

State Opportunity Index



KANSAS

STATE SUMMARY 2025

Kansas at a glance

THE STATE OPPORTUNITY INDEX combines research-backed strategies for improving education-to-career outcomes with benchmarking measures to track progress for all 50 states, giving policymakers and institutions a framework for strengthening the link between education and opportunity.

For each state, the Index reports the percentage of students who experience a positive return on investment and summarizes progress in five key areas for improving success beyond completion: Clear Outcomes, Quality Coaching, Affordability, Work-Based Learning, and Employer Alignment. States are grouped into four categories: Leading (at the forefront, demonstrating strong progress); Advanced (substantial progress); Developing (early stages of improvement); and Foundational (just beginning their journey).

Positive ROI

70%



State
Opportunity
Index

strada

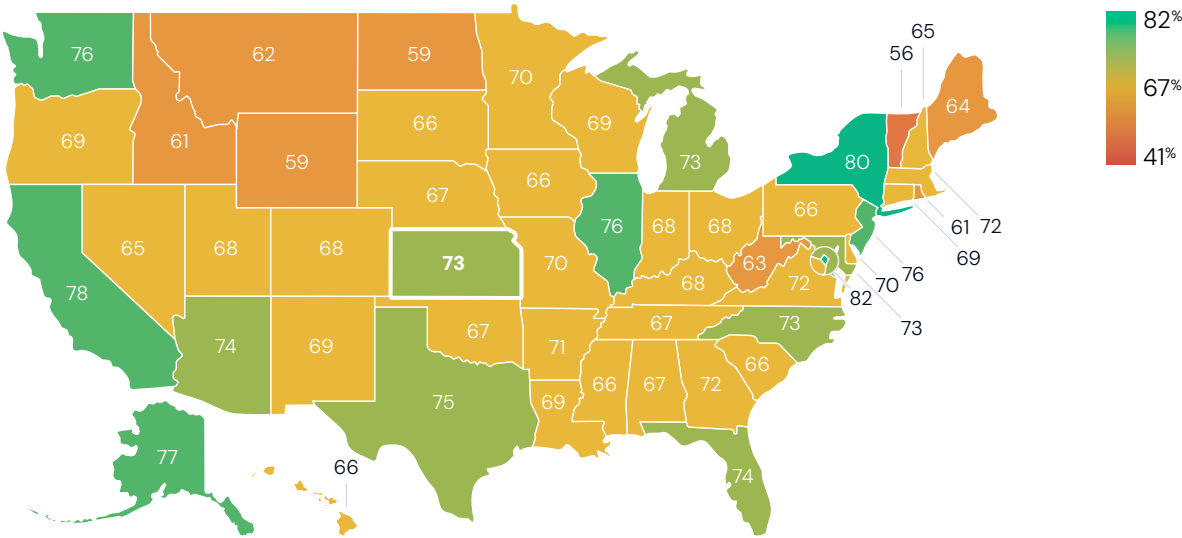
Positive ROI

Kansas

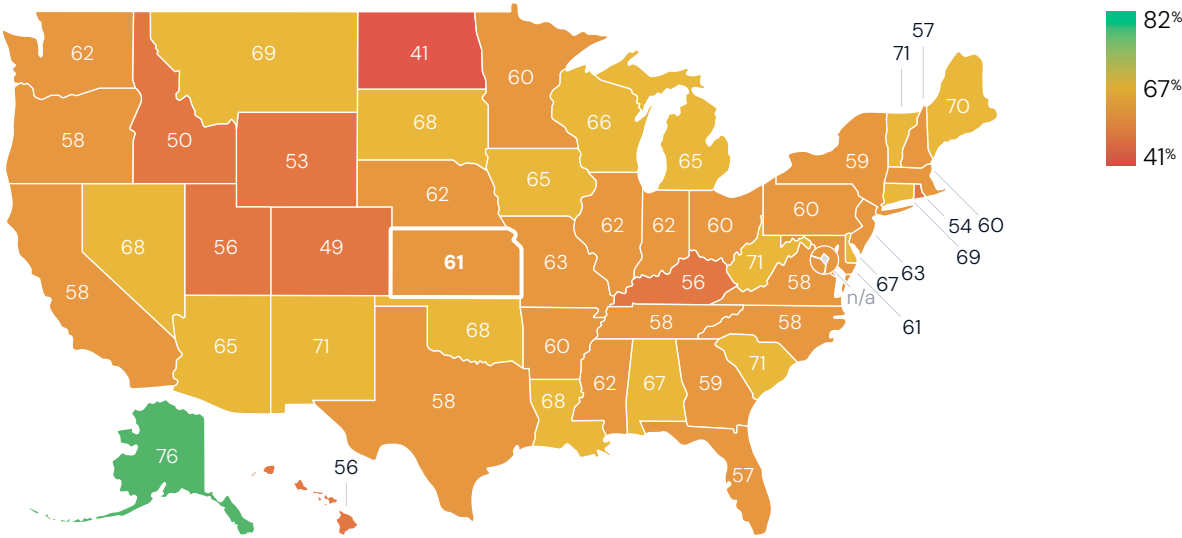
The positive ROI value for each state represents the estimated percentage of public college graduates whose earnings premium over high school graduates is enough to repay their total cost of a degree within 10 years.

