

August 12, 2024

Dear Secretary Jenner,

Thank you for actively seeking input from many communities throughout the state, including public universities that all provided suggestions.

We deeply appreciate the updates you kindly provided over the past weekend, including the updated Indiana high school diploma with Honors Seal that meets the part of Purdue admissions requirement involving high school curricula. And in generally, for college-readiness by any interested students and families, it is excellent to see the introduction of the Honors Seal and Honors Plus Seal. Thank you for the open-minded willingness to provide a broad range of choices and clearly illuminated pathways for all high school students.

We also strongly support the excellent steps taken by the state legislature and your office to create the work-based tracks and diplomas. Hoosier high school students will benefit from the additional choices and the flexibility. As mentioned in our earlier communication, not all high school students will choose to attend college and all should have the opportunity for fulfilling high school learning and rewarding careers.

Finally, we are excited to further explore your team's ideas of having Purdue work with the IDOE team to build out data science programming, and to work with both IDOE and the College Board to develop several new AP classes.

Thank you, again, for the ongoing collaboration as we all work toward a successful future for all Indiana students.

Sincerely,



Mung Chiang  
President



THE PRESIDENT

August 12, 2024

Dr. Katie Jenner  
Secretary of Education  
Indiana Department of Education  
Government Center North, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
100 N. Senate Avenue  
Indianapolis, IN 46204-1971

The Honorable Chris Lowery  
Commissioner  
Indiana Commission for Higher Education  
101 West Ohio Street, Suite 300  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Secretary Jenner and Commissioner Lowery:

We write today to express our support for the draft version of the new Indiana high school diploma, shared with Indiana University on Monday, August 12<sup>th</sup>. This version provides much needed guidance to families, students, and educators in the development of high school graduation plans that prepare Hoosier students for postsecondary enrollment, employment, and enlistment. In particular, we appreciate the specificity with which the Enrollment Ready Seals have been developed – which was an area of emphasis in our prior letter, dated July 30, 2024.

It is our hope that these Seals will be encouraged as mutually contributory options, where students are prepared for, and informed of, the rich range of possibilities across the Indiana post-secondary education and employment landscape, including efforts to expose high school students to work-based learning opportunities sooner. As the flagship four-year institution serving the entire State, IU campuses will continue to provide an onramp into higher education for students immediately enrolling post-high school graduation and for students at a later point in their careers.

We look forward to seeing the final version of the rule on the Indiana high school diploma submitted to the Indiana Register.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Pamela Whitten".

Pamela Whitten  
President

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August 9, 2024

Dr. Katie Jenner  
Secretary of Education  
Indiana Department of Education  
Government Center North, 9th Floor  
100 N. Senate Ave. Indianapolis, IN 46204

The Honorable Chris Lowery Commissioner  
Indiana Commission for Higher Education  
101 West Ohio St., Suite 550  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Secretary Jenner and Commissioner Lowery,

For more than two decades, Indiana has been proudly at the forefront of preparing students for life after high school by offering them the opportunity to earn college credits and workforce credentials prior to crossing the high school graduation stage. Ivy Tech's dual credit and dual enrollment programs are the largest of their kind in the nation, providing Hoosier students with more college in high school opportunities than ever before. More than half of all the dual credits earned from Ivy Tech are in the career and technical education space, and last year alone, over 91,000 high school students enrolled in Ivy Tech coursework that resulted in the completion of more than 9,200 college credentials that include certificates, technical certificates, and associate degrees. This programming provides students with accessible and affordable routes to enrollment, employment, and enlistment — preparing students for any post-high school plan.

Indiana's commitment to maintaining postsecondary options for all students is a shared responsibility. The remarkable achievements of the dual credit and dual enrollment programs are the result of collaborative efforts among the Indiana General Assembly, the Indiana State Board of Education, the Indiana Department of Education, the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, K-12 schools, and higher education partners throughout the state.

