The Challenges for Adult Education in Indiana

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Major data themes of the report

This is a report about the adult education system in Indiana. It focuses on the programs administered by the Division of Adult Education in the Indiana Department of Education. Most of the delivery of these programs is provided by local education agencies that cover every county in the state. There are certainly many other components to a full meaning of Indiana adult education—the Department of Workforce Development and the state's postsecondary system to name just two of the more important—but these are not examined in detail in this paper. Unless otherwise noted, the adult education system referred to here thus implies adult basic education, adult secondary education, adult English as a Second Language education, general educational develpoment, family literacy, and the Workforce Education Project.

The most significant challenges identified by this report is that *the adult education system's output does not match the magnitude of Indiana's educational attainment deficits*. In the 2005-06 program year, Indiana's adult education system produced 6,228 learners who earned a high school diploma or the equivalent. In 2006, there were 524,370 Hoosiers between the ages of 18 and 64 without a high school diploma.

Despite the high proportion of youth in Indiana's adult education system (53% of adult education learners in Indiana were between the ages of 16 and 24 during the 2005-06 program year, compared to 38% for the U.S.), *the high school diploma attainment of Indiana's younger population lags the attainment of their peers in other states*. In 2006, Indiana's 18-24 year olds ranked 39th out of the 50 states and District of Columbia in the portion with a high school diploma or better. Their degree of improvement ranked 47th between 2000 and 2006. For Hoosiers age 25 and older, their 2006 rank was 29th and their 2000-06 degree of improvement ranked 33rd.

The problem extends into issues of postsecondary achievement. In the 2005-06 program year, Indiana's adult education system produced 1,441 learners who entered postsecondary education or training. In 2006, there were 956,457 Hoosiers between the ages of 18 and 64 with a high school diploma but no postsecondary experience.

The rapid growth of the population who are not proficient in English is a special concern for the system. In the 2005-06 program year, Indiana's adult education system produced 4,320

learners who successfully completed one or more levels of English as a Second Language instruction. In 2006, there were 76,412 Hoosiers age 18-64 who spoke English "not well" or "not at all." This represented an increase of 1,879 persons over the prior year.

In addition to a decline in Indiana's high school diploma attainment levels relative to the U.S., *Indiana appears to have a growing college dropout problem*. Between 2000 and 2006, Indiana's degree of change in the population with at least some postsecondary experience ranked 7th in the nation. Over the same time period, Indiana's degree of change in the population with at least a college degree ranked 27th in the nation.

The Division of Adult Education is only one piece of Indiana's larger adult education system. A rundown of other elements of that system suggests its complexity. There were 42,493 learners who took advantage of Indiana Division of Adult Education-supported programs in 2005-06. Nearly 7,000 students age 25 and older were in Indiana undergraduate programs in 2005-06. There are almost 5,000 education or training programs in Indiana for which Workforce Investment Act dollars may be used. And though state-level data were unavailable for total job-related course-taking, if the national average of 38.8% were true of Indiana, then well over one million Hoosiers workers would have taken at least one job-related education or training course in the Year 2005.

Major challenges identified by the report

The first four data themes above suggest the most significant challenge facing Indiana's formal adult education system: the current enrollment and output of the Division of Adult Education cannot significantly address the size of Indiana's high school and postsecondary educational attainment problems.

The college dropout problem is part of a larger set of issues that point to the degree to which many of Indiana's most pressing adult education issues and most troubling warning signs are beyond the direct purview of the Division of Adult Education.

All of the data themes above point to the need for a larger adult education system in which each component bureaucracy is capable of gaining maximum advantage from, while reinforcing the efficacy of, all other elements of the larger system. The Division of Adult Education has an obviously special role in the context of such a change.

