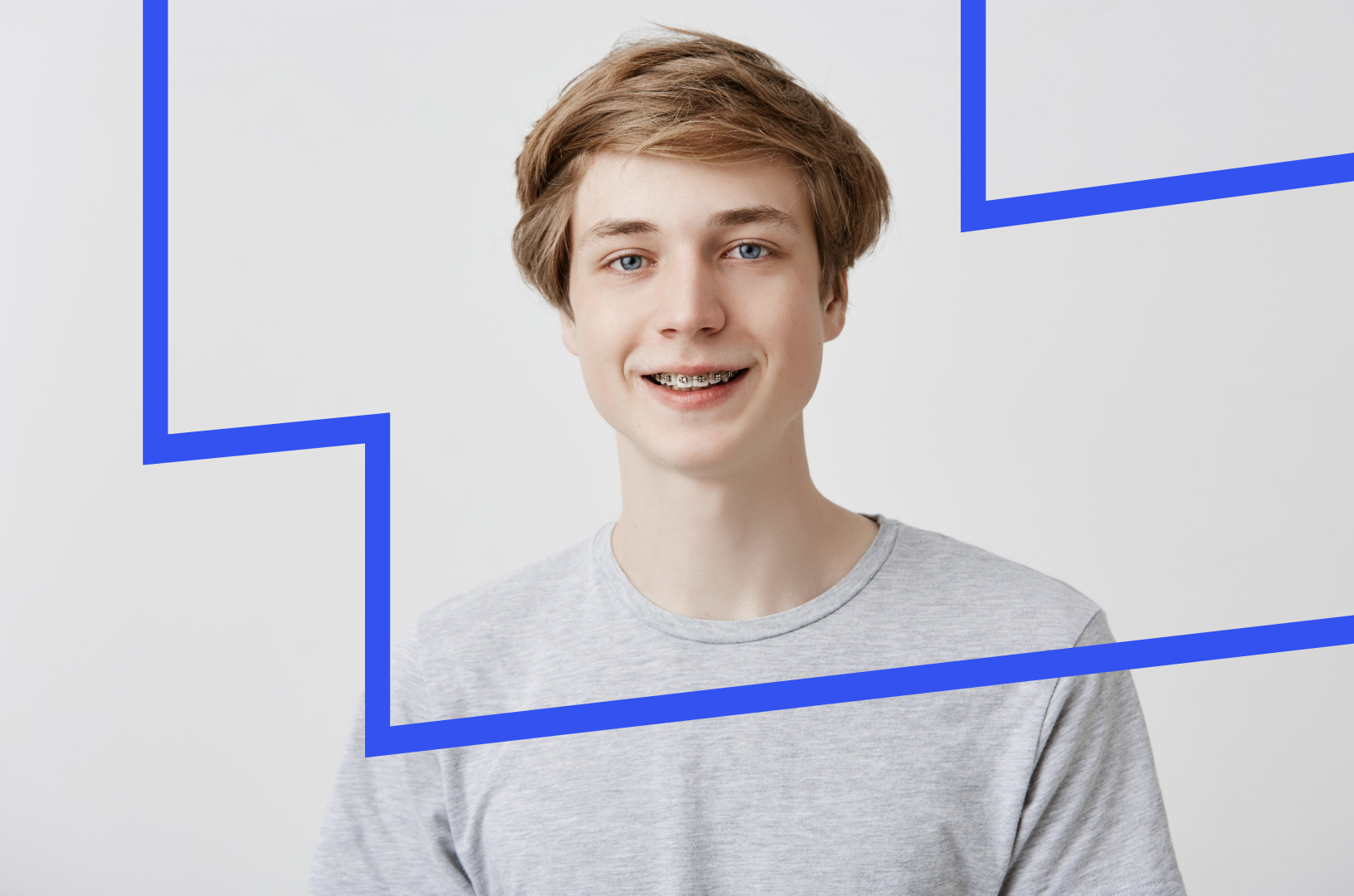# Indy Achieves

## Improving access and creating pathways to college completion for all Marion County residents

Recommendations of the Indianapolis Promise Task Force for Mayor Joe Hogsett

May 2018

THE CITY OF
**INDIANAPOLIS**
MAYOR JOE HOGSETT
EST. 1821

By 2020, 62% of jobs in Indiana will require some form of postsecondary credential, yet just 42% of Marion County residents currently have the requisite high-quality credentials.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

According to the Georgetown Public Policy Institute, 62% of jobs in Indiana will require some form of postsecondary credential by the year 2020, yet just 42% of Indianapolis residents currently have the requisite high-quality credentials. The misalignment between qualifications needed for available jobs and the pool of qualified employees is being driven by too few students enrolling at postsecondary institutions, too few students completing postsecondary credentials, and too few adults skilling up and completing industry-recognized certifications or traditional degrees. Furthermore, Indianapolis has ranked among the worst of large cities in the nation on measures of social mobility. In fact, children who grow up in Indianapolis earn 12.1% less than the national average.

Indy Achieves is Mayor Joe Hogsett's response to Indianapolis' rapidly changing labor market by ensuring that every Indianapolis resident has the ability to pursue and complete a postsecondary credential or degree program, and empowering residents to pursue careers that put them on a pathway to the middle class.

To completely close the skills gap in Indianapolis, our city would need an additional 215,000 adults with a job-ready credential. Indy Achieves is committed to increasing the proportion of Indianapolis adults with high-quality postsecondary credentials to 65% of residents by 2027, and to eliminating attainment gaps that currently exist for minority residents.

**Leveraging Indianapolis' powerful network of stakeholders and experts, Indy Achieves will focus on two key ways to increase the proportion of adults with the appropriate credentials: increasing the number of K-12 students who pursue and complete postsecondary credentials, and increasing the educational attainment level of the existing adult population, all the while ensuring more intentional pathways into high-demand careers.**

In order for Indianapolis to continue the growth it has experienced over the last three decades, it is imperative there is a sufficient supply of talent to meet the demand. Indy Achieves will ensure that every resident of Indianapolis understands they have a role to play in that growth. It is more than a guarantee that every student in Indianapolis can pursue a postsecondary credential. Indy Achieves is a commitment to remove barriers and promises a pathway to the middle class, ensuring the growth experienced in Indianapolis benefits all residents.

# SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

## 1 Program Administration

**The mission of Indy Achieves is to ensure Indianapolis has the requisite talent supply to support the available local careers by piloting, evaluating, and scaling proven practices that improve postsecondary access for Marion County youth and adults, improve postsecondary completion for all students enrolled at IUPUI and Ivy Tech Community College Indianapolis, and improve alignment and placement in careers with purpose and value.**

Indianapolis has an array of existing organizations and initiatives working to improve educational attainment, including college access to workforce alignment. Indy Achieves – based on the highly-successful work of "Tennessee Achieves" – does not duplicate these ongoing efforts, but aligns and complements them with investments to spur increased college enrollment and completion, and leverages the unique capacities of the Mayor's Office to bring awareness and gain buy-in from partners.

## 2 Postsecondary Access

In order to improve postsecondary access for traditional K-12 students, Indy Achieves will focus on two initiatives: increasing student access to financial aid, and providing a student experience that leads to an understanding of the education options available.

Indy Achieves will provide resources and assistance to school counselors across all Marion County school districts to increase enrollment of eligible 21st Century Scholars, monitor 21st Century Scholars' progress through Scholar Track steps, increase the number of students completing their FAFSA application on time, and increase the number of students applying for Higher Education Awards. In addition to programmatic support, Indy Achieves will act as the fiscal steward for City funds supporting a last-dollar "promise" scholarship for Marion County 21st Century Scholars and Higher Education Award recipients attending Ivy Tech, as well as 21st Century Scholars attending IUPUI, covering all unmet financial need for tuition, fees, books and supplies.

To ensure the student experience, Indy Achieves will utilize behavioral nudges that encourage students to remain eligible for their 21st Century Scholarship and orchestrate a mentorship program that will coach them through key college decisions during their senior year of high school and support their transition through their first semester of college at IUPUI or Ivy Tech.

For adult learners, Indy Achieves will work with community organizations, United Way of Central Indiana, Commission for Higher Education, and EmployIndy to develop an outreach plan to identify potential adult students and support their Workforce Ready and Adult Student Grant applications.

