

State Opportunity Index



TEXAS

STATE SUMMARY
2025

Texas 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

71%



**State
Opportunity
Index**

strada

Learn more at strada.org/state-opportunity-index

References for "unavailable" refer to states in which there was insufficient data to assign a rating at this time.

In cases where the margin of error crosses a category threshold, states are given a combined category.

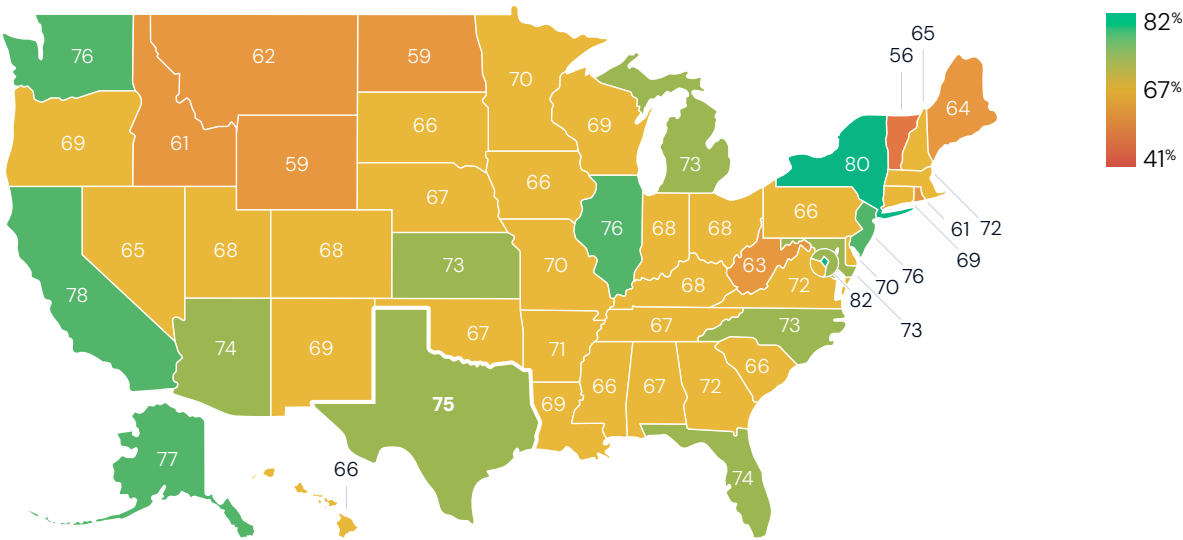
Positive ROI

Texas

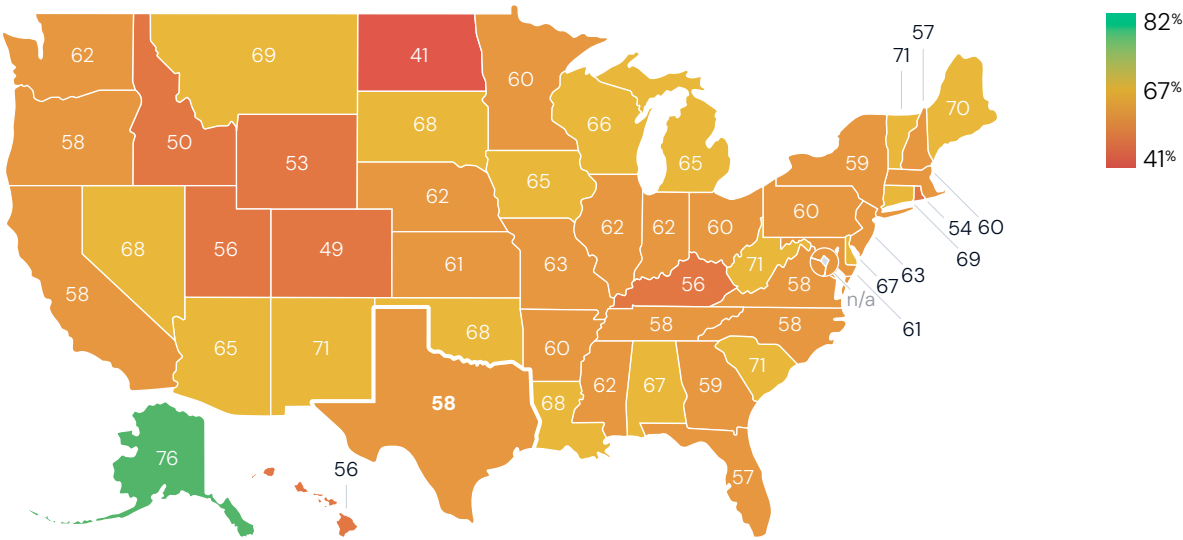
The positive ROI value for each state represents the estimated percentage of public college graduates whose earnings premium over high school graduates is enough to repay their total cost of a degree within 10 years.