	Kansas	U.S.
Overall	70%	70%
Bachelor's	73%	73%
Associate	61%	60%

Percentage of graduates with positive 10-year ROI by state – bachelor's degrees



Percentage of graduates with positive 10-year ROI by state – associate degrees





Everyone should have access to accurate information on employment outcomes that can help them make informed decisions about education after high school. The Clear Outcomes measure is based on 10 critical elements that contribute to the capacity of state education-to-employment data systems to strengthen the connection between education and opportunity.

COLLECT

State data system elements	State description	Rating
1 Includes learner-level and program characteristic data for nondegree and noncredit postsecondary education and training programs	Kansas implements extensive collection of enrollment and credential outcome data for nondegree and noncredit postsecondary education and training programs. The state collects: (i) college-issued, for-credit nondegree credentials; (ii) college-issued, noncredit nondegree credentials; (iii) WIOA-eligible training providers; (iv) occupational licensure; and (v) other third-party credentials, including industry certifications and apprenticeships. Kansas links college-issued, for-credit nondegree credentials with employment outcomes. Additionally, the Kansas Board of Regents has convened the Council of Institutional Research Officers to provide recommendations about collecting badges, microcredentials, and other skills-based continuing education certificates from Kansas public universities.	LEADING
2 Examines earnings by occupation, pay rate, and work location	Kansas does not collect any of the three enhanced elements, and Strada's research did not demonstrate any emerging collection policy.	FOUNDATIONAL

INTEGRATE

State data system elements	State description	Rating
3 Integrates and delivers information on learner's earnings and employment after postsecondary education and training completion, and over time	Kansas has extensive integration and publication of postsecondary education and training and employment data, including: (i) public four-year institutions to employment, (ii) community colleges to employment, and (iii) WIOA-eligible training providers to employment. Employment outcomes for public four-year institutions, community colleges, and college-issued, for-credit nondegree credentials are available as public downloadable datasets and a public interactive reporting tool through the Kansas Higher Education Statistics portal and Kansas DegreeStats . The employment outcomes reported through Kansas Higher Education Statistics are disaggregated by race/ethnicity and gender. Employment outcomes for WIOA-eligible training providers are available as a public downloadable dataset and a public interactive reporting tool through the Kansas Training Information Program . Kansas does not integrate and publish data on private four-year institutions to employment.	ADVANCED
4 Integrates and delivers information on learner's earnings and employment after high school completion and over time	Kansas integrates information on learners' earnings and employment for all high school graduates who don't immediately enter postsecondary education and training. The state publishes high school-to-employment outcomes for high school students concurrently or dually enrolled in postsecondary education programs.	ADVANCED
5 Partners with national and multi-state initiatives to assess education-to-opportunity outcomes for graduates and non-graduates of postsecondary education and training programs who relocate or work outside the state	Kansas partners with State Wage Interchange System and the Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations. Some private four-year institutions in Kansas partner with PSEO (data pending).	FOUNDATIONAL

CATEGORY KEY



Leading
Fully present



Advanced
Partially present



Developing
In development



Foundational
Not in development

Extent to which elements are present in state data infrastructure.