In addition, Indy Achieves will work with IUPUI and Ivy Tech to offer

a structured schedule for adult learners to reduce the barrier that unpredictable scheduling poses to adult learners' ability to enroll in postsecondary institutions.

## 3 Postsecondary Retention and Completion

In addition to maintaining a satisfactory GPA, Indy Achieves Scholarship recipients will enroll in 30 credits each academic year, complete the college-level math and English requirements within the first academic year, and declare a program of study or major within the first academic year.

**To ensure greater likelihood of student success, retention and completion, all Indy Achieves Scholarship recipients will adhere to a set of eligibility requirements that are based on proven college completion strategies.**

To increase retention and completion rates at Ivy Tech, all remedial education for Indy Achieves Scholarship recipients deemed to be academically underprepared will be delivered through corequisite models rather than traditional remedial sequences.

Indy Achieves will work with Ivy Tech and IUPUI to support advising efforts, using innovative technology so that students can meet critical benchmarks of academic progress and requirements for ongoing financial aid.

City resources, complemented by philanthropic support over time, will support a completion grant program available to any Indianapolis resident who is a student at Ivy Tech or IUPUI. Indy Achieves

Completion Grants will be awarded with preference for those students who have completed 75% of their program, have a history of good academic standing, are recipients of state or federal aid, and are pursuing high-demand career paths.



## 4 Placement in High-Demand Careers

Thanks to the robust efforts of Ascend and EmployIndy, the infrastructure is in place to connect students into existing employer networks for internships and early-in career opportunities. Indy Achieves will add to that effort by ensuring that the changes on the demand side of the labor market are realized in real time and adjustments are made to the supply side so that the two are aligned.

In order to align the labor market, Indy Achieves will operationalize a model of the Indianapolis labor demand and supply that shows where misalignment currently exists, and evolves as the labor market changes over time.

This model will be used in three ways:

> First, it will inform students of employment prospects associated with specific major pathways and align career advising at Ivy Tech and IUPUI to match those prospects.
>
> Second, those credentials and degrees highest in demand will receive preference for completion grants.
>
> Finally, this analysis will inform Indianapolis which high-quality credentials are being created within and near Indianapolis and the types of new employers we should encourage to relocate here because their labor force is aligned to the existing supply.

To ensure students can make informed career choices based on the results of the labor supply and demand analysis, Indy Achieves will seek philanthropic support to implement a predictive analytic student support system across both IUPUI and Ivy Tech, enabling improved advising and student pathway development.

Then, based on the career path chosen, Indy Achieves will work with EmployIndy and Ascend to identify high-quality internships and early-in career job opportunities within Indianapolis.

# INTRODUCTION

On April 19, 2017, in his second State of the City Address, Mayor Joe Hogsett set Indianapolis on a pathway of hope with the directive to close the educational attainment gaps in our city and ensure that the rising tide of economic success lifts all Indianapolis residents. Consistent with that commitment, Mayor Hogsett signed Executive Order No. 1, 2017 the very same day, which launched the Indianapolis Promise initiative as the vehicle for such change in Indianapolis.

[1] See Appendix A - Mayor Joseph H. Hogsett, State of the City Address, April 19, 2017.
[2] See Appendix B - Mayor Joseph H. Hogsett, Executive Order No. 1, 2017.

Executive Order No. 1 set forth three specific directives:

1. The Mayor hereby orders the Office of Education Innovation to create and support the Indianapolis Promise initiative whose mission shall be to create program recommendations and solicit community feedback in order to provide access to quality postsecondary credentials for every child in Indianapolis that will prepare them for postsecondary success and a path toward a sustainable career.

2. The Mayor shall appoint members to the Indianapolis Promise initiative from City-County government, representatives of postsecondary educational partners, local and national nonprofit and philanthropic organizations, secondary education leaders and other subject matter experts and member of the community at his discretion.

3. The Indianapolis Promise initiative shall finalize its work and report its findings and recommendations to the Mayor no later than December 2017.

This report is a set of recommendations developed by the Indianapolis Promise Task Force (hence forth known as "the Task Force"), that fulfills the three directives set forth in Executive Order No. 1, 2017, and sets forth a path to break the cycles of generational poverty that have gripped our city by ensuring that every Indianapolis resident has access to educational opportunities that will allow our city to be inclusive in its growth, and economically competitive on a global scale, for decades to come.

# OVERVIEW

Over the last two decades the Indianapolis labor market has undergone a dramatic shift away from career-oriented, living wage jobs[3] to low-wage service and logistics jobs. As these career-oriented jobs become a smaller portion of the overall economy, the demand for employees with at least a postsecondary credential have continued to rise, leading to a loss in job opportunities for individuals without the requisite education and training.

**Indianapolis has consistently ranked among the worst large cities in the nation on measures of social mobility. In at least one study of the 100 largest counties in the country, Marion County ranked 95th in upward mobility.**

Not only have the employment opportunities for career-oriented jobs become a smaller portion of the labor market, but high-skill[4] good jobs' share of the labor market continues to rise. By 2020, 62% of jobs in Indiana will require some form of postsecondary credential, yet just 42% of Indianapolis residents have the requisite high-quality credentials. This has resulted in a steadily increasing employment rate for Indianapolis residents with a bachelor's degree

[3] A good job is defined as a job that pays an annual salary of $37,000, full health care benefits, and is accessible to individuals with less than a bachelor's degree.

or higher, and a steadily decreasing employment rate for Indianapolis residents with high school diploma or less.

Because of higher demand in the high-skill employment market, the wages of a bachelor's degree recipients have risen to 168% of the wages of a high school graduate. This means that more and more frequently, an Indianapolis resident's pathway to the middle class runs through a postsecondary credential program. In fact, Indianapolis has consistently ranked among the worst large cities in the nation on measures of social mobility.

**Employment Change by Educational Attainment**



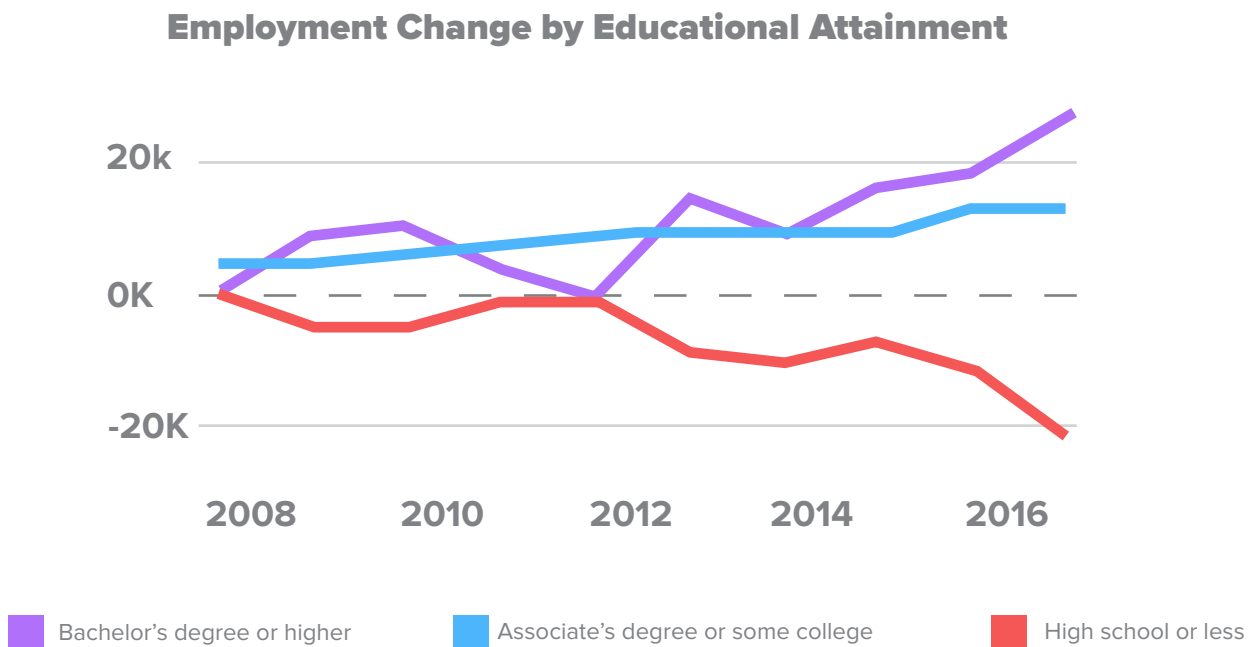Bachelor's degree or higher ▪ Associate's degree or some college ▪ High school or less

Figure 1. Marion County Residents with a Bachelor's degree have gained 27,000 jobs since 2007. Those with a high school diplomas or less have lost 5,000 jobs since 2007.

