

State Opportunity Index



OHIO

STATE SUMMARY 2025

Ohio 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

66%



State
Opportunity
Index

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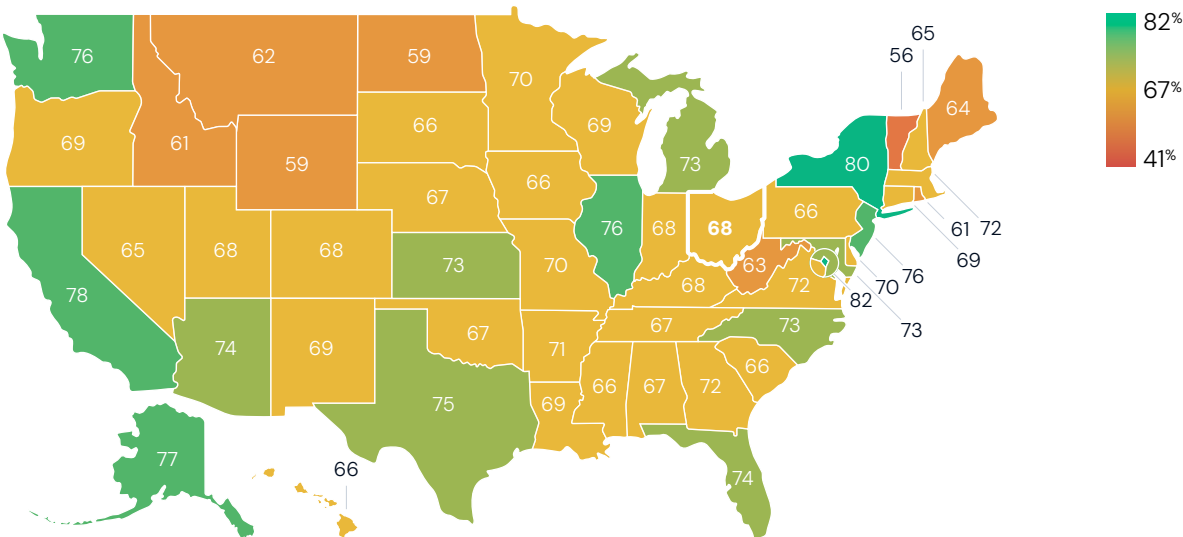
Positive ROI

Ohio

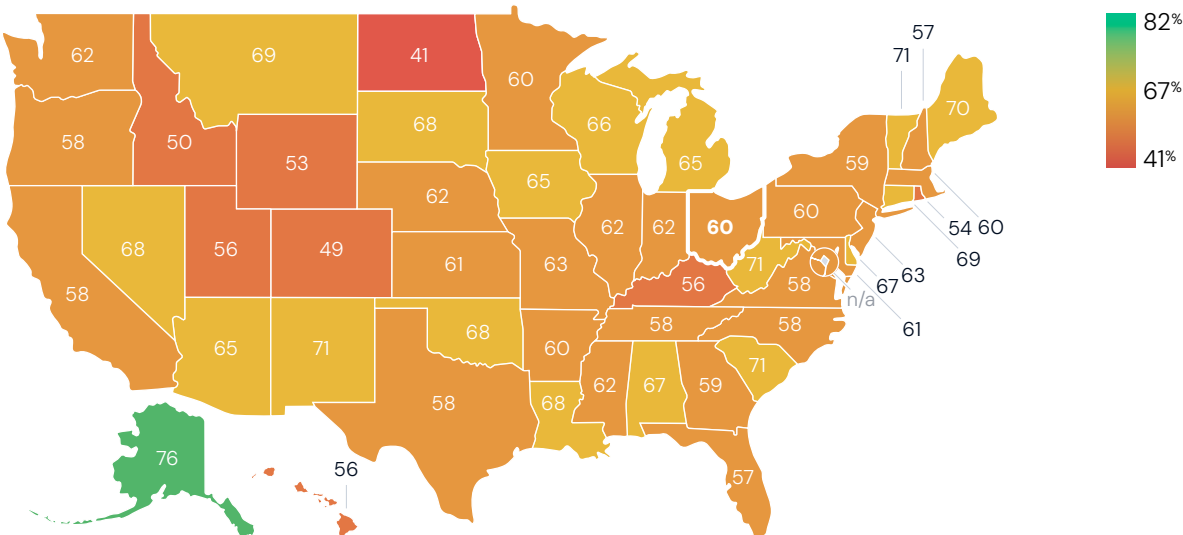
The positive ROI value for each state represents the estimated percentage of public college graduates whose earnings premium over high school graduates is enough to repay their total cost of a degree within 10 years.