Further research questions identified by the report
A number of research questions remain difficult to answer or are beyond the scope of this report, particularly with respect to the geography of Indiana adult education and educational attainment, the size of total job-related course-taking in Indiana, the present role of net domestic and foreign migration in shaping Indiana's educational attainment profile (i.e., "The Brain Drain), and a full and detailed accounting of the college dropout problem. Moreover, a data connection among all of the various elements of adult education and training in Indiana remains an inviting, but promises to be an overwhelmingly involved, task. Finally, as this report concentrated on matching basic outcome data from Division of Adult Education programs with the most important contextual elements of Indiana educational attainment, a robust state-by-state comparison of adult education policy and promising initiatives was unfortunately beyond the report's scope.

Narrative summary of the report
The vision of lifelong learning is becoming a reality in the knowledge economy. Most measures available—for learning that takes places before the K-12 system; for undergraduate and graduate school attainment; and for work-related training—have posted substantial increases in the U.S. over the last decade or so. There is one glaring exception: the "formal" adult education system that administers adult basic, adult secondary, and adult English as a Second Language education. From a federal perspective, this is the system now supported by the Workforce Investment Act, Title II - Adult Education and Family Literacy Act.

That fact is extraordinary. The gap between the earnings of high school dropouts and those with more education continues to grow. The public costs of a dropout, in terms of foregone tax revenues and increased healthcare and criminal justice costs, are enormous. As everyone knows, the number of those who have immigrated to the U.S., and would thus be the natural pool for English as a Second Language education, is exploding. Still, the federal system remains focused on basic skills and not diploma attainment.

The U.S. is at a turning point. The beginning concepts of adult education, as most now conceive of it, emerged in the 1920s. Since then, high school graduation has gone from a fairly unusual to a completely common event. Bachelor's degrees have gone from the province of the elect to the achievement of the many. Even relative to the 1960s, when the federal government became substantially involved in adult education, high school and college degree attainment is dramatically higher. Starting in the 1980s, however, the pace of improvement for high school diploma attainment began to flatline.

This is perfectly explainable in some ways. With the overwhelming majority of the U.S. population having a high school diploma, the natural ceiling of 100% became influential. There now remains only a core reservoir of those who see the benefits of a high school diploma as not worth the costs of attaining one, either by staying in high school through graduation or entering the formal adult education system. Yet, in other ways, the leveling off of high school graduation rates is less understandable. As mentioned, the individual and public benefits of a high school diploma continue to grow.

Overcoming the instincts of this reservoir of high school dropouts must occur in the face of the changes wrought by the transition to a model of lifelong education. The traditionally discrete barriers between secondary and postsecondary education, between education and work, and between work and retirement are visibly breaking down. The nature of adult education is thus changing even in cases when the popular conception of the system of adult education does not. The formal system's traditional role remains. New roles are needed, whether they are or should be performed by the formal system or not.

The influx of less-developed world immigrants into the U.S. (and into the entire developed world) makes the evolution even more challenging. While the barriers between work and education are generally breaking down, mandatory school attendance in the U.S. at least props up most of the barriers that exist between primary education and work. Immigration changes that source of small comfort. With low-skill immigrants, primary education attainment is no certainty. Moreover, for immigrants and children-of-immigrants who enroll in the K-12 system, high school graduation is a much less common event than for their domestic-born peers.

Indiana shares in many of these trends. The economy is changing and so the increased demand for skills and knowledge is becoming manifest here. Immigrants are pouring into the state. Depressingly, high school diploma attainment is leveling off in Indiana and to a greater degree than for the U.S. as a whole.

The similarities to the rest of the county end when the comparison is educational attainment. Indiana's does not meet the attainment level of the rest of the country. It even lags much of the Midwest. While there are some positive trends in overall attainment levels, a continuation of the recent pace of improvement would still leave Indiana with decades to go before it catches up with the nation. This paper argues that Indiana's poor educational attainment relative to other states is the most important lens through which potential reforms to adult education should be considered.

There are also a number of troubling signs when one drills down into the detailed educational behavior of various sub-populations. This is especially true of age. Historic improvement to the educational profile of Indiana's workforce, like in the rest of the nation, has been significantly driven by age dynamics. As less educated older populations retire, they leave the workplace to far more educated younger workers. The impact of this dynamic is slowing, however. The educational gap between the pre-Baby Boom and Baby Boom generations was much larger than is the gap between the Baby Boom and post-Baby Boom generations. Even worse, Indiana's younger cohorts appear to be falling ever further behind their peers in other states.

