K12 ACADEMICS — STATE EDUCATION SERIES



Indiana
Education Guide

A complete profile — schools, testing, graduation, accountability, school choice, teacher certification & financial aid, each in depth.

K12 ACADEMICS

Find Your Community

2026 EDITION

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Everything about school in Indiana.

This guide profiles **Indiana**'s education system in seven parts, each a two-page deep dive with the key facts, plain-English explanations, and a link to the full, regularly-updated guide online. From K12 Academics, the world's largest education resource, online since 2004.

WHAT'S INSIDE

Education Overview · State Testing · Graduation Requirements · Accountability & Report Cards · School Choice · Teacher Certification · Financial Aid

SEARCH 200+ DIRECTORIES

K-12 Schools · Colleges & Universities · Vendors · Summer Programs · International Programs · Performers

Education Overview

EDUCATION IN INDIANA

Indiana educates roughly 1 million public K–12 students across about 290 school corporations (Indiana's term for school districts), plus charter schools, overseen by the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) and a Secretary of Education. Indiana is one of the nation's most school-choice-heavy states : its Choice Scholarship voucher —...

WHO MUST ATTEND SCHOOL

- **Start age** — 7
- **End of compulsory age** — 18 (early exit at 16 via exit interview)
- **Districts** — ~290 "school corporations" + charters
- **Satisfying it** — Public, private, or homeschool

PRE-K IN INDIANA

Indiana does not offer a universal pre-K program. State-funded early education is targeted through On My Way Pre-K — a program providing preschool for income-eligible 4-year-olds in participating counties — along with Build, Learn, Grow scholarships, the child-care assistance program, and Head Start . Private preschools serve many...

AT A GLANCE

Compulsory	Ages 7–18
Districts	~290 corps
Testing	ILEARN · SAT
Diploma	Core 40
Choice	Universal voucher

SCHOOL CORPORATIONS & CHARTERS

Indiana's largest school corporations include Indianapolis Public Schools , Fort Wayne Community Schools , Evansville Vanderburgh , and fast-growing suburban districts such as Carmel Clay and Hamilton Southeastern . Indiana has a substantial charter-school sector (authorized by entities including the Indianapolis Mayor's Office and...

PRIVATE & INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS IN INDIANA

- **Catholic & parochial schools** — A large network across the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and dioceses statewide (such as Cathedral High School, Brebeuf Jesuit, and Bishop Chatard)
- **Independent schools** — Nonprofit, board-governed schools such as Park Tudor School , The Orchard School, and the International School of Indiana (Indianapolis), and...
- **Other religious schools** — Lutheran, Christian, and other faith-based schools
- **Specialty schools** — Montessori and schools for specific learning needs

READ INDIANA'S FULL EDUCATION OVERVIEW GUIDE
tools.k12academics.com →

State Testing

WHAT YOUR STATE TESTS

Indiana uses ILEARN in grades 3–8 and, in high school, the SAT — Indiana adopted the SAT as its statewide grade-11 assessment (starting 2021–22), replacing the retired ISTEP+ . Grade 3 students take IREAD-3 (a reading test tied to promotion). All are run by the Indiana Department of Education and aligned to the Indiana Academic Standards.

WHICH TESTS, WHICH GRADES

- **ILEARN (grades 3–8)** — English language arts and mathematics; science at grades 4 and 6; social studies at grade 5; a Biology end-of-course
- **SAT (grade 11)** — Indiana's statewide high-school assessment, giving students a college-usable score
- **IREAD-3** — A grade-3 reading assessment connected to promotion
- **I AM alternate assessment** — For eligible students; WIDA ACCESS for multilingual learners

FORMAT & SUBJECTS

ILEARN is online and computer-adaptive with varied item types. The grade-11 SAT follows the national digital SAT format.

IS PASSING REQUIRED TO GRADUATE?

Through graduation pathways. Indiana does not gate graduation on a single test score. Students earn a diploma by completing course/credit requirements and meeting a graduation pathway — which can include the SAT/ACT, industry credentials, AP/IB/dual credit, a locally-created pathway, and more. The grade-11 SAT provides a college-usable...