[4] A high-skill good job is defined as a job that pays an annual salary of $37,000, full health care benefits, and is accessible to individuals with a bachelor's degree or higher.

In Indianapolis, a child born into a family in the bottom 20% of earners is likely to have a family income of $23,000 by the age of 30. There is less than a 5% chance that child will have achieved the "American Dream" by moving from the bottom income distribution to the top. This falls below the national average of 7.5% and the average of our peer cities of 7.2% of achieving the "American Dream". Put another way, these studies indicate that children who grow up in Indianapolis earn 12.1% less than the national average .

## In Indianapolis, there is less than a 5% chance that a child born into poverty will achieve the "American Dream."

One of the surest ways of increasing a child's likelihood of obtaining a post-secondary degree is to increase the wages of their parents. A program designed to increase the educational attainment level of Indianapolis adults and Indianapolis children not only increases the social mobility of future generations of Indianapolis residents, it also increases the social mobility of today's Indianapolis residents.

In 2016, approximately 32% of Indianapolis residents had a bachelor's degree, and an additional 11% had an Associate's degree or industry recognized credential. Unfortunately, this means that nearly two thirds of Indianapolis residents have an extremely limited pathway to the middle class.

## Educational Attainment in Marion County 2016



Figure 2. Indianapolis needs an additional 215,000 adults with the requisite credentials by 2020 to fill the anticipated jobs in Marion County.

This burden is disproportionately borne by Black and Hispanic residents in Indianapolis. While 38% of white residents have a bachelor's degree or higher, only 16% of Black residents and 14% of Hispanic residents have a bachelor's degree. If we are to truly embrace the concept of Indianapolis as "One City," we must close these attainment gaps and ensure the rising tide of economic success lifts all Indianapolis residents.

# In order to provide opportunity to all Indianapolis residents, we must create 100,000 good jobs and add 215,000 adults with a market value credential.

Leveraging Indianapolis' powerful network of stakeholders and experts, the initiative will focus primarily on two ways to increase the proportion of adults with the appropriate credentials: increasing the number of K-12 students who pursue and complete postsecondary credentials and increasing the educational attainment level of the existing adult population, all the while ensuring more intentional pathways into available and high-demand careers.

For Indianapolis to continue the growth it has experienced over the last three decades, it is imperative there is a sufficient supply of talent to meet the evolving demands of the labor market. Indy Achieves ensures that every resident of Indianapolis understands they have a role to play in that growth. It is more than a guarantee that every student in Indianapolis can pursue a postsecondary credential. Indy Achieves is a commitment to remove barriers and promises a pathway to the middle class, ensuring the growth experienced in Indianapolis benefits all residents.

# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Over the ten-year period a student moves from 7th grade to their first job in their career, there are a multitude of "inflection points" where a student could face barriers to their continued education. These inflection points force them onto a pathway that likely leads to a lower-wage job with less opportunity for advancement.

In Indianapolis, there is an extensive network of organizations providing programmatic support for students and families as they make their way through this ten year journey from middle school to a career. However, Indianapolis is lacking an organization that aligns its mission and goals around providing support that begins when students are in the 7th grade, and continues all the way through their graduation from a postsecondary program and placement in a career.

As the scope of Indy Achieves was being developed, the Task Force continually returned to the metaphor of a pipeline. Too often the objectives of increasing access to postsecondary institutions, increasing persistence and completion rates of high demand credential and degree programs, and connecting students into a professional network in their career are seen as three separate efforts.

However, when viewed in the framework of talent development and labor market alignment, it is obvious that if Indianapolis is going to develop the talent necessary to remain competitive in the 21st century economy, these three efforts must be aligned and coordinated so that a student can seamlessly move through the pipeline.

Although there are many organizations providing support to remove barriers that students and families may face, too often a student's access to those services is dependent on the neighborhood they grow up in, the school they go to, or the educational attainment levels of the adults around them. The role of Indy Achieves is to be the thread connecting the organizations providing services at all inflection points in the pipeline and serve as an incubator for innovation when gaps in the pipeline are identified.

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# PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

**For Indy Achieves to be successful, it is imperative that the program reduces barriers for students and families, and does not duplicate ongoing efforts to improve access, completion, and placement.**

Instead, Indy Achieves should leverage and scale successful initiatives, and implement new programs where there are not ongoing efforts to address those barriers.  Similarly, it is not necessary to duplicate the administrative costs of launching an independent third-party entity to administer the programmatic initiatives of Indy Achieves. Alternatively, the Task Force recommends achieving economies of scale and collocating Indy Achieves into an existing agency whose mission is aligned with that of Indy Achieves, and who can serve as the long term neutral home for this initiative.

When surveying the existing network of organizations whose missions are aligned with that of Indy Achieve, EmployIndy was immediately identified as a logical place for such a collocation.  After productive conversation with their board and executive staff, EmployIndy has agreed to collocate Indy Achieves alongside their ongoing workforce development efforts. The Task Force recommends Indy Achieves have the following mission, organizational structure, goals, and objectives.

## Mission

## The mission of Indy Achieves is to ensure all Marion County residents have access to postsecondary opportunities and tools for completion and success.

Indy Achieves will help to ensure Indianapolis has the requisite talent supply to support the available local careers by piloting, evaluating, and scaling proven practices that improve postsecondary access for Marion County youth and adults, improve postsecondary completion for all students enrolled at IUPUI and Ivy Tech Community College Indianapolis, and improve alignment and placement in careers with purpose and value.

Indy Achieves will work to support all available local careers by piloting, evaluating, and scaling proven practices that improve postsecondary access for Marion County youth and adults. Indy Achieves seeks to improve postsecondary completion for all students enrolled at IUPUI and Ivy Tech Indianapolis, and improve alignment and placement in careers with purpose and value.

## Goals and Objectives

Indy Achieves will blend financial and programmatic support to improve postsecondary access for Indianapolis high school students and adults, improve postsecondary completion for all students enrolled at IUPUI and Ivy Tech, and improve alignment and placement of graduates in careers with purpose and value.

*Improve Postsecondary Access*

In order to improve postsecondary access for traditional K-12 students, Indy Achieves will increase student access to financial aid, and ensure a standard experience for all students in Indianapolis. To expand access to financial aid, Indy Achieves will provide resources and assistance to school counselors to increase enrollment of eligible 21st Century Scholars, monitor 21st Century Scholars progress through Scholar Track steps, increase the number of students completing their FAFSA application on time, and increase the number of students applying for Higher Education Awards. In addition to programmatic support, Indy Achieves will act as the fiscal steward for City funds supporting a last-dollar scholarship for 21st Century Scholars and Higher Education Award recipients attending Ivy Tech and 21st Century Scholars attending IUPUI, covering all unmet financial need for tuition, fees, books, and supplies.

To ensure a standard student experience, Indy Achieves will facilitate a prescriptive mentorship program that will support Indianapolis high school seniors enrolling at Ivy Tech and IUPUI through key college decisions during their senior year of high school and support their transition through their first semester of college.

For adult learners, Indy Achieves will work with community organizations, United Way of Central Indiana, and the Commission for Higher Education to develop an outreach plan to identify potential adult students and support their Workforce Ready and Adult

Student Grant applications. In addition, Indy Achieves will work with IUPUI and Ivy Tech to offer a structured schedule for adult learners to reduce the barrier that unpredictable scheduling poses to adult learners' ability to enroll in postsecondary institutions.

Through the impacts of the aforementioned interventions and supports, Indy Achieves anticipates enrollment of Indianapolis adults and high school graduates to increase by 5% to 10% by the 2020-2021 school year.

### *Improve Postsecondary Retention and Completion*

Dramatically increasing the number of Indianapolis students who matriculate into higher education is an important goal, but Indy Achieves must go even further, ensuring that each and every student has the highest possible likelihood of persistence and completion. There are three pillars of reform that upon implementation will increase retention and completion rates for Indy Achieves students.

The first is the use of success-centered eligibility requirements that have been proven to increase the likelihood of postsecondary completion. Indy Achieves will monitor students' progress in meeting these requirements to ensure they are persisting from year to year.

