

# INDIANA

## ★ State Highlight

**Indiana Career Explorer.** The Indiana Department of Workforce Development (IN DWD) provides, [Indiana Career Explorer](#), a free online career exploration and graduation planning tool. Although the tool is meant for a wide range of users, middle school students can create their account through their counselor and begin taking career interest assessments and exploring careers in in-demand fields.



### VISION



**State Definition.** The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) defines career exploration as skills consisting of learning how to identify and analyze various career options in terms of what education, training, experience, and competencies are required for success. Exploration includes learning in workplace environments or directly in workplaces to discover and experience what it may be like to work in different occupations. It also involves learning to evaluate how well a career matches or fits one’s own interests, skills, strengths, and work values.

Indiana has yet to codify the definition of career exploration or state career exploration as an official priority.



### POLICY



**Career Standards.** Indiana Code requires schools to include state-developed career standards in the school's curriculum in 8th grade using either the Indiana Career Explorer program and standards or an alternate system. The IDOE’s standards include employability skills for grades 6 through 8.

**Graduation Plan.** Indiana requires students to complete a graduation plan by the end of grade 8, which includes postsecondary goals aligned with graduation pathway requirements.

Indiana has yet to formally include middle school career exploration in state or federal accountability systems.



### INFRASTRUCTURE






**User Friendly Resources.** [Learn More Indiana](#) (LMI) helps students of all ages explore post-high school education options and how to pay for them. LMI provides resources, tools, and real-life guidance for students, families, and educators to make the process of accessing post-high school education manageable and attainable. Other resources include a [Quick User Guide](#) for support coaches, a [slide deck](#) that guides K-8 students on the Career Exploration platform, a [resource guide](#) to support schools serving middle school students to complete Graduation Pathways in high school successfully, and a K-12 [work-based learning manual](#) that includes career exploration activities and definitions.

Indiana has yet to include middle school career exploration into data collection processes or provide dynamic training opportunities to staff related to middle school career exploration.





# INDIANA • VISION

Category	Status	Description
<b>Leadership</b> Does the state leadership include career exploration as a valued or prioritized component of students' middle school experience?	 Building Emerging Advanced	Although the state board of education's <a href="#">strategic plan</a> sets a vision of being the leader in college and career readiness, the state's leadership does not have any clear priorities for middle school career exploration.
<b>Career Exploration Definition</b> Does the state formally define career exploration for middle school students?	 Building Emerging Advanced	The IDOE <a href="#">defines</a> career exploration as skills consisting of learning how to identify and analyze various career options in terms of what education, training, experience, and competencies are required for success. Exploration includes learning in workplace environments or workplaces to discover and experience what it may be like to work in different occupations. It also involves evaluating how well a career matches or fits one's interests, skills, strengths, and work values. The Interagency Learning Task Force defines career exploration as learning ABOUT work, exploring career options, and postsecondary for the purpose of motivating students and informing their decision-making in high school and post-secondary education.
<b>Advocacy</b> Are there organizations within the state that are advocating for middle school career exploration?	 Building Emerging Advanced	The Indiana Department of Workforce Development has partnered with The <a href="#">DeBruce Foundation</a> as they relaunch the Indiana Career Explorer, a free career and education planning tool, to empower the Indiana economy. Through partnership amongst the IN DWD, Department of Education, Commission for Higher Education (IN CHE), Ivy Tech Community College, Vincennes University, and The Governor's Workforce Cabinet, the INCE is being rolled out this year for use by clients of IN's WorkOne locations, students throughout higher education, and youth in IN elementary, middle, and high schools. This "one tool for all" is designed to empower and equip Hoosiers across the lifespan of their education and working life.









# INDIANA • POLICY

Category	Status	Description
<b>Standards</b> Does the state have policies that establish standard practices for career exploration in middle schools?	 Building Emerging Advanced	IN Code <u>requires</u> schools to support students completing their graduation plan at the end of grade 8, including postsecondary goals aligned with graduation pathway requirements and an annual review. IN Code also <u>requires</u> schools to include state-developed career standards in the school's curriculum in 8th grade using either the Indiana Career Explorer program and standards or an alternate system. The IDOE's <u>standards</u> include employability skills for grades 6-8.
<b>Accountability</b> Does the state integrate career exploration into their accountability systems?	 Building Emerging Advanced	The state does not integrate career exploration into its ESSA state plan. However, middle school career exploration activities are formally included in <u>IN's Perkins V Plan</u> .
<b>Student Requirements</b> Does the state have policies that require middle school students to complete career exploration activities?	 Building Emerging Advanced	IN <u>requires</u> students to complete a graduation plan by the end of grade 8 that will follow them through grade 12.
<b>Incentives</b> Does the state have policies that incentivize career exploration in middle schools?	 Building Emerging Advanced	IN does not have any incentives directly related to middle school career exploration.



# INDIANA • INFRASTRUCTURE

Category	Status	Description
<p><b>Funding</b></p> <p>Does the state use state or federal funding sources to support career exploration for middle school students?</p>		<p><a href="#">Indiana Career Explorer</a> is a free online career exploration and graduation planning tool provided by the IN DWD. Supported by the IN CHE, <a href="#">Learn More Indiana</a> (LMI) helps students of all ages explore post-high school education options and the ways to pay for them. <a href="#">Perkins V state leadership funds</a> are allocated to support CTSOs and expand and improve middle school CTE programs.</p>
<p><b>Professional Development</b></p> <p>Does the state support the training of school counselors (and other school staff) in career exploration?</p>		<p>IN does not support training or professional development opportunities for school counselors and other school staff in career exploration.</p>
<p><b>Material Supports</b></p> <p>Does the state provide material supports on the implementation of middle school career exploration?</p>		<p>The IDEO provides several support resources, including the <a href="#">Employability Skills Standards Implementation Guide</a>, College and Career Navigation <a href="#">webpage</a>, a <a href="#">Quick User Guide</a> for support coaches, a <a href="#">slide deck</a> that guides K-8 students on the Career Exploration platform, and a <a href="#">resource guide</a> to support schools serving middle school students to complete Graduation Pathways in high school successfully. An interagency work-based learning task force provides a <a href="#">K-12 work-based learning manual</a> that includes career exploration activities and definitions.</p>
<p><b>Data Collection</b></p> <p>Does the state collect data on middle school career exploration opportunities in the state?</p>		<p>There are no formal state-level data collection practices related to middle school career exploration.</p>
<p><b>CTSOs</b></p> <p>Does the state support student participation in career and technical student organizations?</p>		<p><a href="#">Business Professionals of America</a> has middle school chapters for students enrolled in CTE or career-related education programs. Indiana uses <a href="#">Perkins V state leadership funds</a> to support CTSOs.</p>
<p><b>Organizations</b></p> <p>Are there organizations within the state that support career exploration in middle schools?</p>		<p><a href="#">Junior Achievement of Central Indiana</a> hosts JobSpark, an initiative that includes in-class or remote curriculum and activities before and after attending the event. JobSpark is meant to “spark” an interest in students and get them excited for their future.</p>