PROVIDE

State data system elements	State description	Rating
6 Provides comprehensive and timely open data files containing anonymized education-to-opportunity statistics that anyone can access, download, and otherwise use	Kansas has open data files containing education-to-employment outcomes by institution and program for (i) public four-year institutions; (ii) community colleges; (iii) WIOA-eligible training providers; and (iv) nondegree credentials from the Kansas Higher Education Statistics portal or the Kansas Training Information Program .	LEADING
7 Publishes robust, timely, and easily understandable interactive resources informing education-to-opportunity decision-making by learners, families, and institutions	Kansas has interactive resources containing education-to-opportunity metrics such as enrollment, retention, and earnings by institution, credential, and program for (i) public four-year institutions; (ii) community colleges; (iii) WIOA-eligible training providers; and (iv) nondegree credentials. These resources include the Kansas Higher Education Statistics portal , Kansas DegreeStats , and the Kansas Training Information Program .	LEADING
8 Gives researchers access to individual-level matched education-to-opportunity datasets	Researchers can request de-identified individual-level data through the Kansas Board of Regents' data governance committee. Though there are some exceptions, researchers have to work within the agency's system to access the data and may not remove data from the system. Kansas has engaged researchers on multiple occasions, and research often focuses on postsecondary graduation outcomes and employment placement and earnings. The state publishes research findings , but the request and approval review is not clearly documented.	ADVANCED

(...) IMPACT

State data system elements	State description	Rating
9 Enables learners and earners to access and utilize their own verified data, unlocking opportunities for college and career advancement	Kansas' four-year institutions are piloting CLRs and LERs primarily for alternative credential verification. For instance, Kansas State University leverages Credly and Wichita State University partners with 1EdTech and Territorium to issue and manage digital credentials or badges earned through the institutions' microcredential programs. Select university personnel along with Board of Regents staff are providing feedback in national efforts to bring about an interoperable framework and definitions to further advance LERs.	ADVANCED
10 Designates a unit with responsibility and dedicated, full-time capacity for generating education-to-employment insights to inform state policymaking and resource allocation decision-making	The Kansas Board of Regents' Data, Research, and Planning unit has developed resources and tools for E2E stakeholders, such as Kansas Higher Education Statistics, K-TIP, Kansas DegreeStats, and E2E research, and an analysis of transitions to the labor market and implications for policy. The unit continues to pursue new opportunities to encourage a system approach for advancement of E2E resources.	DEVELOPING

CATEGORY KEY

Extent to which elements are present in state data infrastructure.

- **Leading**
Fully present
- **Advanced**
Partially present
- **Developing**
In development
- **Foundational**
Not in development



Quality Coaching

Kansas

FOUR-YEAR

DEVELOPING

TWO-YEAR

ADVANCED

Everyone should have access to coaching that helps them reflect on their talents and interests, choose a career goal, chart a path, and navigate challenges. Graduates who receive such guidance are more likely to land a job that requires a degree and feel satisfied with their career trajectory. The Quality Coaching measure is based on the percentage of two-year students and four-year senior students who reported receiving personalized guidance, timely labor market information, and support to create a plan and overcome barriers.

Personalized guidance		Four-year	Two-year
Percentage of students at public institutions who report receiving personalized coaching or guidance to help select the education that will help prepare them for a successful career.		47% 	49% 
Timely labor market information		Four-year	Two-year
The average share of students at public institutions who receive timely labor market information, across the various types below, before enrolling or during their first year.		21% 	31% 
Education-to-career paths that might be a good fit for student's strengths and interests		26%	39%
Job opportunities that a particular education program could lead to		26%	37%
Potential earnings in different careers related to student's education program		15%	27%
Career outcomes of students from their own institution		17%	21%
Support		Four-year	Two-year
The average share of students at public institutions who receive at least some support in setting goals and in overcoming obstacles.		76% 	77% 
Setting education and career goals and developing a plan to achieve these goals		74%	76%
Identifying and overcoming barriers		78%	78%
CATEGORY KEY			
When the margin of error crosses a category threshold, states are given a combined category.			
 Leading ≥75%		 Advanced 50% to <75%	
		 Developing 25% to <50%	
		 Foundational <25%	
National results		Four-year	Two-year
Personalized guidance		34%	45%
Timely labor market information		21%	33%
Support		71%	74%



Affordability

Kansas

FOUR-YEAR

FOUNDATIONAL

TWO-YEAR

ADVANCED

Quality post-high school programs should be within everyone's financial reach, allowing for equitable opportunities for success. The Affordability measure is based on how many hours a week the average student would need to work to cover the in-state net price (total cost of attendance minus any grants and scholarships), how many hours a student from a low-income family would need to work to cover their typical in-state net price, and the percentage of students that complete their degree on time – a critical factor in the cost of a degree.

