



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Higher education chief calls for changes to improve college advising**

INDIANAPOLIS, IND. – Indiana Commissioner for Higher Education Teresa Lubbers today called upon the state’s college and universities to embrace proactive college advising practices that will help Hoosier students better navigate their program of study and complete college on time.

“Indiana students often experience college as a maze rather than as path to success, and many finish with debt and no degree,” said Lubbers. “With clear degree maps, proactive advising and related strategies, we can empower students to make better decisions, save time and money, and increase their likelihood of earning a degree.”

Less than a third of Indiana’s four-year college students and only 4 percent of the state’s community college students graduate on time. In response, the Commission for Higher Education (CHE) is partnering with the state’s colleges to expand a series of practices—called “Guided Pathways to Success”—that provide clearer direction, simplified choices and more structured support to keep students on track for graduation.

Recommended strategies for preventing wasted credits and improving graduation rates include:

- Supplementing college advising with structured degree maps that simplify the course-selection process and provide students with a clear path to graduate on time
- Encouraging students to complete 15 credits each semester; or 30 credits per academic year
- Instituting proactive advising practices that intervene when students fail to complete key milestone courses, take courses on their degree map, or make satisfactory academic progress
- Expanding block scheduling options that offer greater consistency and predictability, making it easier for working students to balance their schooling with work and family obligations

The recommendations were included as part of a new study designed sponsored by, titled “*Guided Pathways to Student Success: Perspectives from Indiana College Students & Advisors.*” The study was informed by a series of focus groups with current college students, college dropouts, faculty advisors and professional advisors at public two- and four-year colleges across Indiana.

The proposed reforms to college advising practices were the focus of a first-of-its-kind convening of college leaders on Sept. 19. Sponsored by CHE, the summit featured state guidance on a newly legislated degree map requirement, best practices in student advising and the unveiling of Indiana’s new “15 to Finish” campaign, an initiative designed to encourage Hoosier college students to complete at least 15 credit hours each semester. Learn more at [www.che.in.gov](http://www.che.in.gov).