	Ohio	U.S.
Overall	66%	70%
Bachelor's	68%	73%
Associate	60%	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	Ohio collects enrollment and credential outcome data from multiple nondegree and noncredit postsecondary education and training programs. The state's collections include: (i) college-issued, for-credit nondegree certificates; (ii) college-issued, noncredit nondegree credentials; (iii) occupational licensure; and (iv) other third-party credentials, namely industry certification and apprenticeship programs. Ohio links employment outcomes to college-issued, for-credit nondegree credentials, occupational licensure, and industry certification. The state publishes these integrated nondegree credential-to-employment data through the Ohio Education Research Center's Employment by Program dashboard .	ADVANCED
2 Examines earnings by occupation, pay rate, and work location	Ohio currently collects work location and plans to collect occupation in the future. The Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services is considering a skills-based reporting system.	ADVANCED

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	Ohio integrates two key postsecondary education and employment datasets, including: (i) public four-year institutions to employment, and (ii) community colleges to employment. Integrated postsecondary education-to-employment data for public four-year institutions, community colleges, and nondegree credentials are available as open data files and public interactive reporting tools through the Ohio Education Research Center's Employment by Program dashboard and the Earnings over Time dashboard . The employment outcomes in the dashboards are not disaggregated.	ADVANCED
4 Integrates and delivers information on learner's earnings and employment after high school completion and over time	Through the Coleridge Initiative, the Ohio Department of Higher Education is working with the Ohio Education Research Center to expand the Multi-State Postsecondary Outcomes dashboard to track high school and nondegree employment outcomes in Ohio.	DEVELOPING
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	Ohio partners with PSEO (50–75% graduate coverage), Multi-State Data Collaborative, and State Wage Interchange System.	LEADING

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



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	Ohio has downloadable files from public interactive resources containing postsecondary education-to-employment outcomes for: (i) public four-year institutions; (ii) community colleges; and (iii) nondegree credentials.	LEADING
7 Publishes robust, timely, and easily understandable interactive resources informing education-to-opportunity decision-making by learners, families, and institutions	Ohio has public interactive resources containing education-to-employment outcomes for: (i) public four-year institutions; (ii) community colleges; and (iii) nondegree credentials.	LEADING
8 Gives researchers access to individual-level matched education-to-opportunity datasets	The Ohio Longitudinal Data Archive (OLDA) combines data from several state agencies such as the Ohio Department of Higher Education, Ohio Department of Education, and the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services. The platform provides internal and external researchers with pre-matched datasets across PSET programs and into employment through a data request application process . Ohio publishes results of studies conducted using OLDA records.	LEADING

(...) 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	Ohio is a SkillsFWD grantee. The SkillsFWD team, led by Aspyr Workforce Innovation and the Central Ohio Workforce Development Board, is leveraging existing technology partners in the Columbus City Schools to place graduates in employment opportunities. Columbus City Schools uses SchoolLinks for college and career planning and is now expanding this partnership to include LER functionality. Every Columbus City Schools high school student can access a digital wallet through their SchoolLinks account. Ohio has established a resume and candidate feedback process to help students reflect on their experiences and ensure they go into application processes prepared. They are also engaging local employers to help them understand the value that high school students can bring to their workforces. All functionality developed in the SchoolLinks platform for this project will be released nationally to allow other organizations to take advantage of the tools.	DEVELOPING
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 Ohio Education Research Center (OERC) at The Ohio State University maintains ready access to integrated education-to-employment data through the Ohio Longitudinal Data Archive. OERC publishes resources on postsecondary employment outcomes. There is evidence of sustainable funding, governance, and staffing as well as partnerships with higher education and workforce development agencies.	ADVANCED

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

Ohio

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.		35% DEVELOPING	51% DEV./ADV.
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.		24% FND./DEV.	42% DEVELOPING
Education-to-career paths that might be a good fit for student's strengths and interests		27%	48%
Job opportunities that a particular education program could lead to		29%	46%
Potential earnings in different careers related to student's education program		20%	37%
Career outcomes of students from their own institution		20%	35%
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.		73% ADV./LEAD.	76% ADV./LEAD.
Setting education and career goals and developing a plan to achieve these goals		71%	76%
Identifying and overcoming barriers		75%	76%
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

Ohio

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 46 hours per week Average annual net price, four-year institutions: \$18,476	ADVANCED 18 hours per week Average annual net price, two-year institutions: \$9,753		
Low-income student hours of work needed	DEVELOPING 25 hours per week Average annual net price for low-income students, four-year institutions: \$11,942	ADVANCED 11 hours per week Average annual net price for low-income students, two-year institutions: \$7,513		
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			
	46%			
CATEGORY KEY	Leading ≥65%	Advanced 50% to <65%	Developing 35% to <50%	Foundational <35%



Work-Based Learning

Ohio

FOUR-YEAR

DEV./ADV.

TWO-YEAR

FOUNDATIONAL

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	52% DEV./ADV. Paid internship participation: 46% Percentage of students who participated in at least one of the five types of experiences (paid or unpaid): 81%	14% FOUNDATIONAL Paid internship participation: 11% Percentage of students who participated in at least one of the five types of experiences (paid or unpaid): 30%

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 Ohio, **0.44 percent** of the state labor force is made up of active apprentices, for a total of **25,933 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

Ohio

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%