AT A GLANCE

Grades 3–8	**ILEARN**
Subjects	**ELA, Math + Sci/SS**
High school	**SAT (grade 11)**
Grade 3 reading	**IREAD-3**
Grad requirement?	**Graduation pathways**
Format	**Online, adaptive**

HOW IT 'S SCORED

ILEARN reports levels (Below, Approaching, At, and Above Proficiency). The grade-11 SAT is scored 400–1600. IREAD-3 reports pass/did-not-pass for the reading benchmark.

TESTING WINDOWS

ILEARN and the grade-11 SAT are given in a spring window ; IREAD-3 has spring (and summer retest) windows. Exact dates are set by the state and district.

HOW TO PREPARE

- **SAT prep for grade 11** — Because the state test is the SAT, our SAT guide and free Khan Academy Official SAT Practice apply directly
- **ILEARN practice** — The state provides practice tests matching the adaptive online format
- **Grade-3 reading support** — For IREAD-3, focus on reading fluency and comprehension early

READ INDIANA'S FULL STATE TESTING GUIDE
tools.k12academics.com →

Graduation Requirements

AT A GLANCE

Indiana graduation combines a diploma (credits) with Graduation Pathways — and there's no single exit exam . Indiana has also redesigned its diploma around readiness, phasing in for future classes — so confirm what applies to your student.

CREDIT & COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Indiana's diploma frameworks (historically the Core 40 and its Academic Honors and Technical Honors versions) require roughly 40+ credits across English, math, science, social studies, and electives. The redesigned diploma emphasizes readiness and work-based learning — confirm the current framework with your school.

TESTING TO GRADUATE

No single exit exam. Indiana uses Graduation Pathways : earn a diploma, show employability skills (via a project, work-based learning, or service), and demonstrate postsecondary readiness through one of several options (a state test score, ACT/SAT, AP/IB/dual credit, a CTE credential, ASVAB, or a locally created pathway).

DIPLOMA TYPES & HONORS

Indiana offers diploma designations (Honors, Technical Honors) and readiness seals under the redesigned diploma, plus the Seal of Biliteracy .

AT A GLANCE

Framework	**Indiana diploma + Graduation Pat...**
Exit exam?	**No single exit exam**
Pathways	**Diploma + employability + readin...**
New	**Redesigned diploma (phasing in)**
Confirm with	**Your district**

ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS

The Graduation Pathways flexibility (multiple ways to show readiness) is Indiana's family-friendly design.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **How many credits does Indiana require?** — The state sets a minimum, but your district may require more — confirm locally.
- **Does Indiana require a test to graduate?** — No single exit exam — Indiana uses flexible Graduation Pathways to show readiness.
- **Are there different diploma types?** — Yes — plus honors designations and seals; see the diplomas section.
- **What if my student is behind on credits?** — Talk to the counselor about credit recovery and alternative pathways.
- **Where do I confirm the exact requirements?** — Your school counselor, district, and the state department of education.

READ INDIANA'S FULL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS GUIDE
tools.k12academics.com →

INDIANA — PART 4 OF 7

Accountability & Report Cards

AT A GLANCE

Indiana historically used A-F letter grades , but the state paused and is redesigning its A-F system (with new grades expected to resume around 2026–27). In the meantime, schools carry federal ESSA designations , and data is shown on the Indiana GPS dashboard.

HOW THIS STATE RATES SCHOOLS

During the transition, Indiana identifies schools under ESSA (CSI/TSI) and publishes performance data on Indiana Graduates Prepared to Succeed (GPS) and school report cards. The redesigned A-F grades are being developed — confirm the current status, and in the meantime read the underlying indicators .

WHAT GETS MEASURED

- **Academic achievement** — How students score on state tests (proficiency in reading/ELA and math)
- **Academic growth / progress** — How much students improve year to year — not just where they land
- **Graduation rate** — For high schools (the 4-year cohort rate)
- **English-learner progress** — How English learners are progressing toward proficiency
- **School quality / student success** — An extra indicator — often attendance/chronic absenteeism, college/career readiness, or similar

FINDING & READING THE REPORT CARD

Look up any school on Indiana GPS (indianagps.doe.in.gov) and the state report cards. Read across the indicators (achievement, growth, graduation, readiness) and note the trend.