	Texas	U.S.
Overall	71%	70%
Bachelor's	75%	73%
Associate	58%	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	Texas has extensive collection of enrollment and credential outcome data from 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, namely apprenticeships. The state links college-issued, for-credit nondegree credentials and WIOA-eligible training providers to employment outcomes. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board is seeking to expand collections of noncredit data as well as industry certifications, microcredentials, and bootcamp data, and the state will link these credentials to employment outcomes for purposes of its community college funding formula.	ADVANCED
2 Examines earnings by occupation, pay rate, and work location	In 2025, the Texas legislature adopted a budget and implementing legislation to collect occupation, work location, and worker type (full time, part time, remote). Additionally, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board is integrating third-party sources to supplement job title and skill information in integrated education-to-employment data.	DEVELOPING

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	Texas has integrated and published postsecondary education and employment data for: (i) public four-year institutions; (ii) community colleges; and (iii) WIOA-eligible training providers. Integrated education-to-employment data are available as downloadable datasets and a public interactive reporting tool through the Texas Consumer Resource for Education and Workforce Statistics . While these integrated education-to-employment data are not currently disaggregated, recently enacted legislation requires publishing by race/ethnicity, gender, and family income or economically disadvantaged status. Texas 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	The Texas Education Agency publishes earnings and employment outcomes of high school students through the Texas Public Education Information Resource's Employment and Earnings by Education and College Enrollment & Employment interactive reporting tools. While not currently disaggregated by demographic categories, employment outcomes are broken out by school district.	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	Texas partners with PSEO (>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	Texas, through the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's (THECB) Accountability System , has open data files containing education-to-employment outcomes for: (i) public four-year institutions; (ii) community colleges; and (iii) nondegree credentials. THECB is also expanding the availability of datasets through the DataBridge cloud infrastructure to support institutional and policy decision-making.	LEADING
7 Publishes robust, timely, and easily understandable interactive resources informing education-to-opportunity decision-making by learners, families, and institutions	Texas has multiple interactive resources containing various education-to-opportunity metrics such as graduation rate and earnings for: (i) public four-year institutions; (ii) community colleges; (iii) nondegree credentials; (iv) WIOA-eligible training providers; and (v) high schools. These tools include My Texas Future , Texas CREWS , and Texas Public Education Information Resource .	LEADING
8 Gives researchers access to individual-level matched education-to-opportunity datasets	The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) provides secure access to longitudinal student and workforce data through its three Education Research Centers (ERCs). Researchers can apply to use de-identified data from K-12, postsecondary, and workforce systems, and the ERCs clearly document the request and approval process . In 2025, THECB began pursuing a virtual data enclave with the Coleridge Initiative to expand access and support national data linkages.	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	While not a statewide coordinated effort, multiple institutions are laying a foundation to empowering individuals to use their own verified education and employment achievements to navigate lifelong learning pathways. The following institutions have been awarded an LER Accelerator grant to support these efforts: (i) Alamo Colleges District to develop a detailed implementation roadmap for a learner-controlled digital skills wallet and CLR, focusing on technical readiness, governance, and workforce alignment to support underserved learners' access to high-value employment and education pathways; (ii) Dallas College to build upon its existing Marketable Skills and Digital Badging initiatives to provide its diverse student body with a comprehensive, secure platform for showcasing verified credentials across both credit and noncredit programs; (iii) University of Texas at Austin to develop a CLR, connecting academic achievements to career pathways and representing skills to employers, by creating a cohesive data ecosystem, mapping courses to competencies, and developing a "student-owned" digital credential; and (iv) University of Texas Medical Branch to develop a framework for a CLR, starting with digital microcredential pilots to inform the plan and eventually map to existing degree programs.	FOUNDATIONAL
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	Texas, through its Higher Education Coordinating Board , has built an internal Office of Data Management and Research with full-time analysts who provide dedicated analytic support to strategic priorities (e.g., HB 8, My Texas Future) and generate E2E insights to guide decision-making.	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



FOUR-YEAR

DEVELOPING

TWO-YEAR

DEVELOPING

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	43% DEVELOPING
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% FOUNDATIONAL	34% DEVELOPING
Education-to-career paths that might be a good fit for student's strengths and interests		26%	41%
Job opportunities that a particular education program could lead to		25%	38%
Potential earnings in different careers related to student's education program		17%	31%
Career outcomes of students from their own institution		15%	25%
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.		74% ADV./LEAD.	73% ADV./LEAD.
Setting education and career goals and developing a plan to achieve these goals		73%	72%
Identifying and overcoming barriers		74%	74%
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

Texas

FOUR-YEAR

FOUNDATIONAL

TWO-YEAR

LEADING

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 36 hours per week Average annual net price, four-year institutions: \$14,861	ADVANCED 13 hours per week Average annual net price, two-year institutions: \$7,956
Low-income student hours of work needed	DEVELOPING 23 hours per week Average annual net price for low-income students, four-year institutions: \$10,793	LEADING 8 hours per week Average annual net price for low-income students, two-year institutions: \$6,534
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 39%
CATEGORY KEY	
● Leading ≥65% ● Advanced 50% to <65% ● Developing 35% to <50% ● Foundational <35%	



Work-Based Learning

Texas

FOUR-YEAR

DEVELOPING

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	40% DEVELOPING Paid internship participation: 35% Percentage of students who participated in at least one of the five types of experiences (paid or unpaid): 67%	11% FOUNDATIONAL Paid internship participation: 8% Percentage of students who participated in at least one of the five types of experiences (paid or unpaid): 25%

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 Texas, **0.25 percent** of the state labor force is made up of active apprentices, for a total of **38,773 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

Texas

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

ADVANCED

Finance and accounting professionals

FOUNDATIONAL

Finance and accounting support

FOUNDATIONAL

Information and cybersecurity

ADVANCED

Software development and engineering

LEADING

Health care

Health care technicians and technologists

DEVELOPING

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%