Public Affairs, was very new at the time. I was a first-generation college student. My father was a blue-collar worker at General Motors. My mother worked part-time at different times but mostly ran our home. I remember going to IU with my and driving around, we saw the music school, saw the business school saw this, that and the other and they said 'so, where's this school of yours?' And it was actually in an old building that, I think, at one point had been either a hotel or an apartment tower. They were wholly unimpressed, at the time. They said, 'so, this is what you're going to do with your life?' And I said yeah, and they somehow trusted me.

Chris Lowery, Indiana's new Commissioner for Higher Education is photographed at the Commission's office on Wednesday, July 6, 2022, at the Indiana Commission for Higher Education in Indianapolis.

IndyStar: When you were 17 and choosing to go into public affairs, what did you envision (for your future)? Was it this?

Lowery: I'm not sure, today, if I did envision it.

My first job, when I was 12, was working on a farm because I wanted a Schwinn bicycle like my buddies. My parents told me I could have it, all I had to do was buy it.

And then when I got into high school and was old enough to drive, I started working at a local pharmacy, stocking shelves, delivering, working at the cash register, etc. One of the owner's wife was involved in politics. She said 'hey, would you like to pass out these leaflets door-to-door and would you like to come to an event?' I was starting to get a little bit of a taste and going, 'wow, it's interesting getting to hear these policymakers speak on issues that I've started to read about,' and then decided, well, maybe that's what I should pursue.

After graduating, I went to D.C. and worked for about a year for then-Senator Dan Quayle. I was recruited back here to work for then-Gov. (Robert) Orr in his second term. I spent most of that time – I was there almost three years – focusing on education reform of K-12.

IndyStar: Your path to higher education commissioner was not a straight line. You spent time in politics and private industry. Was this always an interest of yours?

Lowery: That (experience) more than whetted my appetite. It was really significant, one of the first K-12 reform efforts that took place in the United States. And then-Gov. Orr had a real vision for what it could be, you know, and the importance in terms of economic and social prosperity.

And then, where I've been fortunate is that, over the ensuing years, including while at Hillenbrand and Batesville Casket, education just kind of continued to weave in and out of my life. During the time, as we had children, it was a nice way for me, through our local schools, to start becoming involved. I served on a school improvement committee when our kids were really, really young and then that led to going on the local school board, which really fed my appetite. I started to push for some things that really not many, if any, school corporations were doing. I became the president of the school board. And it was just a great spot that I got to feed my interest but also it was really something I could do for, through and with the community.

IndyStar: So you still split your time between Batesville and Indianapolis?

Lowery: I do. I was doing that while with Ivy Tech. We've lived in Batesville now 29 years. That's home base. And then for the better part of six years now I've maintained an apartment here. So through the week, I spend probably on average three nights a week here.

IndyStar: Your first few months on the job have been busy. What's your schedule like?

Lowery: I think when I started the day, my calendar was booked from 7 a.m. through 7:30 p.m. And I added on a call and then added on one more call so it was probably 9 p.m. or so. For me, it's really personal and I never expect anyone else to do that. It's just a place, I think, in life where I can do that. It just fits my life and for many years I've been able to find great satisfaction in the work I've been allowed to do, whether it was at Hillenbrand, whether it was at Ivy Tech and is the case here.

IndyStar: If you ever find yourself with free time, how do you like to spend it?

Lowery: I love to read. But I also run, I bike and I do yoga twice a day – right when I get up and shortly before I go to bed, about 20 minutes each. Credit to Jerilyn, my wife. She helped me really get into it, probably going on three years ago now.

And then spending time with our family. My son is in Chicago, but we try to see him, and then our daughter and son-in-law and their little girl now live in Batesville, which we're pinching ourselves.

IndyStar: In your time at Ivy Tech, you focused on adult learners and non-traditional students. How do you view the traditional, four-year college experience?

Lowery: The way I would characterize it is I think we have got to have an all-of-the-above approach. For years, I've heard about the pendulum. You know, people will say, 'the pendulum swung to four-year

paths only for 20 years or something like that. And then the pendulum swung over this way to short-term credentials, without regard maybe to the four-year and beyond pathways. I had heard this so many times over the years, and I thought to myself, 'that's not actually how a pendulum works.'

And as we've looked at, for example, this latest readiness report showing that only 53% of high school students are going to do something and that's a certificate, a four-year, an associate degree... all of the above. When I look at that, my thought is, 'we're not doing enough of all of the above.'

