



THE STATE THAT WORKS: ENHANCE CAREER, TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Policy Goal: Enhance career, technical and vocational career pathways for high school students by engaging local employers and educators in designing demand-driven curriculum and providing applied learning opportunities.

Goals Served:

- Goal #1: Increasing private sector employment
- Goal #5: Improving the quality of the Hoosier workforce

Policy Steps:

- Create regional Indiana Works Councils (IWCs) with membership including representation from employers and educators.
- Task each IWC to deliver to the state, by November 1, 2013, a comprehensive evaluation of career, technical and vocational educational opportunities for high school students within its region.
- Beginning January 1, 2014, empower the IWCs to draft alternative curriculum, subject to approval by the State Board of Education, which offers high school students opportunities to pursue internships and apprenticeships, learn from qualified instructors, and ultimately earn an industry certification or be on a career pathway to a high-wage, high-demand job.
- Re-brand the *Core40 with Technical Honors*¹ as the *Core40 Career* degree and communicate to students the potential earnings associated with each degree pathway.

Rationale

- There is a skills gap in Indiana. Employers are having difficulty finding qualified workers.² Enhancing career, technical and vocational education will lead to new job opportunities for high school graduates and a more qualified pool of workers for employers.
- According to the Department of Education, in 2011 only 1 percent (1,010) of all high school graduates earned a Core40 with Technical Honors degree, and yet Indiana has the third highest percentage of high school graduates in our workforce.³ To improve the quality of our workforce, it's clear that we need to improve the quality of our high school graduates.

¹ <http://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/curriculum/core401.pdf>

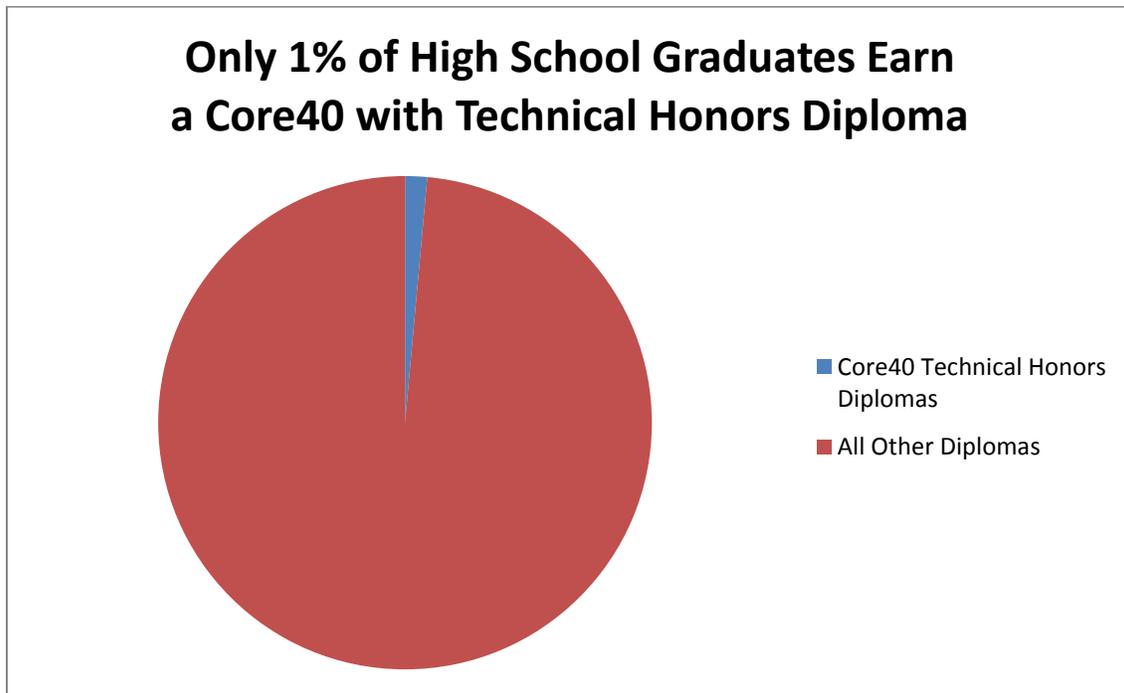
² See Timothy R. Homan, "Workers Lacking Skills Hinder More U.S. Factory Gains: Economy," *Bloomberg* (May 14, 2012) ("Paul Bonin has no problem getting enough orders to keep his South Bend, Indiana, factory busy. What he can't find are enough qualified employees to work on the assembly lines. 'The biggest challenge we face is a skilled labor force,' said Bonin, president of Bertrand Products Inc., which makes transmission parts for helicopters. He said he sees opportunities to fill more orders, 'but I can't take the work because I can't find the workforce.'").

³ See Educational Attainment data from American Community Survey, collected by Stats Indiana, located at <http://www.stats.indiana.edu/sip/>.

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- Many certifications and associate degrees pay higher salaries than the average bachelor's degree. While the median earnings of a worker with a bachelor's degree are \$36,662, the median earnings for a science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) related certificate are \$45,554 and \$51,737 for a STEM related associate degree.⁴ Putting high school students on a pathway toward earning these degrees will significantly increase their earnings potential.

Examples of Jobs that Do Not Require a Four-Year Degree		
Dental Hygienist	Associate Degree	Average Salary: \$65,844
Welding/Industrial Machinery Mechanic	Long-Term on the Job Training	Average Salary: \$59,944
Construction Supervisor	Long-Term on the Job Training	Average Salary: \$57,377
Registered Nurse	Associate Degree	Average Salary: \$56,393
Electrician	Long-Term on the Job Training	Average Salary: \$51,852
Operating Engineer	Long-Term on the Job Training	Average Salary: \$47,523



Source: Indiana Department of Education

⁴ See *Crossing the Starting Line: An Examination of Productivity at Indiana's Public Colleges and Universities*, Figure 2 at page 11, National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (October 2010), located at http://www.achieveindiana.com/pdfs/NCHEMS_Indiana_Productivity_Final_Oct2010.pdf.