By asking the students to meet these requirements, we are also asking Ivy Tech and IUPUI to implement high-impact practices by prioritizing early credit accumulation, gateway course completion, corequisite remediation, and early determination of programs of study. Indy Achieves will help the institutions pilot, evaluate, scale, and monitor these high-impact practices.

Secondly, Indy Achieves will use predictive analytic technology to monitor students, issue early alert flags for students in need of interventions, administer proactive interventions and behavioral nudges, connect students to resources, and help students get back on track. Where these techniques have been deployed in other places, there have been significant improvements in retention, graduation rates, and decreases in excess credits for students completing degrees .

Finally, Indy Achieves will act as the fiscal steward for City funds supporting a retention and completion grant designed to ensure Indianapolis residents pursuing high demand career fields are able to continue at IUPUI or Ivy Tech without the fear they will be dropped from courses due to small, unmet financial obligations. These funds will be open to any Marion County resident attending IUPUI or Ivy Tech.

## Through the impacts of the aforementioned interventions and supports, Indy Achieves anticipates completion rates at IUPUI and Ivy Tech to increase by 2% - 5%.

### *Improve Workforce Alignment and Placement*

The primary objective regarding workforce alignment of Indy Achieves will be to ensure that the changes on the demand side of the labor market are realized in real time and adjustments are made to the supply side so that the two are aligned.
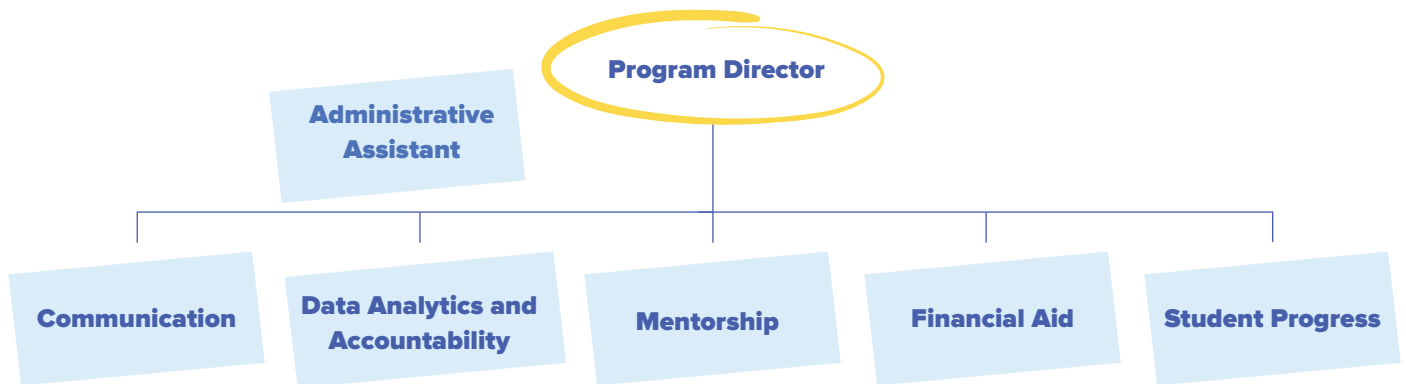
In order to align the labor market, Indy Achieves will model the Indianapolis labor supply and demand and conduct a labor model. This analysis will be used in three ways. This first use will be to inform students of employment prospects associated with specific major pathways and align career advising at Ivy Tech and IUPUI to match those prospects.

Secondly, those credentials and degrees highest in demand will receive preference for completion grants. Finally, this model will inform Indianapolis which high-quality credentials are being created within and near Indianapolis and what types of new employers should be encouraged to relocate here because their labor need is aligned to the existing supply.

To ensure students can make informed career choices based on the results of the labor supply and demand model, Indy Achieves will seek philanthropic support to improve existing predictive analytic student support systems across both IUPUI and Ivy Tech, enabling improved advising and student pathway development. Then, based on the career path chosen, Indy Achieves will work with Ascend Indiana to identify high quality internships and early-in career job opportunities within Indianapolis.

# Organizational Structure

The Task Force recommends adding between six to eight dedicated staff at EmployIndy to oversee and manage the launch of Indy Achieves, as well as implement and administor the programs recommended in this report.

```
                          ( Program Director )
         Administrative
           Assistant
   ┌──────────────┬──────────────┬──────────────┬──────────────┐
Communication  Data Analytics   Mentorship    Financial Aid   Student Progress
               and
               Accountability
```

# Pro Forma

Upon appropriation by the City-County Council, the scholarships and completion grants will be funded by the City of Indianapolis and administered by EmployIndy.  For every completion grant awarded, IUPUI and Ivy Tech will reimburse EmployIndy a percentage of the tuition and fees received for that student that semester to cover the cost of administration of the scholarships and grants, as well as the programmatic elements Indy Achieves is responsible for implementing.

This structure is beneficial to the institutions because they will see tuition dollars from the student receiving a completion grant that would have been lost from the student no longer attending their school. It also ensures the institution is only responsible for paying for students attending the school as a direct result of the work of Indy Achieves. The structure is beneficial to EmployIndy because it ensures there is a long term sustainable funding source for the implementation of Indy Achieves. This will provide the flexibility to make operating decisions with the long-term in mind.

The City-County Council will appropriate $2 million annually

**Office of Education Innovation**

EmployIndy will administer $1.5 million in scholarships and grants

**EmployIndy**

This funding will serve a estimated 1,600 students between both institutions

**Ivy Tech Community College**
**(Indianapolis Campus)**

**IUPUI**

Approximately 400 students will receive scholarships and 1,200 will receive completion grants in year one

**Scholarships**

**Completion Grants**

For every completion grant awarded, the institution will pay EmployIndy a fee. The fees will serve as a sustainable funding source for Indy Achieves

**EmployIndy**

# POSTSECONDARY ACCESS

## Standardize the Student Experience

Too often, the likelihood of a student pursuing a postsecondary credential is left to chance and is dependent on an adult in a student's life, a parent, a school counselor, or a teacher, walking them through the complicated postsecondary enrollment process. This results in varying college going rates dependent on the school a student attended and the income level of their parents.

**The first task of Indy Achieves is to dramatically increase the number of Marion County students who matriculate into higher education.**
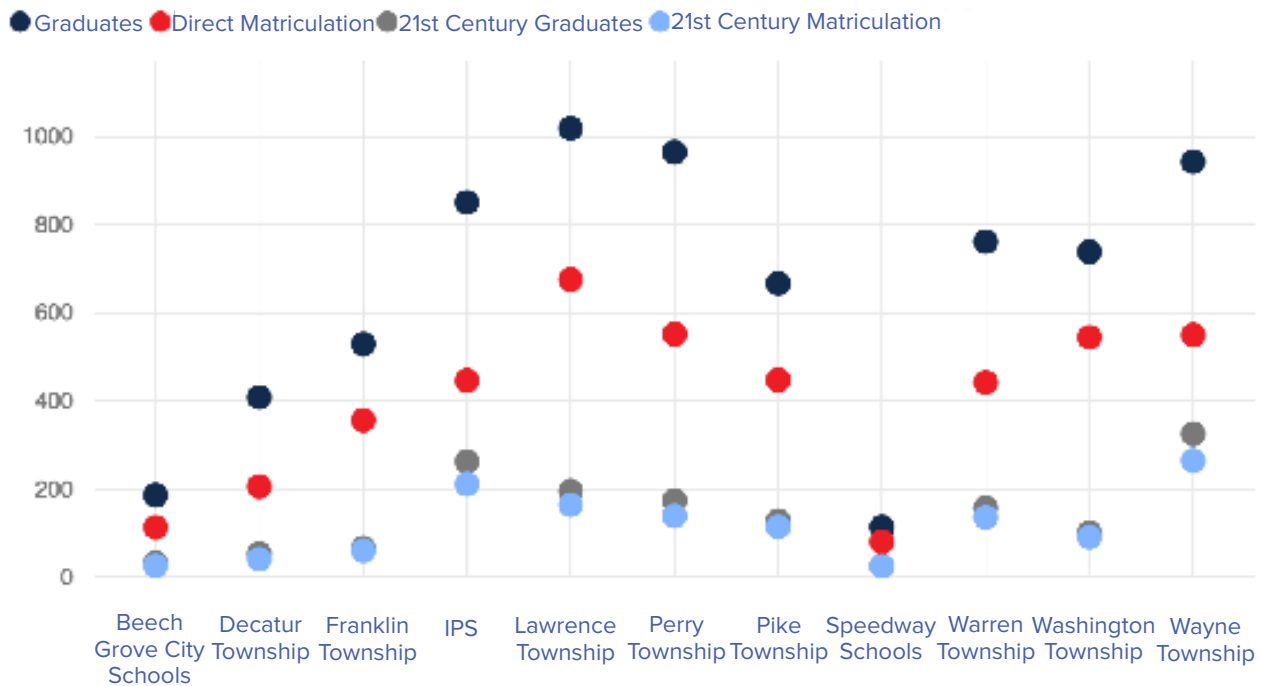
Figure 3. 2014-2015 Direct Matriculation Rates by Township and 21st Century Status

Instead of leaving a student's future to chance, Indy Achieves should standardize the student experience so that every student, regardless of circumstance, understands they are capable of and expected to pursue a postsecondary credential or degree – and that they have the resources to navigate the steps required to enroll.