The economy needs more people with bachelor's degrees and higher. And the economy needs more people with certain certifications in manufacturing and IT and healthcare and logistics and construction, and so forth. We've got to have all of those.

IndyStar: You're creating two new positions at ICHE. What are they?

Lowery: Yes, the associate commissioner for K-12 strategy and associate commissioner for adult strategy.

We pulled funding that wasn't being utilized elsewhere, positions that we hadn't backfilled, and so forth. You know, going back to when I talked with the search committee about this opportunity when I had been asked to apply for it, there were key things that I wanted to share with them that I thought we needed to be addressing and looking at.

One was this value proposition. Do people value higher education and training beyond a high school diploma? Too many people don't. And there are absolutely clear economic and social reasons to value it.

Then, if we think about Indiana's talent pool, and what we need to make all of this run, we've got to do a much better job of getting students to matriculate from high school to something, be it four-year, certificate, associate degree... something. And we've got to focus on adults. We've got almost 2 million working-age adults with nothing beyond a high school diploma. They have great value, but they don't have necessarily the skills, training, credentials that send that signal to the marketplace to prosper the way perhaps they could.

And the third one is really taking a hard look at the graduating college and university students and saying, 'can we keep more of them here?'

IndyStar: What's one misconception about higher education that you'd like to dispel?

Lowery: The misperception of the value of higher education. I use that word because I think there's several components to it that make up value. Cost is not the same as value. Quality is not the same as value. But all of those things are part and parcel to it.

The fact of the matter is, in economic terms and social terms and really understanding what the true costs are, the outcomes are good. This is really about individuals and their loved ones, you know, being able to thrive economically and socially, to have economic and social mobility.

It's not just something that we feel is the truth, or we think, or we would like to be the case. It's absolutely the reality that the value of training and education beyond a high school diploma is there.

Tribune-Star
'Male college crisis': Male high school grads going to college at much lower rates
By Sue Loughlin
July 22, 2022

Nationally, it's being described as a "male college crisis," and Indiana is not immune to the trend. Male high school graduates are going to college at much lower rates than women, and that gap continues to widen.

Indiana higher education officials describe it as "a concerning gap ... This is the first time in recent history the male college-going rate has dropped to below half (46%)," in reference to the high school graduating class of 2020.

In contrast, the college going rate for Hoosier women in 2020 was 61%.

The report focused on the overall decline in college attendance, with just 53% of Indiana high school graduates going to college in 2020, a one-year decline described as "alarming" by Chris Lowery, Indiana's new commissioner for higher education.

The gender gap, one component of the report, "has caught the attention of a lot of people," Lowery said in an interview.

The commission is researching the data and possible reasons why fewer males are choosing college, defined as the full range of credentials beyond high school, including credentials of less than one year up through a four-year degree.

Possible reasons include affordability issues and the perception it's too expensive, Lowery said. Some may not see the value of college or question if it has the career relevance it did in the past.

But when looking at economic data, including unemployment, labor participation and wages, "Quantitatively, it does pay off," he said.

"There are clear economic benefits that come with greater levels of education. People with a bachelor's degree or higher are more likely to be employed and participating in the workforce, and they have significantly higher wages and a greater overall net worth," Lowery has stated.

The issue is important both for the individuals affected, the state and the economy. Among those who don't pursue post-secondary education, "The prospects for that individual, for lifelong economic and social mobility, become more limited," Lowery said.

It doesn't mean someone can't be successful, he said, "but statistically, prospects for social and economic mobility lessens," he said.

The decline in male college participation is also important to the Indiana economy and the ability of employers to have the talent they need with a tight labor market. "Indiana has a booming economy," Lowery said, but the decline in male post-secondary participation exacerbates the challenges and availability of that talent pool.

Among the organizations taking notice is the Indiana Chamber of Commerce.

Indiana's overall decline in college participation, and among Hoosier males in particular, "is cause for serious concern in an economy that strongly favors workers with education and training beyond high school," said Jason Bearce, the state chamber's vice president for education and workforce development.

Companies today are looking closely at state- and metro-area education levels when deciding where to relocate or expand their businesses, "so we absolutely have to turn these numbers around for Indiana to remain competitive," Bearce said.

Searching for answers

Rachel Meyer, a Commission regional outreach coordinator for Indiana's West region, assists high school students in preparing for college, including efforts to secure financial aid.