The potential influence of relatively poor attainment among Indiana's younger cohorts is magnified by the potential influence of the new immigrants who are generally less educated than domestic-born populations when they arrive in Indiana. A large share of these immigrants, as well as their children, also demonstrate a lower propensity to graduate from high school and go onto postsecondary achievment. As their importance to Indiana's total population growth increases (and it is increasing rapidly) the depressive effect on Indiana's overall educational attainment profile could be significant. This warning sign is exacerbated by lower attainment and graduation rates among other minorities while the white, non-Hispanic share of Indiana's population is falling.

There are other challenges unique to Indiana. A phenomenon of high college dropout rates is becoming evident, especially relative to the rest of the country. Again, this problem appears to be worse for Indiana's younger generations than its older generations.

Like other states, Indiana is becoming radically altered by the global phenomenon of accelerated urbanization (or, perhaps more accurately, the accelerated de-ruralization) of the population. In Indiana, this trend is associated with widely different educational attainment rates and propensities to graduate high school. With a few exceptions, Indiana counties that are distant from major metropolitan areas lag the nation and are falling further behind. As in many states, urbanization has begun to shape Indiana's challenges and opportunities in complex ways and in many policy areas. The issue begs special attention and should command an increased amount of research, discussion, and policy response. Fortunately, with the creation of the Office of Community and Rural Affairs in 2005 and its various initiatives, Indiana is now more capable of injecting greater geographic sophistication into a broad spectrum of its policy leadership.

These issues form the context in which Indiana's adult education system must operate and define the challenges it must attempt to independently or jointly address with other education and training systems in Indiana. As such, there are some encouraging signs in the performance of Indiana's formal adult education system. The percentages of those who meet goals of high school graduation, postsecondary acceptance, earning a job, and retaining a job are high compared to other states. Indiana also has a relatively high number of adult learners in the formal system.

However, there are also elements of concern.

- Relatively few learners are able and willing to choose the educational or work-related goals above for their educational program.
- Indiana's adult education population features a very high concentration of students between the ages of 16-18 who should still be in a traditional high school. As a result, Indiana's adult education population features a very low concentration of students between the ages of 25-44, when states with high concentrations of 25-44 year olds are typically those most associated with the "new" or "knowledge" economy.
- Enrollment patterns in the adult education system have not caught up with the seriousness of the demographic challenge, especially that posed by immigration.
- There are large disparities across Indiana counties in the enrollment sizes of adult education populations relative to the number of high school dropouts.
- Above all, the throughput of the formal adult education system does not appear adequate given the magnitude of Indiana's current educational attainment problems. That gap between output and need would appear to be even greater in light of many of the trends above. This is not to say that another state's current system would meet Indiana's needs. It is to say that Indiana's needs are particularly great.