Indy Achieves should utilize technology to help students maximize their financial aid packages, behavioral economics to coordinate prescribed nudges that allow students to maintain their eligibility and meet the required deadlines, organize volunteer mentors so each Indianapolis student has access to an adult who can help them navigate the transition to a postsecondary institution, and public relations to set the expectation that every student has the ability to earn a postsecondary education.

Programs across the country have shown how successful it can be when there is the right combination of financial investment in a student's future, coordinated and prescriptive messaging that nudges students through the steps, and a dogged pursuit to measure effectiveness and adjust interventions accordingly. However, it is also evident that starting during a student's senior year of high school is often too late. Thanks to the 21st Century Scholars Program and the work of the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, the infrastructure exists to allow Indy Achieves to go further and begin these supports and interventions in 7th and 8th grade.

**In doing so, Indy Achieves will maximize the number of students accessing a postsecondary credential and will cement the notion that here in Indianapolis, everyone has a shot at a bright future.**

## Recommendations

*Pilot, Evaluate, and Scale Interventions that Increase Number of 21st Century Scholars*

The Task Force recommends Indy Achieves work with Indianapolis middle and high school counselors to design interventions that will provide additional capacity for the counselors. Indy Achieves should apply predictive analytics to identify students ripe for interventions. In addition, they should pilot, evaluate, and scale prescriptive behavioral nudges to remind students of key deadlines and to complete scholar track activities. For example, they could pilot a text and email campaign, evaluate the number of students who maintained their eligibility, and scale the most effective implementation method to all 21st Century students in Indianapolis.

*Incentivize Counselors for Students Enrolling in 21st Century and Completing FAFSA On Time*

The Task Force recommends Indy Achieves work with middle and high school counselors in Indianapolis to design, implement, and fund an incentive program for middle and high school counselors in Indianapolis. The incentive program should award counselors for enrolling eligible students in 21st Century Scholar or for ensuring their students completed their FAFSA on time.

*Support IUPUI Summer Bridge Program*

The Task Force recommends Indy Achieves support the IUPUI Summer Bridge program, which is designed to bolster academic skills and acclimate students to campus. Indy Achieves should connect Indianapolis students enrolling at IUPUI to their Summer Bridge program. Indy Achieves should monitor student success following the program and work with IUPUI to pilot, evaluate, and scale best practices that lead to better student outcomes.

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### *Create and Implement a Mentorship Program*

The Task Force recommends Indy Achieves create a prescriptive mentorship program, similar to tnAchieves, so that every high school student in Indianapolis has access to the same set of resources to aid in their transition to postsecondary institutions. All Indianapolis high school seniors choosing to attend IUPUI or Ivy Tech the following year would automatically be enrolled in the mentorship program. Indy Achieves should recruit adults from the corporate community. The mentors would assist students through their final semester of their senior year of high school, aid them in enrollment at IUPUI or Ivy Tech, and support them as they transition to their postsecondary institution through their first semester.

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## Key Stakeholders

- The Office of Mayor Joe Hogsett

- Indianapolis City-County Council

- Indiana Commission for Higher Education

- Marion County Superintendents

- Marion County 8th-12th Grade Counselors

- Corporate and Philanthropic Community

- IUPUI

## Key Performance Indicators

There are four metrics that show the progress Indy Achieves is making in standardizing the student experience:

1. **Percentage of middle and high schools participating in Indy Achieves programing**

2. **Number of texts and emails sent to students and families**

3. **Number of volunteer mentors**

4. **Number of Indianapolis students participating in IUPUI Summer Bridge program**

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## Goals

By the 2020-2021 school year 100% of Indy Achieves students in Indianapolis will be participating in Indy Achieves programming.

By the 2020-2021 school year 100% of Indy Achieves students enrolling at Ivy Tech or IUPUI will have a volunteer mentor.

The underutilization of federal and state financial aid, leads many students and their families to believe that a postsecondary education is unattainable. Indy Achieves should increase students' access to financial aid so that every student and family believes they can pursue a postsecondary credential or degree.

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# Increase Financial Aid Access

The underutilization of federal and state financial aid, leads many students and their families to believe that a postsecondary education is unattainable. Indy Achieves should increase students' access to financial aid so that every student and family believes they can pursue a postsecondary credential or degree.

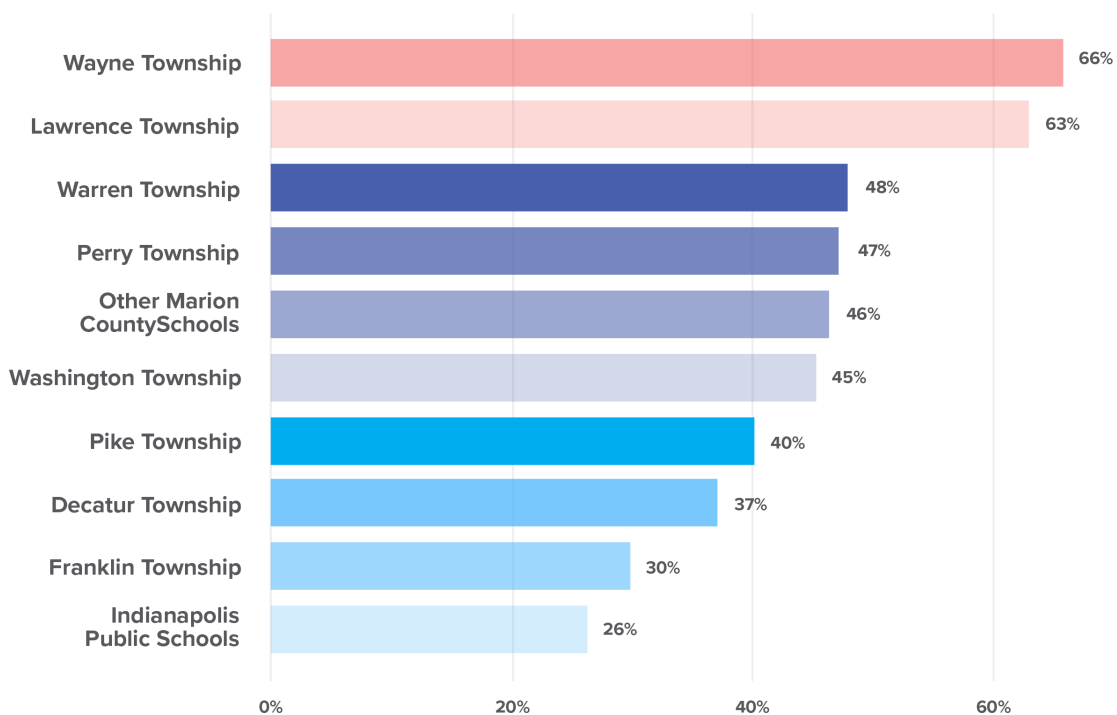## 2017 Cohort 21st Century Enrollment Rate by Township

| Township | Rate |
|---|---|
| Wayne Township | 66% |
| Lawrence Township | 63% |
| Warren Township | 48% |
| Perry Township | 47% |
| Other Marion County Schools | 46% |
| Washington Township | 45% |
| Pike Township | 40% |
| Decatur Township | 37% |
| Franklin Township | 30% |
| Indianapolis Public Schools | 26% |

Figure 4. Only 45% of eligible Indianapolis 8th graders are enrolling in the 21st Century Scholars program.