Student hours of work needed	Four-year	Two-year		
Average student hours of work needed	FOUNDATIONAL 39 hours per week Average annual net price, four-year institutions: \$15,817	ADVANCED 19 hours per week Average annual net price, two-year institutions: \$9,579		
Low-income student hours of work needed	DEVELOPING 24 hours per week Average annual net price for low-income students, four-year institutions: \$11,329	ADVANCED 14 hours per week Average annual net price for low-income students, two-year institutions: \$8,061		
CATEGORY KEY	Leading <10 hrs	Advanced 10 to <20 hrs	Developing 20 to <30 hrs	Foundational ≥30 hrs

On-time completion rate		Four-year		
On-time completion rate	DEVELOPING			
	43%			
CATEGORY KEY	Leading ≥65%	Advanced 50% to <65%	Developing 35% to <50%	Foundational <35%



Work-Based Learning

Kansas

FOUR-YEAR

DEVELOPING

TWO-YEAR

FND./DEV.

All students should have access to quality work-based learning experiences, such as paid internships and apprenticeships, that are linked to higher earnings, greater job satisfaction, and lower underemployment. The Work-Based Learning measure is based on the percentage of two-year students and four-year senior students who reported participating in at least one of the following types of paid experiences: paid internship, paid apprenticeship, paid co-op, paid practicum, or paid undergraduate research experience.

Quality Work-Based Learning	Four-year	Two-year
Percentage of students at public institutions who participated in at least one of five types of quality paid work-based learning experiences	42% DEVELOPING Paid internship participation: 39% Percentage of students who participated in at least one of the five types of experiences (paid or unpaid): 73%	25% FND./DEV. Paid internship participation: 22% Percentage of students who participated in at least one of the five types of experiences (paid or unpaid): 39%

CATEGORY KEY

When the margin of error crosses a category threshold, states are given a combined category.

● **Leading**
≥75%

● **Advanced**
50% to <75%

● **Developing**
25% to <50%

● **Foundational**
<25%

National results	Four-year	Two-year
Any quality paid work-based learning experience	43%	17%
Paid internship	37%	14%
Any work-based learning experience (paid or unpaid)	72%	33%



In addition to student self-reporting of apprenticeship participation, states have other sources of information on participation in registered apprenticeships via the U.S. Department of Labor. In Kansas, **0.20 percent** of the state labor force is made up of active apprentices, for a total of **3,077 apprentices**. Across the country, this number ranges from 0.9 percent (Hawaii) to 0.12 percent (Oklahoma). In countries with leading apprenticeship systems, such as Germany, Switzerland, Australia, Canada, and England, apprentices constitute about 2.5–3.0 percent of the labor force, so all states in the U.S. have substantial room for improvement.



Employer Alignment

DEVELOPING

Kansas

Students should have access to programs that lead to quality jobs and mobility, and employers should assess and advance individuals based on skills and experiences, not just degrees. The Employer Alignment measure is based on the percentage of terminal bachelor's degree holders aged 25–34 employed in a college-level job as well as the supply/demand ratio for a variety of high-demand, high-wage jobs in each state.

College-level employment

The percentage of bachelor's degree graduates who are employed in college-level positions

ADVANCED

Supply/demand ratio

The overall ratio: the average of the entry-level supply/demand ratios for these nine opportunity occupational groups

FOUNDATIONAL

Information technology and business

Data analytics

LEADING

Finance and accounting professionals

DEVELOPING

Finance and accounting support

FOUNDATIONAL

Information and cybersecurity

LEADING

Software development and engineering

LEADING

Health care

Health care technicians and technologists

FOUNDATIONAL

Nursing

FOUNDATIONAL

Manufacturing and engineering

Engineering

ADVANCED

Manufacturing/Trades technicians and technologists

FOUNDATIONAL

CATEGORY KEY

● **Leading**
≥75%

● **Advanced**
60% to <75%

● **Developing**
50% to <60%

● **Foundational**
<50%