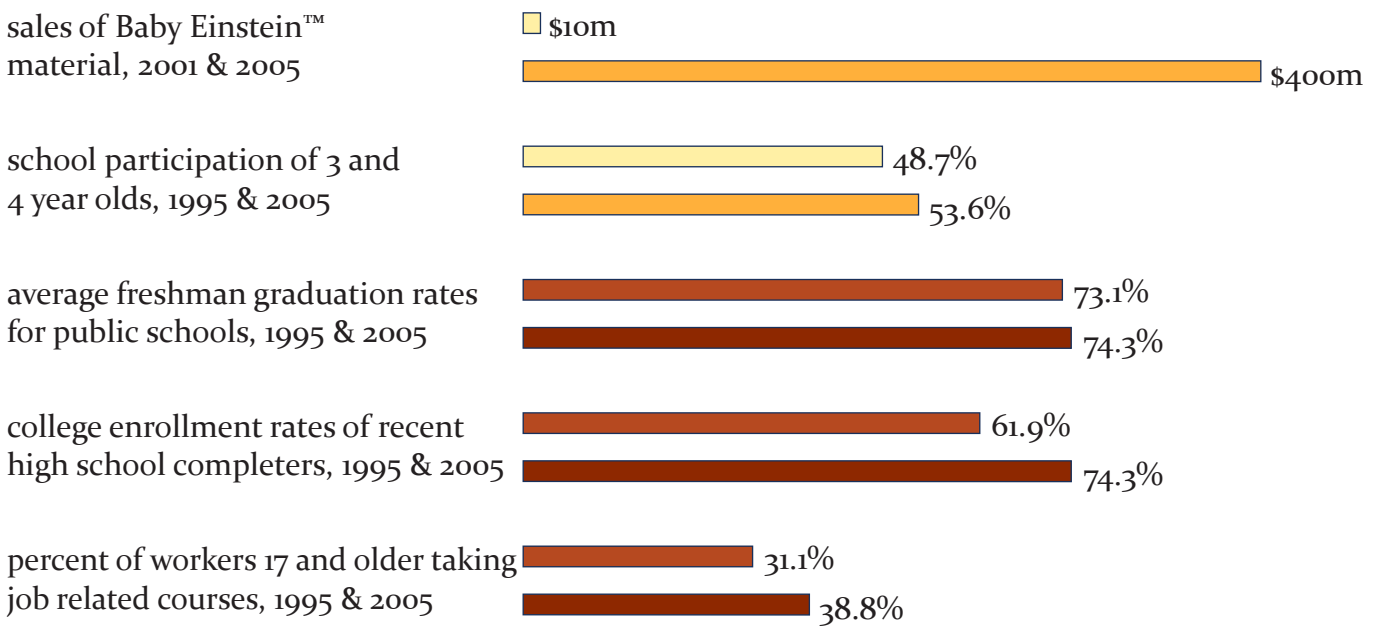
As such, Indiana must look to the means through which all the various elements of the full, and not just the formal, adult education system can reinforce the efficacy of the others. Indiana has recently taken some steps in this regard, including steps by the formal adult education system itself. There remains a considerable distance yet to travel in reform and institutional change.

I. INTRODUCTION

The vision of formal education as a continuum that helps define the entire modern life has become a near consensus in American education and work. The starting point has moved from kindergarten to pre-kindergarten and now includes popular multimedia curricula aimed at children as young as a few months old (and, in some cases, before). The U.S. high school dropout rate continues to decline, its postsecondary enrollment continues to increase, and the percentage of adults who participate in work-related education courses is growing.

Formal learning has expanded both its age purview and its penetration. The movements associated with this expansion—edutainment, lifelong learning, the New Employment Contract, and other related social and economic trends—have largely been a response to the demands of the knowledge economy. However, the strength of those demands has not significantly affected participation in the programs administered by the policy structures and bureaucracies charged with "adult education:" Adult Basic Education, Adult Secondary Education, English as a Second Language education, etc. National participation in adult basic and GED preparatory education barely increased from 1.0% in 1994-95 to just 1.3% in 2004-05.[2] Similarly, participation in English as a Second Language education increased from 0.7% to only 0.9% over the same time period.[3]

Figure 1. Measures of the extension of US education to younger and older ages[1]



The stagnation of participation trends in adult and English as a Second Language education is curious. Three basic and longstanding forces should have translated into significantly increased participation.

the earnings gap

The individual work and earnings consequences of limited education are as much symbols of the knowledge economy as are the work and earning benefits of extensive education. Between 1995 and 2005, real annual earnings for high school dropouts aged 25-34 increased by just 4.5%, compared to 10.6% for high school graduates (including GED earners), 55.6% for those with some college but no degree, 8.7% for those with an associate's degree, and 14.9% for those with a bachelor's degree.[4] Over the ten years between the ages of 25 and 34, a high school dropout at today's average wage levels would make $64,000 less than a high school graduate or GED earner and a whopping $246,000 less than a bachelor's degree holder.[5]

the social accounting gap

The income disparities described above generate large direct and indirect fiscal effects. These include foregone positive effects—additional taxes from higher earnings in a progressive income tax structure—and incurred negative effects, chiefly in the form of health, incarceration, and welfare costs. Relative to a high school graduate, a new study of California dropouts calculates that each dropout costs the federal government $43,790 in health, education, and welfare expenditures and another $54,580 in correspondent expenditures from California state and local governments.[6] At the same time, relative to what it would gain from a high school graduate, the federal government loses $75,350 in tax receipts per individual while California state and local governments lose $25,840 in taxes.[7] Relative to even higher levels of educational attainment, of course, these costs are much steeper. While California is a far different place than Indiana, research would no doubt identify the same gaps here.