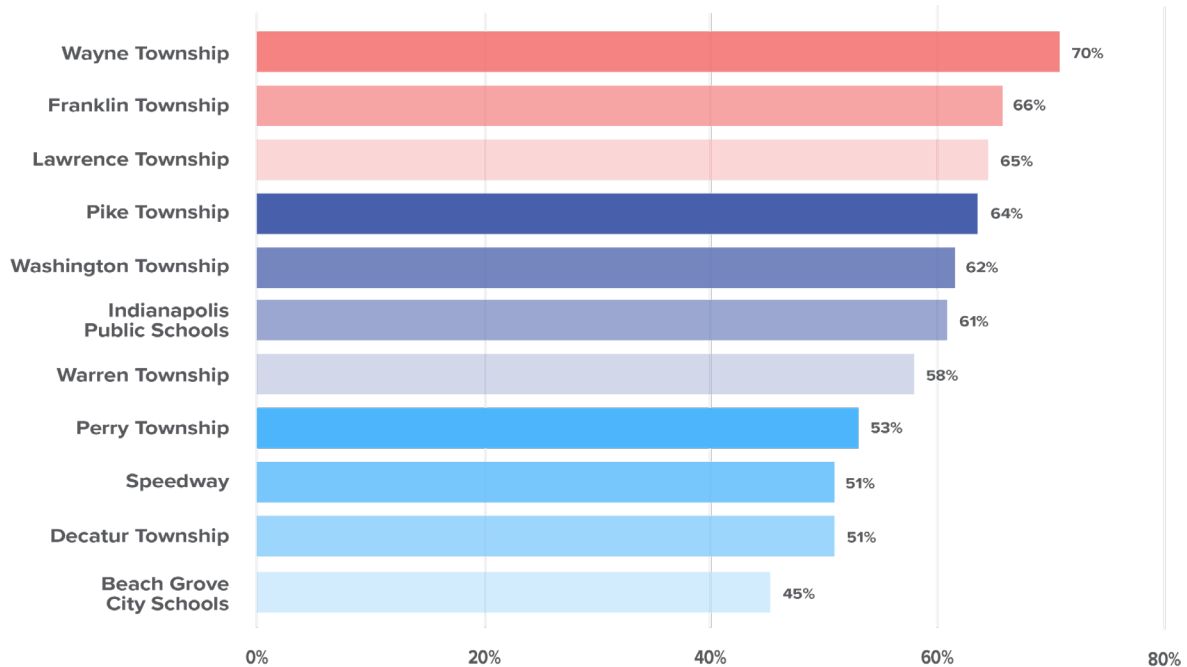## On Time FASFA Completion Rate and High School Seniors by School District



Figure 5. Only 65% of Indianapolis high school seniors are completing their FAFSA on time.

**Not only does FAFSA completion unlock additional financial aid, but it is correlated with an 45% increase in college attendance rate, 4% increase in college persistence rate, and 8% increase in college completion rate.**

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# Recommendations

### *Lead Public Awareness Campaign*

The first step in increasing access to financial aid is increasing students' and parents' awareness of existing financial aid programs. The Task Force recommends the Mayor's Office, in partnership with the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, Indianapolis middle and high schools, and corporate partners, lead a public awareness campaign to inform students and parents of the eligibility requirements for the 21st Century Scholars program and Higher Education Awards, and the importance of on time FAFSA completion during a student's senior year in high school.

### *Conduct 21st Century and FAFSA Completion Events*

The second step in increasing access to financial aid is to aid students and parents in completing the necessary paperwork required for participation in the programs they qualify for. The Task Force recommends Indy Achieves, in partnership with the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, Indianapolis middle and high schools, and community based organizations, conduct 21st Century Enrollment and FAFSA completion events.

### *Identify Eligible Students in Real Time*

The third step in increasing access to financial aid is to proactively identify students eligible for 21st Century Scholars or Higher Education Awards and reach out to students and parents to encourage enrollment The Task Force

recommends Indy Achieves in partnership with Indianapolis middle and high schools and the Indiana Commission for Higher Education enter in to a data sharing agreement so that Indy Achieves can monitor student enrollment in the 21st Century program and FAFSA completion in real time, and can coordinate interventions to enroll eligible students.

Similar reforms have resulted in increases in FAFSA completion rates ranging between 28% to 54% in other major cities.

### *Fund Last Dollar Scholarship*

The final step in increasing access to financial aid is to ensure that all students in Indianapolis attending Ivy Tech or IUPUI who have unmet financial need after maximizing Federal and State financial aid have access to a scholarship program that covers the remaining costs. The Task Force recommends the City of Indianapolis fund a last dollar scholarship program for all Marion County 21st Century Scholars and Higher Education Award recipients attending Ivy Tech Indianapolis or Marion County 21st Century Scholars attending IUPUI that covers remaining tuition, fees, books, or supplies costs.

## Key Stakeholders

- The Office of Mayor Joe Hogsett
- Indianapolis City-County Council
- Indiana Commission for Higher Education
- Marion County Superintendents
- Marion County 8th - 12th Grade Counselors
- Ivy Tech
- IUPUI

## Key Performance Indicators

There are five metrics that show the progress Indy Achieves is making towards increasing access to postsecondary education:

1. The number of eligible Indianapolis 8th graders enrolling in 21st Century Scholars

2. The number of Indianapolis high school seniors completing FAFSA on time

3. The number of scholarships awarded

4. Amount of scholarship awarded per student

5. The number of Indianapolis high school seniors enrolling in a postsecondary institution for the semester following high school graduation

## Goals

By the end of the 2018-2019 school year 100% of eligible Indianapolis 8th graders will be enrolled in 21st Century Scholars

By the end of the 2018-2019 school year 80% of Indianapolis high school seniors will complete their FAFSA on time

By the 2020-2021 school year there will be a 5% increase in the college going rate of Indianapolis high school seniors.

# Increase Adult Student Enrollment

Increasing the number of Indianapolis high school students directly matriculating to higher education is a noble effort, but Indy Achieves must increase access for adult students in order for Indianapolis to have the requisite talent growth necessary to thrive. In doing so, Indy Achieves will be the one of the first programs in the country that is simultaneously boosting access for traditional K-12 students and adult students.

In 2016 there were nearly 194,000 adults ages 25-64 in Indianapolis with a high school diploma or less. Thanks to the efforts of the Indiana Commission for Higher Education and Ivy Tech, funding is available to these adults looking to skill up through Workforce Ready Grants and Adult Student Grants. In order to maximize this investment, Indy Achieves should coordinate efforts between community organizations, employers, and the Indiana Commission for Higher Education to recruit adults ripe to pursue an industry recognized credential or degree.

## Recommendations

### Increase Financial Aid Access

The Task Force recommends the Mayor's Office, in partnership with the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, community based organizations, and corporate partners, lead a public awareness campaign to inform Indianapolis adults and businesses of the eligibility requirements for Workforce Ready and Adult Student Grants.

### Coordinate Efforts to Recruit Eligible Adults

The Task Force recommends Indy Achieves, in partnership with the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, Center for Working Families, EmployIndy, and community based organizations, coordinate efforts to identify and recruit eligible adults in Indianapolis.

### Recruit Employers to Encourage Employees to Further Educational Attainment

The Task Force recommends Indy Achieves, in partnership with the corporate community, recruit small and midsized employers to encourage their employees to take advantage of the Workforce Ready and Adult Student Grants and for large employers to develop their own employer tuition support programs in partnership with the universities.

### Develop Resources Unique to Adult Students' Circumstances

We acknowledge that adult students seeking to further their education face unique barriers when they return. These barriers typically fall into one of two categories: they either cannot coordinate the timing of class with the demands of their job or they cannot identify the support they need in order to balance their additional responsibilities. The Indianapolis Promise Task Force recommends Indy Achieves, in partnership with IUPUI and Ivy Tech, create structured scheduling and identify ways to award credit for prior experience.

In addition to helping the adult student navigate the barriers presented by inconsistent scheduling, the Task Force recommends Indy Achieves, in partnership with EmployIndy, Center for Working Families, and community based organizations, develop resources to support existing facilitators in connecting prospective adult students to the wraparound services they need to thrive while balancing their familial obligations.