AT A GLANCE

Format	**A-F (paused/redesigned)**
Status	**Resuming ~2026–27**
Interim	**Federal ESSA designations**
Tool	**Indiana GPS / report cards**
Look up at	**indianagps.doe.in.gov**

HOW FAMILIES SHOULD USE RATINGS

- **Read it in context** — A school's score reflects its students' circumstances too, not only its quality
- **Look at growth, not just scores** — Growth shows how much a school moves students — often more telling than raw proficiency
- **Check the trend** — Is the school improving over time?
- **Look past the summary** — Dig into the underlying data (subgroups, attendance, readiness)
- **Then visit** — Data raises questions; a visit answers them (see our guide on evaluating a school)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **How does Indiana rate schools?** — Indiana's A-F system is paused and being redesigned (resuming ~2026–27); interim ratings use federal ESSA designations.
- **What do the ratings measure?** — Test scores, growth, graduation rate, English-learner progress, and a school-quality indicator.
- **Where do I look up my school?** — On the state's official report-card portal (see below).
- **Should I choose a school by its rating alone?** — No — use it as a starting point, weigh growth and context, and visit.
- **What are CSI and TSI?** — Federal labels for schools flagged for Comprehensive or Targeted Support and Improvement.

READ INDIANA'S FULL ACCOUNTABILITY & REPORT CARDS GUIDE
tools.k12academics.com →

School Choice

AT A GLANCE

Indiana has one of the older, larger voucher programs — the Choice Scholarship — and it recently removed its income cap , making it broadly available . Indiana also has an Education Scholarship Account (ESA) and a public charter sector.

THIS STATE'S CHOICE PROGRAMS

The Choice Scholarship voucher helps eligible families pay private-school tuition; with the income cap removed , it is now available to a broad range of Indiana students . The Education Scholarship Account (ESA) serves students with special needs, providing a flexible account for approved expenses.

ELIGIBILITY

With the income cap removed, Choice Scholarship eligibility is now broad (most students qualify), though other criteria may apply. The ESA has its own (special-needs) eligibility. Confirm current rules.

APPLYING

Apply for the Choice Scholarship through a participating private school; apply for the ESA through the state program. Confirm windows and requirements.

AT A GLANCE	
Flagship	Choice Scholarship (voucher)
Change	Income cap removed — broadly ava...
Also	Education Scholarship Account (E...
Plus	Public charters
Confirm with	The state program

PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE, TOO

- **Open enrollment / transfers** — Attend a public school outside your zone, where allowed (see our finding-your-school guide)
- **Charter schools** — Tuition-free public schools of choice (where available)
- **Magnet schools** — Tuition-free public schools with a specialized focus
- **Homeschooling** — Legal in all 50 states (rules vary)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **Does Indiana have a private-school-choice program?** — Yes — Indiana has the Choice Scholarship voucher (income cap removed) plus an ESA for special needs.
- **What's the difference between an ESA and a voucher?** — A voucher pays a private school directly; an ESA is a flexible parent-managed account for many approved expenses.
- **What is a tax-credit scholarship?** — Donors get a tax credit for giving to organizations that fund private-school scholarships.
- **Is there public school choice too?** — Yes — open enrollment, charters, and magnets (plus homeschooling).
- **Where do I confirm the details?** — On the official state program site (see below).

READ INDIANA'S FULL SCHOOL CHOICE GUIDE
tools.k12academics.com →

INDIANA — PART 6 OF 7

Teacher Certification

HOW LICENSURE WORKS HERE

Indiana licenses teachers through the Indiana Department of Education . You complete an approved program, pass the required Indiana CORE assessments, and earn an Initial Practitioner License , later a Proficient Practitioner License .