The individual lifetime costs of a dropout are exacerbated by the trend in absolute dropout numbers. While the dropout *rate* has declined slightly over recent history, as shown in Figure 1, the estimated *absolute number* of 18-19 year old dropouts has slightly increased (though well within the statistial margin of error), due to the increase in total population size. In 1996, there were an estimated 3,227,000 18-19 year olds in the U.S. without a high school diploma.[8] In 2006, there were an estimated 3,231,000 18-19 year olds without a high school diploma.[9] In short, the dropout rate is not falling quickly enough to overcome the growth of the total population and thereby produce substantially fewer total dropouts among a given youth cohort.[i]

the language gap

The role of immigration in driving total current U.S. population growth is well known. The effect on the number of U.S. residents without competence in the English language has been predictable. In 1990, a bit more than 5.75 million Americans reported that they spoke English "not well" or "not at all."[10] By 2006, that number had more than doubled to 12,466,899.[11]

The large growth among populations with limited or non-existent English proficiency is not the sole result of Hispanic immigrants, contrary to what many might expect. An underappreciated aspect of immigration to the U.S. is the rapid growth of non-Latino immigrant populations. So it is with

[i]There is an important distinction between the number of dropouts in the 18-19 year old age cohort and the total number of dropouts in the whole population. The former increased slightly between 1996 and 2006 for the reasons described. However, due to much higher dropout rates in decades past, the total number of dropouts in the U.S. population is shrinking. Over the 1996-2006 time period, the total number of 18 and older dropouts declined from 36,475,000 to 33,872,000.

the growth of populations who do not report English competency. For example, the number of Americans who primarily speak Asian or Pacific Island languages and who speak English "not well" or "not at all" grew from 929,000 in 1990 to 1,762,000 in 2006.[12] In all, the number of non-Spanish speakers who also reported limited or non-existent English proficiency increased from 1.9 million to 3.2 million over the period.[13,ii]

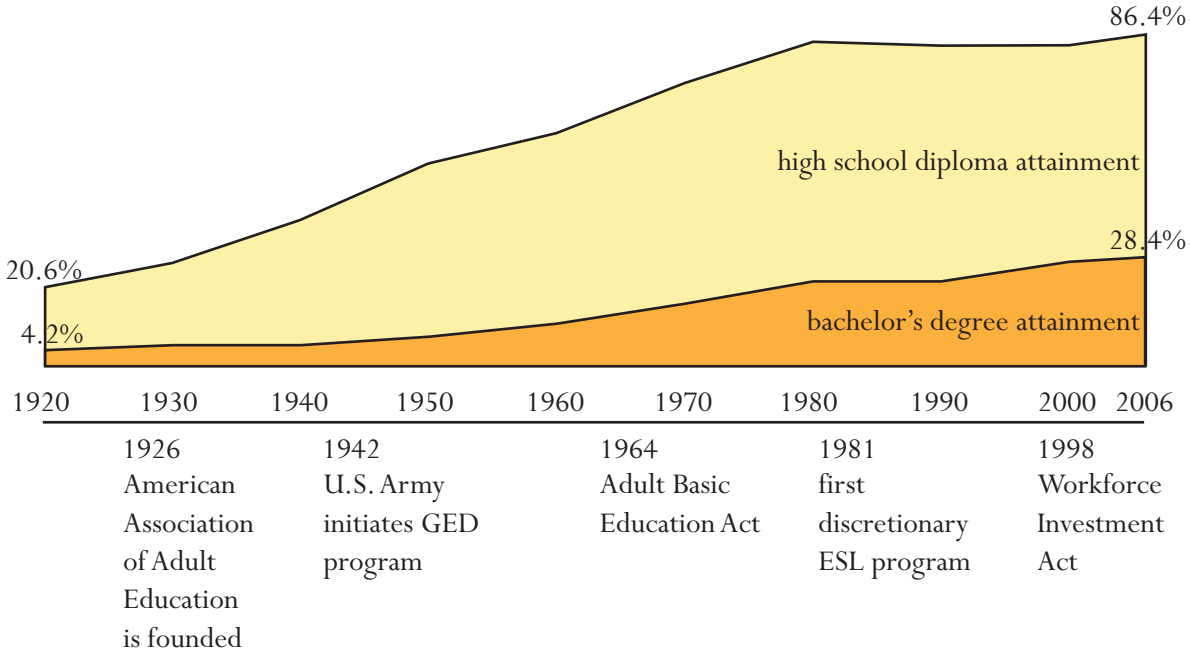
Whatever their primary language, the stunning growth in the population with limited English proficiency should have translated into substantially increased participation in English as a Second Language education. Instead, the number of participants increased by only an estimated 664,000 from 1995-2005, compared to an increase of almost seven million in the population who spoke English "not well" or "not at all."[14]