## Key Stakeholders

- Indiana Commission for Higher Education
- Ivy Tech
- IUPUI
- Center for Working Families
- EmployIndy
- Central Indiana Corporate Partnership
- Community based organizations

## Key Performance Indicators

1. **The number of Indianapolis adults applying to Workforce Ready or Adult Student grants**

2. **The number of Indianapolis adults accepting Workforce Ready or Adult Student grants and enrolling in IUPUI or Ivy Tech**

## Goals

By the 2020-2021 school year there will be a 3% increase in the college going rate of Indianapolis adults.

# POSTSECONDARY RETENTION AND COMPLETION

## Prioritize Student Success and Completion

Dramatically increasing the number of Indianapolis students who matriculate into higher education is an important goal, but Indy Achieves must go even further, ensuring that each and every student has the highest possible likelihood of success and completion. In so doing, Indy Achieves will be one of the few programs in the country that is boosting both access and degree attainment, catalyzing talent growth and retention in the city, and making a measurable impact on efforts to increase social mobility for our residents.

Indy Achieves should utilize program requirements tied to key, student-centered success milestones and support interventions at participating insitutions that are designed to increase college completion rates and eliminate achievement gaps.

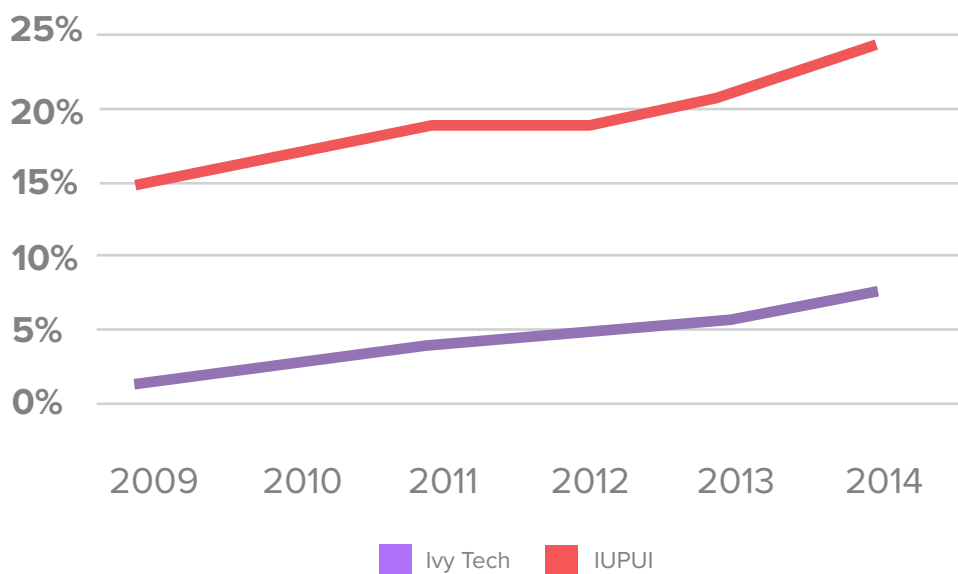### On Time Completion Rates at IUPUI and Ivy Tech



Figure 6. On Time Completion Rates at IUPUI and Ivy Tech of Central Indiana

Thanks to the efforts of the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, Ivy Tech and IUPUI, on-time completion rates at these institutions have been on the rise, with a 6% increase and 9.3% increase at Ivy Tech Indianapolis and IUPUI respectively. But for Indy Achieves to be effective, and to justify the public investment, success rates for program participants must far exceed these baselines.

## Recommendations

### *Utilize Success-Centered Eligibility Requirements*

The Task Force recommends that all program participants adhere to a set of eligibility requirements that are based on key metrics of academic progress and success. Requirements should include:

- Student will maintain a satisfactory academic progress (SAP)

- Student will enroll in a minimum of 30 credit hours each academic year, including the optional use of summer terms.

- Student will complete the gateway (college-level) math and English requirements within the first academic year.

- Student will declare a program of study or meta major within the first academic year.

- File a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by Indiana's April 15th deadline every year.

Research has shown that students who take 15 credits each semester (30 credits per academic year) have higher GPAs, are more likely to be retained and complete their degrees at higher rates than peers who enroll in just 12 credits each semester, regardless of their level of academic preparedness. While federal definitions of full-time enrollment call for a course load of 12 credits each semester, being on track for on-time graduation requires higher credit accumulation.

Analysis by EAB, a DC-based research firm, found that students who take 15+ credits in their first semester were 19 percentage points more likely to graduate within four years. Research from the Community College Research Center and efforts at the University of Hawaii have shown similarly impressive benefits for students.

Another major indicator of ultimate student success is early completion of gateway math and English courses. Among the many institutions implementing interventions focused on gateway course completion, the University of Nevada-Reno found that students who completed gateway math in their first academic year were twice as likely to graduate (or maintain enrollment) than students who did not complete gateway mathematics. By requiring completion of these courses for Indy Achieves students, the initiative can ensure early momentum towards timely completion for its participants.

On the issue of program selection, the Tennessee Board of Regents conducted a student persistence analysis over a three academic-year period of 4,470 students to explore the impact of students choosing a degree program within the first year. Just 29% of students who failed to select a program of study completed all three years, while 95% of students who selected a program completed. The analysis suggested that success would be greater if institutions enabled students to identify a program of study as early as possible. Research from the University System of Georgia is also particularly telling as it relates to ensuring students develop an academic mindset as quickly as possible. The system has also explored the implementation of a "Momentum Year," which utilizes many of the eligibility requirements outlined by the Task Force.

*Leverage Indy Achieves as a Mechanism to Drive Student Success*

Indy Achieves will work with Ivy Tech and IUPUI to support advising efforts, both through the use of technology and through a network of volunteer mentors, to help students meet critical benchmarks of academic progress and to satisfy ongoing financial aid requirements, including program requirements regarding credit accumulation, declaration of major and completion of gateway courses.

Indy Achieves will increase retention and completion rates at Ivy Tech and IUPUI by connecting struggling students with academic and off-campus resources to ensure they have the support they need—this includes access to food, housing, transportation and childcare services, as well as tutoring.

*Deploy Completion Grant Program to Address the Needs of Students*

**For many students, especially those from low-income families, unmet financial need after enrollment is an insurmountable barrier to student success. It is a challenge that often presents itself toward the end of a student's academic journey as savings and traditional financial aid are depleted. Nearly 15% of students with three quarters of their required credits fulfilled leave college without degrees.**

Completion Grants, sometimes referred to as retention grants, provide students with proven records of academic success financial assistance to ensure they do not drop out due to financial constraints as they near graduation.

Similar grant programs around the country have proven effective in catalyzing degree completion. At Georgia State University, completion grants led to graduation rates 134% higher than similar students who did not receive assistance.

City resources, complemented by philanthropic support over time, should support a completion grant available to any Indianapolis resident who is a student at Ivy Tech or IUPUI. Indy Achieves Completion Grants will be awarded with preference toward students who have completed 75% of their program, have a history of good academic standing, are recipients of Workforce Ready Grants, and are pursuing high-demand career paths.

### *Better Serve Academically Underprepared Students through Corequisite Remediation*

Of those students deemed to be academically underprepared, few ever enroll in, let alone, complete their introductory gateway courses in math and English. And only 17% of "remedial students" go on to graduate. These low success rates are not due to academic ability, in fact, research shows that attrition is the primary reason for this leak in the student pipeline. Students succeed in their remedial courses but simply fail to enroll in subsequent courses. Simply put, more give up than fail, due in part to the long sequences of remedial coursework and the costs associated with them.

Any Indy Achieves participant who is deemed to be academically underprepared, either through the use of placement exams or multiple

measures assessments, should receive academic support through the use of Corequisite Remediation - whereas students are enrolled directly into the college-level courses and provided academic support concurrently. Under traditionally remediation, just 22% of affected students complete the associated gateway courses within two years. With Corequisite Remediation, more than 60% of students complete the associated gateway courses within one year.

***Encourage Supporting Policies and High-Impact Practices at Participating Postsecondary Institutions***

While the expectations of students should be evidence-based and clear, partnering postsecondary institutions should take steps to ensure that policies and practices are in place to help students achieve the milestones of the program, prioritizing early credit accumulation, gateway (college-level) course completion, determination of programs of study, and the provision of academic supports for underprepared students.