She has spoken with male high school students who don't plan to attend college. "I love my region students. They are brutally honest, which I love," she said. "They give a lot of good feedback." Based on her discussions, she believes a major reason is that those students aren't sure what they want to do after high school and are reluctant to enter college without having a "final destination" in mind in terms of a career.

The young men she talks to also have concerns about the perceived expensiveness of college. She'll ask them to take a guess at how much tuition costs at Indiana's public colleges, and someone might throw out \$200,000 for one year.

She'll point out that the most expensive state public college tuition is a little over \$10,000 per year.

Other factors also come into play. Many students are in foster care, or they may be couch surfing or homeless. Their basic human needs are not being met, "so it doesn't leave a lot of room for them to plan or dream when really, they just want to know if they're going to have dinner tonight," a place to sleep or an opportunity to shower, Meyer said.

The challenge becomes, "How do we give them aspirations of thinking about the future when the present is so urgent and they have a lot on their mind, a lot on their heart," Meyer said.

For those who opted not to pursue post-secondary, she's aware of many going into the military or into the trades and they are able to have "pretty lucrative careers."

The commission continues to research why young males aren't going to college and what they are doing, instead.

Other perspectives

In a November 2021 article for Inside Higher Education, Angela Baldasare wrote, "While the exact causes of this trend line are difficult to pin down, the pressures on men to work and provide are commonly cited, as are campus climates and services not tailored to men, increased uncertainty during the pandemic, negative impacts of the pandemic on career choices, not wanting to take classes online and the lack of internet access and/or technology."

Insight into Diversity, in a March 16 online article, suggests the pandemic appears to have worsened the disparity, especially for men of color and those from under-served backgrounds in both urban and rural areas.

“Many experts agree that better support must be provided for male students starting in early childhood,” the article states. “Some theories suggest the decline in underrepresented men begins in K-12 education, as boys overall are more likely to be held back, drop out, and struggle with reading skills. By high school, young men across demographic groups tend to earn lower GPAs than young women in English, math, social sciences, and science, according to research by ACT Inc.”

Sylvester Edwards, a Terre Haute community leader and president of the Greater Terre Haute Branch of the NAACP, suggests that young people, including males, are electing not to attend college because they don’t see a future. “Therefore, why go to college?”

He added, “I think the spirit of the times is very bleak as far as what our young people are looking at and seeing.”

From climate change, to U.S. political division, to military conflicts overseas, young people view life as “bleak to a point where they have given up,” he said. “I don’t know why there is such a pessimistic attitude with young people. Maybe it’s because we haven’t given them a reason to be optimistic.”

Tom Steiger, Indiana State University professor of sociology, suggests that more young men are finding good-paying jobs in the skilled trades and becoming plumbers, electricians, carpenters, etc.

“The harbinger of the growing gender gap was beginning years ago, but really began to express itself with the millennial generation,” he said. More young men opted for skilled trades.

Obama-era policies emphasized training in the trades, as did the Trump administration, Steiger said. Add in restructured immigration policies, and “men are just responding to the market and a culture that defines those occupations as for men.”

What can be done?

Lowery said the response must involve policies, programs and partnerships.

One policy the commission suggests is automatically enrolling all eligible students into the 21st Century Scholars program; currently, fewer than half of eligible students enroll in the program. Eighty-one percent of Scholars go to college.

In terms of programs, the commission recommends expanding programs already underway, such as the Indiana College Core, a 30-credit-hour block of general education credit that transfers among Indiana’s public institutions.

High school students who earn the Indiana College Core enroll in a series of dual credit courses, which allows them to earn high school and college credit at the same time.

About 90% percent of students who earned the Indiana College Core this past year went on to the next step, Lowery said. “That’s amazing.”

Partnerships also are critical, he said. Young people, or even older students, want to hear from a trusted messenger, “and that is not necessarily government.”

Partnerships may involve nonprofits such as Boys and Girls Clubs; faith-based organizations; and employers.

As an example of partnerships, employers could host FAFSA completion nights for employees with high-school age children or they could conduct college fairs so students could learn about career options.

Bearce agreed that partnerships are key, particularly those that provide greater opportunities for students to engage in meaningful work-and-learn experiences, including internships and apprenticeships, before graduating high school. “Many male students who think it’s a choice between working or more school are going to choose a paycheck, so we have to give them relevant options to do both at the same time,” Bearce said. “Employers today are so desperate for talent that they may settle for lower-skilled workers, but they’ll be much more selective as the labor market shifts.”