The redesigned high school diploma, currently under consideration, provides students with additional flexibility to prepare for their futures. It includes routes to high school graduation where the Indiana College Core is embedded, promoting college readiness and transferability in Indiana. It allows students to participate in apprenticeship and work-based learning to develop an understanding of job responsibilities, professional skills, and career paths available to them in advanced industries that are critical to Indiana's economy. And it creates flexibility for high schools to continue co-curricular programs that meet the unique needs of their local communities.

Indiana is already seeing schools implementing some of this important work, and the new diploma will contribute to even more credit options for students. Last year, over 2,600 high school seniors graduated high school with an entire year of college coursework earned, thanks to the Indiana College Core. An additional 600 students even completed an Ivy Tech associate degree, participating in a college graduation ceremony before their high school commencement.

Nearly 6,000 additional Ivy Tech dual credit students earned an industry-aligned credential during high school at little to no cost to them or their families, allowing them to secure well-paying jobs and to embark on a path to personal prosperity immediately after graduation. These credits are most often transferable and stackable, offering students options for lifelong learning. Ivy Tech applauds that this vision will expand opportunities for students under the new diploma requirements by allowing students more flexibility to choose a path for their future.

The new diploma structure will demand significant effort and time to implement fully, and there are programming details that will need to be refined through the rulemaking process. Ivy Tech stands ready to support K-12 partners in all aspects, ensuring that students have multiple pathways to success. Regardless of the diploma path selected, Ivy Tech will be an option for Hoosier students as a college enrollment or transfer option for those who want a quality postsecondary education, save money, and earn a stackable credential before attending a four-year college or university; for those who want to learn marketable skills for immediate employment; and for those who return to Indiana after serving their country with the option to earn college credits for what they learned in the military.

Ivy Tech remains deeply committed to providing educational opportunities that meet the needs of Hoosier students, employers, and communities.

Sincerely,



Dr. Sue Ellspermann  
President  
Ivy Tech Community College



**BALL STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

August 13, 2024

Honorable Katie Jenner  
Secretary of Education  
Indiana Department of Education  
Government Center North, 9th Floor  
100 N. Senate Ave.  
Indianapolis, IN 46204-1971

Honorable Chris Lowery  
Commissioner  
Indiana Commission for Higher Education  
101 West Ohio Street, Suite 550  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Secretary Jenner and Commissioner Lowery:

On behalf of Ball State University, I write to express support for the most recent draft of the proposed new Indiana high school diploma. I am grateful to you and your colleagues for considering our feedback, which led to the development of a single diploma with two levels of seals. This change will help to communicate more clearly the coursework high school students will need to prepare for their post-graduation plans, whether those plans include enrollment, employment, or enlistment.

As an Indiana-serving institution, with students from all 92 Indiana counties, our University exposes our students to opportunities for success in their chosen career in Indiana. The diploma draft provides flexible, work-based experiences, which will provide opportunities to apply learning in the workplace. Additional high school work-based experiences, paired with appropriate support, guidance, and coursework from institutions like Ball State, will help to prepare Hoosier students for college.

Our University is prepared to provide guidance and support to students, families, and schools as the proposed diploma moves through the rulemaking process.

Sincerely,

Geoffrey S. Mearns  
President

August 13, 2024

Dr. Katie Jenner  
Secretary of Education  
Indiana Department of Education  
Government Center North, 9th Floor  
100 N Senate Avenue  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

The Honorable Chris Lowery  
Commissioner  
Indiana Commission for Higher Education  
101 West Ohio Street, Suite 550  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Secretary Jenner and Commissioner Lowery,

Indiana State University supports the Indiana Department of Education's recently revised draft version of the new Indiana high school diploma, shared on August 12, 2024. The latest version of the diploma provides a more straightforward framework for graduation plans chosen by students, whether attending an accredited higher education institution, employment, or enlistment. Equally important, it offers much-needed guidance and instruction to students' parents, guardians, and educators, fostering a collaborative approach to planning for each student's future. We await the final version of the rule, which will provide additional guidance and specificity around the new diploma.