[ii]Given the controversy that surrounds the issue of immigration, especially Latin American immigration, fairness demands a note that not all immigrants from Latin American nations are primary or even competent Spanish speakers, as some are fluent, literate, or both only in Native American languages. However, the Census estimates used here suggest that this group is a small minority of those discussed in this passage.

II. CHANGING CONTEXT

The three forces just described—the earnings gap, the social accounting gap, and the foreign language gap—testify to the changed context in which adult education functions. At the time of the first fledgling efforts of an organized adult education movement, only a small minority of young Americans graduated high school and a truly infinitesimal percentage earned a bachelor's degree. Even compared to the Year 1964 when the federal structures of modern adult education began to take shape, the high school graduation rate has jumped by roughly one-third and the bachelor's degree attainment rate has essentially doubled. To be sure, some of this success is due to Adult Basic Education itself; the increase in high school diploma attainment includes GED earners.

Figure 2. 25-29 year old educational attainment and key historic developments in U.S. adult education, 1920-2006[15,iii]



[iii]Pre-1990 educational attainment data require estimation. First, no educational attainment data were collected by the Census Bureau prior to 1940. Second, prior to 1990 (i.e., 1940-1989), data reported "years of schooling" and not the attainment of diplomas or degrees. The 1940-80 data in this figure relies on official Census Bureau estimates. The 1920-30 data are further estimates computed by the author, using the 1940 attainment levels of the relevant cohort as a proxy. Thus, the estimated attainment of 45-49 year olds in the Year 1940 was taken as the attainment of 25-29 year olds in the Year 1920 and the attainment of 35-39 year olds in the Year 1940 was taken as the attainment of 25-29 year old in the Year 1930. This was done to produce a liberal estimate, meaning one that generously estimated the attainment levels of Americans in that year.

