



Stakeholder Feedback Continues to Drive Multi-faceted Approach to Maximizing the High School Experience

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INDIANAPOLIS - Today, the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) provided an [update](#) to the Indiana State Board of Education on the state's ongoing work to rethink the high school experience. This included the anticipated timeline and process for how the state will define high-quality work-based learning and credentials of value, as well as presentations from national thought leaders.

"How might we maximize the four years of high school, in order to make it as valuable as possible for students? This is our collective challenge, yet also, an incredible opportunity," said Dr. Katie Jenner, Indiana Secretary of Education. "As I talk to stakeholders across the state, one thing I have heard on repeat is that, 'if' high school looked different for students, 'then' we could better connect them to what's next. The reality is, the structure of the American high school experience has not changed for most students in over a century, and while some aspects of the current high school experience work, many others are long outdated. Now is our moment in Indiana...our opportunity to make it better and to lead this work nationally."

This spring, IDOE launched a collaborative and comprehensive, yet expeditious, process of rethinking high school, starting with a [Graduation Landscape Analysis](#). The analysis included an in-depth look at how Indiana's graduation pathways and diploma requirements have evolved over time, as well as examples of graduation/diploma practices in other states. The analysis also included stakeholder engagement, which ultimately helped to focus the state's work into three key areas:

- **Diploma requirements** - Making high school diploma requirements **more flexible and relevant** to students, employers, and communities
- **High-quality work-based learning** - Improving access to and the number of students completing **high-quality work-based learning opportunities**
- **Credentials of Value** - Increasing access to and the number of students completing **high-value postsecondary credentials** *before high school graduation*



With a clear vision for the future, IDOE – in coordination with the Commission for Higher Education, Department of Workforce Development, and Governor’s Workforce Cabinet – set out to establish shared definitions of high-quality work-based learning and credentials of value. The definitions shared today aim to ensure that students graduate with knowledge, skills and experiences that align with the needs of employers, communities and our state.

The board also heard from [Patricia Levesque](#), CEO of the Foundation for Excellence in Education and [Dr. Tim Knowles](#), President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Levesque provided a national perspective on rethinking the high school learning experience and the motivating factors behind this effort. She also highlighted other states whose policies are attempting to move in this space, but noted the uniqueness of Indiana’s comprehensive approach. Dr. Knowles’ discussion centered on competency-based learning and the growing shift amongst education leaders and policy makers at the state and federal level in adopting competency-based learning as part of a student’s overall learning experience.

As next steps, IDOE will review current state statute to determine any modifications that may be needed to ensure Indiana’s high school diploma is increasingly learner-centered and future-focused. Stakeholder engagement will continue to be a crucial part of this work.

The presentation from today’s SBOE work session is available [here](#).