Recommended practices include:

### *Meta Majors*

Meta majors, also referred to as career clusters or academic focus areas, group majors into larger academic buckets, providing a more structured and prescribed exploratory pathway. This process ensures that no student is "undecided" and is instead moving along a process that ensures completion of early coursework.

According to EAB, "meta majors also offer a safety net in the event students get off track, as the program structure accounts for switching among similar disciplines. But they can help cut down on students changing majors as well. Since implementing meta-majors, Georgia State University has experienced a 30% reduction in students changing their majors. And students who do end up changing majors are more likely to have enough courses under their belt that will cross over."

### *Default Academic Maps*

Rather than choosing individual courses, academic maps allow students to choose meta majors, majors or programs. The resulting full-program academic maps provide a default sequence of courses that lead to on-time completion, indicating milestone courses – classes that demonstrate appropriate and timely progress – along the way. Additionally, academic maps should provide Math Pathways that are aligned to majors and career interests, offering a clear and relevant path to graduation. Sample academic maps from IU/IUPUI can be found online, indicating critical courses and milestone courses that lead to timely completion.

### Proactive Advising

Proactive advising makes use of available information and student success data to provide support before students ever begin to struggle. Technological innovations enhance this work by monitoring progress and issuing early alerts to flag students for interventions when they need it most.

Georgia State University uses technology to leverage predictive analytics and a system of more than 800 alerts to track students daily, identify at-risk behaviors and deploy advisors to help students get back on track. Proactive advising, along with a suite of other interventions, has led to significant improvements in retention, graduation rates, and decreases in excess credits for students completing degrees.

### Banded Tuition

Institutions should implement banded tuition to ensure that taking 15 credits per semester costs no more than the federal 12-credit standard. This provides a powerful incentive for students to complete on time, because there are no financial consequences for enrolling in a heavier course load.

This recommendation is consistent with a 2014 resolution passed by the Indiana Commission for Higher Education encouraging the state's institutions to adopt banded tuition as a mechanism to increase on-time graduation rates.

## Key Stakeholders

- IUPUI

- Ivy Tech

- Complete College America

## Key Performance Indicators

1. Number of students maintaining a satisfactory academic progress

2. Number of students enrolling in a minimum of 30 credit hours each academic year, including the optional use of summer terms

3. Number of students completing gateway (college-level) math and English requirements within the first academic year

4. Number of students declaring a program of study or meta major within the first academic year

5. Number of students filing a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by Indiana's April 15th deadline every year

6. Number of students receiving remediation in a corequisite model

7. Number of completion grants awarded

8. Amount of completion grant awarded per recipient

## Goals

By the 2020-2021 school year there will be a 10% increase in persistence rate at Ivy Tech and IUPUI.

By the 2022-2023 school year there will be a 5% increase in completion rates at Ivy Tech and IUPUI.

# WORKFORCE ALIGNMENT

## Align the Labor Market

Thanks to the robust efforts of organizations such as Ascend and EmployIndy, the infrastructure is in place to connect students with existing employer networks for internships and early-in career opportunities. Indy Achieves will add to that effort by ensuring that the changes on the demand side of the labor market are realized in real time and adjustments are made to the supply side so that the two are aligned.

## Recommendations

### Analyze Labor Demand and Supply

The labor market has been changing in dramatic ways over the past decade. It is imperative that we understand these changes as they are occurring to better support our local economy and displaced workers. In order to understand those changes, Indy Achieves will conduct a labor supply and demand analysis that focuses not only on current job and training opportunities in Indianapolis, but also identifies growing industries and trends in higher education attainment. Using the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics projected job openings and real time job openings posted by Indianapolis employers, this analysis should estimate demand for skilled workers in the city's top industries and be replicable on an annual basis.

### Align Postsecondary Attainment with Economic Trends

The results of this research will be used to align the current production of certificate, associate, and bachelor degrees at IUPUI and Ivy Tech and ensure students are fully informed of long-term career prospects in their field of study. Indy Achieves will seek philanthropic support to improve existing predictive analytic student support systems across both IUPUI and Ivy Tech, enabling improved advising and student pathway development. This will cultivate a

student body capable of making informed decisions regarding their career paths by providing critical information about career opportunities, such as demand, education requirements, and wage.

### *Leverage Workforce Development Partnerships and Existing Resources*

Using this analysis of labor supply and demand in Indianapolis, Indy Achieves will work with partners in the workforce development sector including Ascend Indiana, EmployIndy, Centers for Working Families (United Way of Central Indiana), the Family and Social Services Administration of Indiana (FSSA), and the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD), to align students' career pathways and increase access to existing funding and resources for placing students in high demand, high wage internships and jobs. Through a coalition-driven effort, Indy Achieves will identify gaps in access or utilization of existing resources and programs to ensure equity among students of different socioeconomic backgrounds and experience in the workforce.

### *Align Economic Development with Existing High-Quality Credentials*

Not only will this analysis allow Indianapolis to direct its supply of labor to the current demand for high-quality credentials, but it will enable us to better understand which high quality credentials are being created within and near Indianapolis without sufficient demand of employers to retain and attract those individuals to Indianapolis. As a result of this analysis, Indianapolis will be able to align its economic development strategies to maximize on the talent we are already producing in Indiana.

## Key Stakeholders

- Ivy Tech

- IUPUI

- Ascend Indiana

- CICP Initiatives

- Indiana Department of Workforce Development

- Indiana Commission for Higher Education

- Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce

- Indiana INTERNnet

- Indianapolis Public Schools

- Orr Fellowship

- Family and Social Services Administration of Indiana

- WIOA

- New Level Jobs Indiana

- Jobs for America' Graduates

- Youth Employment Services

- YouthBuild Indy

- Employ Up

## Key Performance Indicators

1. Net increase in degrees awarded in high-demand fields

2. Net increase in on-time completion

3. Number of students placed in internships

4. Number of students placed in internships in high-demand fields

5. Number of students receiving internship-derived job offers in high-demand fields

6. Number of students placed in jobs

7. Percentage of students placed within their program of study

8. Net increase in job placements in high-demand fields

## Goals

By 2027, 65% of Indianapolis adults will have a high-quality postsecondary credential and the educational attainment gap of African-American and Hispanic residents will be eliminated.

# CONCLUSION

During his 2017 State of the City Address, Mayor Hogsett created the Indianapolis Promise Task Force to ensure that every resident in Indianapolis knows that their community cares deeply about their success, that every resident can break through the cycles of generational poverty, that every resident has access to a quality postsecondary credential that prepares him or her for a fulfilling career, and that in Indianapolis, the rising tide of economic success should lift all residents.

Indy Achieves takes the best practices from across the country and proposes a comprehensive solution that increases access to postsecondary institutions for Indianapolis high school seniors and Indianapolis adult residents, increase the retention and completion rates at our two public higher education institutions in Indianapolis, IUPUI and Ivy Tech, and makes recommendations to better align our labor market so that companies wanting to locate here can trust that we have the requisite talent supply to meet their needs, and recent college grads have a job available for them when they complete their degree.

Such a comprehensive approach makes this a unique initiative, and we hope an exemplar program that can be replicated across the country. City government cannot do this alone. It will take the full support of corporate and philanthropic entities, the engagement of every school system in the county, and the partnership of the higher education institutions for us to accomplish our ultimate goal of 65% of adults in Indianapolis having a postsecondary credential by 2027.

Most significant of all, Indy Achieves sends a message of hope to young students and their families that the success of our city is inextricably linked to their own success. It is more than a guarantee that every student in Indianapolis can pursue a postsecondary credential. Indy Achieves is a commitment to remove barriers and promises a pathway to the middle class, ensuring the growth experienced in Indianapolis benefits all residents.

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# THANK YOU TO THE INDIANAPOLIS PROMISE TASK FORCE

City-County Council

Former Lt. Governor Kathy Davis, Mayor's Representative

Ascend Indiana

Lumina Foundation

Complete College America

Indy Chamber

Strada Education

Ivy Tech Community College Indianapolis

IUPUI

EmployIndy

Marion County Commission on Youth

Commission for Higher Education

Indiana Department of Education

The Mind Trust

United Way of Central Indiana

Cummins

Eli Lilly

Fairbanks Foundation

Central Indiana Community Foundation

Urban League

Center for Leadership Development

Indiana Latino Institute