As we have for almost 160 years, Indiana State University remains committed to serving Indiana by creating educational opportunities for students throughout Indiana and beyond, especially those from traditionally underserved communities, as they transition into higher education. We hope that under the State's revision, young adults of today and tomorrow will be well-equipped to contribute to Indiana's workforce and economic advancement.

We thank you for considering our previous letter and for working to address our concerns. Your willingness to listen and collaborate with Indiana State University and other educational partners has been invaluable in shaping a diploma that benefits all of Indiana's students.

Thank you for your leadership and dedication to improving educational outcomes in Indiana.

Sincerely,



Mike Godard, PhD  
President



August 12, 2024

Honorable Dr. Katie Jenner  
Secretary of Education  
Indiana Department of Education  
115 W. Washington Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Dr. Jenner,

On behalf of the Indiana Association of Public-School Superintendents, I am writing to express our strong support for the proposed revisions to the Indiana High School Diploma requirements. We commend the Indiana Department of Education for its commitment to elevating academic standards while simultaneously offering increased flexibility and curricular relevance for Indiana students.

The new diploma requirements represent a significant step forward in preparing our students for a rapidly changing world. By integrating more rigorous academic expectations with the flexibility to tailor educational experiences to individual student needs, these guidelines ensure that every graduate is well-equipped for the diverse pathways they may choose, whether that be higher education, enlistment, or entering the workforce.

In particular, we are encouraged by the emphasis on curricular relevance that aligns educational outcomes with the evolving demands of our economy. The inclusion of opportunities for students to engage in coursework that directly relates to real-world applications, including career and technical education, will undoubtedly better prepare them for the challenges of the future. Moreover, these guidelines reflect an understanding of the dynamic nature of today's enrollment trends, enlistment requirements, and employment landscapes, making them not just relevant, but essential for the success of our students.

We believe that these new diploma requirements will not only enhance the academic achievements of Indiana's students but will also significantly improve their readiness to contribute meaningfully to our communities and economy. The Indiana Association of Public-School Superintendents stands ready to support the implementation of these changes and looks forward to working closely with the Indiana Department of Education to ensure their success.

Thank you for your continued leadership and dedication to improving the educational landscape for all students in Indiana.

Sincerely,

*Robert L. Taylor* (Digital Signature Authorized)

Robert L. Taylor, Ed.D.  
Executive Director  
Indiana Association of Public-School Superintendents



## Indiana Association of School Principals

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The Indiana Association of School Principals leads in the advocacy and support of all principals in their commitment to every child.

August 12, 2024,

Dear Dr. Jenner,

### Principal Services

Awards & Recognition  
Business Partnerships  
Climate Audits  
Conferences  
District Activities  
Electronic Communications  
Emergency Assistance  
Federal Relations  
Legal Advice  
Legislation  
Principal for a Day  
Principals Service Corps  
Publications  
Research & Information  
Superintendents' Advisory  
Vacancy Listings  
Workshops

### Student Programs

Academic Competitions  
Academic Spell Bowl  
Academic Super Bowl  
Academic M.A.T.H. Bowl  
Academic Science Bowl  
Academic Coaches  
Conference  
E Sports Bowl  
Cheerleading Coaches  
Conferences  
Indiana Cheer  
Championship  
Indiana Academic All-Stars  
Day at the Legislature  
MLK Jr. Essay Contest  
Quiz Bowl  
Riley Kids Caring & Sharing  
Youth Philanthropy  
Advocacy

IASP has considered the draft diploma requirements and is in support of this approach to allow students more flexibility as they seek to earn their Indiana High School diploma. Our students should have high expectations for their K-12 education and the diploma should be the link to opportunities past high school that matches their interests and career goals. Having one diploma with two tiers of seals as an option is a positive step for our system. We appreciate Dr. Jenner and all those that worked to bring this new draft to the State Board of Education as it is clear they have taken feedback and provided a model with greater clarity and simplicity.