WHICH TESTS THIS STATE USES

- **CASA** — Core Academic Skills Assessment (basic skills) — often waivable with qualifying SAT/ACT/GRE scores
- **Indiana CORE content assessment(s)** — Content test(s) for your license area
- **Indiana CORE pedagogy** — A developmental/pedagogy assessment where required
- **Note** — Requirements vary by license — confirm your specific tests

WHAT YOU NEED TO GET LICENSED

- **A bachelor's degree** — From an accredited college or university
- **A state-approved teacher-preparation program** — Completed at a college or through an approved alternative route
- **Student teaching / clinical practice** — Supervised classroom experience
- **Pass the required exams** — See the exams section above
- **A background check** — Fingerprint-based criminal background check
- **Apply to the state** — Submit your application and documents to the licensing agency

AT A GLANCE

Agency	**Indiana Department of Education**
Basic skills	**CASA (often waivable)**
Content & pedagogy	**Indiana CORE assessments**
License	**Initial Practitioner — then Prof...**

OTHER PATHS INTO TEACHING

Most states offer alternative routes for career-changers and those with a degree in another field. In Indiana, these typically let you start teaching while completing licensure requirements — through district or university alternative-certification programs, residencies, or emergency/provisional permits. Requirements (and the exams) are...

RECIPROCITY & OUT-OF-STATE LICENSES

- **Interstate agreements** — Most states participate in the NASDTEC Interstate Agreement, which eases (but doesn't guarantee) recognition of an out-of-state license
- **You may still owe exams** — States often require you to meet their own testing (or coursework) requirements, sometimes within a grace period
- **Check both states** — Confirm the specific steps with Indianas agency and your current state

READ INDIANA'S FULL TEACHER CERTIFICATION GUIDE
tools.k12academics.com →

Financial Aid

THE STATE AID PICTURE

Indiana administers state aid through the Indiana Commission for Higher Education . Its standout program is 21st Century Scholars , which — for students who enroll and fulfill a pledge in middle school — can cover up to full tuition at an eligible Indiana college.

NEED-BASED STATE GRANTS

- **Frank O'Bannon Grant** — Indiana's main need-based grant for residents at eligible in-state colleges.
- **21st Century Scholars** — Income-eligible students who enroll in 7th/8th grade and complete the Scholar Success Program can earn up to four years of tuition at a participating...
- **Adult Student Grant** — Need-based aid for returning adult students.

PROMISE & FREE-COLLEGE PROGRAMS

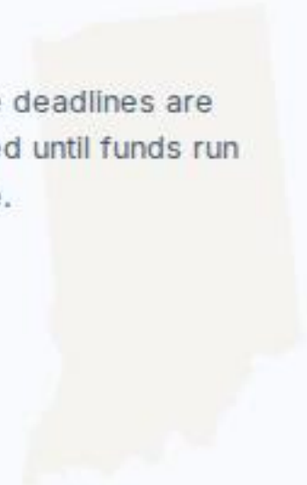
The Workforce Ready Grant (Next Level Jobs) covers tuition for certificates in high-demand fields at Ivy Tech and Vincennes University.

COLLEGE SAVINGS (529 PLAN)

Indiana's Indiana529 plan offers a state tax credit for Indiana taxpayers who contribute.

DEADLINES & TIMING

Indiana has an early state FAFSA deadline (around mid-April) for state aid — don't miss it. State deadlines are typically much earlier than the federal FAFSA deadline , and some aid is first-come, first-served until funds run out. File the FAFSA as soon as it opens (in the fall) and confirm the state's specific priority date.



AT A GLANCE

Need-based	**Frank O'Bannon Grant**
Income-based (pledge)	**21st Century Scholars**
Workforce	**Workforce Ready Grant**
529 plan	**Indiana529**
Agency	**Indiana CHE**
Apply by	**FAFSA**

APPLYING & THE STATE AGENCY

- **File the FAFSA early** — It's the trigger for state grants and many scholarships
- **Register with the Indiana Commission for Higher Education** — Create the state agency's student account to track and claim awards
- **Confirm your details** — Verify residency, GPA, and enrollment as required
- **Meet any extra requirements** — Some programs need a separate form, GPA, or service commitment
- **Reapply every year** — State aid is awarded annually

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **How do I get Indiana state aid?** — File the FAFSA (and any state form) by the deadline; the Indiana Commission for Higher Education administers the programs.
- **Is it need-based or merit?** — Both — Indiana offers need-based grants and merit scholarships.
- **Are the deadlines earlier than federal?** — Usually yes — file early, as some aid is first-come.
- **Can I use it out of state?** — Most Indiana aid is for in-state schools; check each program.
- **Does this list private scholarships?** — No — this guide covers official state programs only.

READ INDIANA'S FULL FINANCIAL AID GUIDE
tools.k12academics.com →

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