The credits that are required for graduation include the essential content so students are prepared for multiple paths we know they will pursue as young adults. Having the ability to earn these credits from a variety of courses within an academic content area is an essential part of this diploma design and one that should continue to be emphasized as the final requirements are set.

The Enrollment, Employment and Enlistment Seals all provide a roadmap that help guide a student in their course selection, while also not being prescriptive of what courses must be taken to attain the seal. The second level of each seal elevates expectations which will enhance the high school experience. It is key that the seals serve as meeting components of the graduation pathway, thus aligning our diploma requirements with post high school opportunities. And, a student is not required to earn a seal, but may still earn a diploma by completing those components, albeit with more limited options.

We would seek clarification and advise continued flexibility around the development of an attendance goal as included in the Employment and Enlistment Seals. IASP believes the attendance goal can be developed through a work-based learning agreement, thus ensuring all parties are understanding of expectations. We see this as an opportunity to lead and work with families as the attendance goal attainment may be met through school attendance guidelines and metrics. We also see great opportunity in infusing work-based learning into the Enrollment Seal to demonstrate the achievement level that is currently outlined solely through academic attainment.

The attainment of the two additional Social Studies credits should be examined to ensure clarity. The interplay of these credits with what is stated in the Enrollment Seal may not be clear and we desire that students have the ability to successfully attain credits that align with future outcomes.

While not stated in this diploma draft, license flexibility will be a key point as implementation occurs. We are confident in the ability of our principals to innovate within the flexible structure this diploma provides. We can then elevate successful practices leading to greater student achievement and success as models for other school leaders. A strong example of this is by allowing the seals to be modified through approved processes. This will allow greater crossover and permeability between each seal, and will emphasize to students that our futures and careers do not operate in a silo, but are linked to successful preparation and demonstration of skills and abilities.

We look forward to working with the Indiana Department of Education and the State Board of Education on the diploma requirements.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Todd D Bess". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Todd" being more prominent than the last name "Bess".

Todd D. Bess, Ph.D.  
IASP Executive Director



August 12, 2024

Dr. Katie Jenner  
Secretary of Education  
Indiana Department of Education  
Indiana State Board of Education

Dear Dr. Jenner and Members of the Indiana State Board of Education,

On behalf of the Indiana School Counselor Association (ISCA), I would like to express our deep appreciation for the ongoing dialogue and collaboration with the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) and Secretary Jenner during the diploma redesign process. From the initial proposal, ISCA has actively engaged our members, gathering their valuable insights and concerns. We are grateful that these concerns have been taken into consideration and that efforts are being made to address them. This collaborative approach highlights the importance of our shared goal: ensuring that Indiana students are equipped with the best possible educational outcomes.

We commend the department for its responsiveness to the challenges faced by school counselors across the state and for working diligently to find solutions that prioritize our students' success. ISCA is particularly encouraged by the progress made in evaluating Indiana's new proposed diploma structure. We believe that the proposed modifications reflect a positive step forward, and we are supportive of the increased flexibility and simplicity offered by the revised proposal, especially when compared to its initial version.

As the State Board of Education continues to assess the proposed diploma structure, ISCA is eager to continue working collaboratively to ensure these changes are implemented effectively. We hope that, should the new structure be adopted, ISCA will have a role in discussions on how best to implement these changes in a manner that does not place additional burdens on school counselors, who already face a significant student-to-counselor ratio.

We also support the enhancements in rigor to the base diploma. The careful alignment of each seal with pathways—whether for enrollment, employment, or enlistment—is commendable and aligns with our shared goal of preparing Indiana's students for success beyond high school.

ISCA looks forward to continued collaboration with the SBOE and the IDOE as we work together to improve educational outcomes for all students in Indiana. Please know that ISCA remains committed to being a constructive partner in this process, and ensuring that the voices of school counselors are heard and respected.

Thank you for your leadership and dedication to advancing education in Indiana.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan Preci", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ryan Preci  
Board Chair  
Indiana School Counselor Association (ISCA)



[www.indianaschoolcounselor.org](http://www.indianaschoolcounselor.org)



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