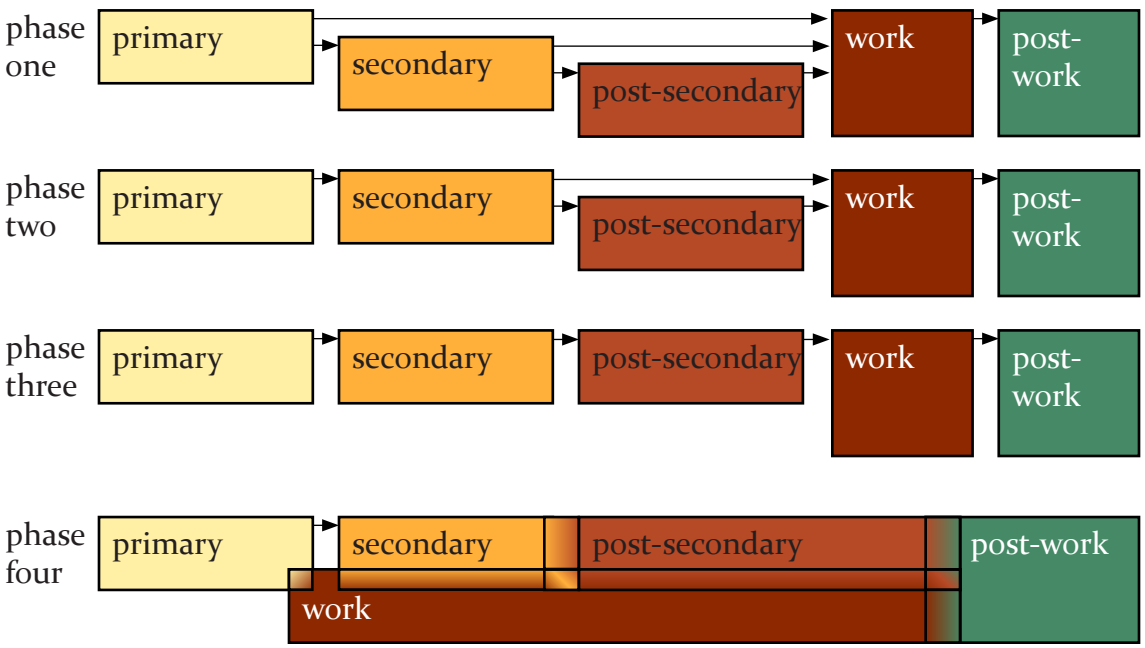
The trends inherent in Figure 2 reflect the changing needs of the economy over the 20th century as it transitioned first from an agrarian•industrial to an industrial base and then from an industrial to an industrial•post-industrial base. In systemic educational terms, the transition is visualized in Figure 3. The impact of economic change has been to gradually sever the effective pathway from primary educational attainment to high-earning work and then from secondary educational attainment to high-earning work.

In many ways, phase three in Figure 3 would thus seem to describe today's relationship between the educational system, high-paying work, and post-work (retirement). The pathway to "good" jobs must include postsecondary education. However, the transition from an industrial to a post-industrial economy—the knowledge economy—has not just been associated with a different vision of the appropriate level of education among workers. It has also been associated with an entirely different vision of the appropriate sequence of education, work, and retirement. Lifelong learning and partial retirement are the two most critical of these variations. If so, the pathway in phase three may be too straightforward.

It is important to note the "may" in the previous sentence. A notion of lifelong learning was an important force in the original adult education movements of the early 20th century. Certainly, the 1920s' notion of lifelong learning was different from today's notion. It nonetheless so failed to gain traction that, as the phrase "lifelong learning" gained currency again in the 1980s and 1990s, it seemed to connote something new and uniquely suited to the knowledge economy. There are substantive challenges to continuous formal education over a work-life and they may still prove difficult to overcome.

Similarly, there is no guarantee that partial retirement will become the mode arrangement for knowledge workers as they reach their late sixties and seventies. Granted, like lifelong learning, partial retirement seems to make sense. Knowledge workers perform work that primarily taxes the mind and not the muscles. Governments

Figure 3. Education and work in the evolution from a low-skill to a knowledge economy



need to avoid over-taxing any kind of work, which may be difficult if full retirement by age 65 remains the norm. What seems to make sense is a good but hardly perfect guide for the future, however. There are many reasons why retirement behavior in the next few decades may look essentially similar to the retirement behavior of the past few decades.

Such caveats aside, there are a number of trends that recommend a future that breaks from the traditional sequencing represented by phases one through three in Figure 3.

- The number of adults taking job-related courses rose dramatically from 31.1% in 1995 to 38.8% in 2005, as shown in Figure 1.[16]
- The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects an increase in the 65-74 year old labor force participation rate, from 22.4% in 2005 to 28.0% in 2029, when the tail-end of the Baby Boom finally reaches the age of 65.[17]
- The number of older adults in postsecondary institutions is rising significantly. In 1987, there were 394,337 students older than age 55 in U.S. postsecondary institutions. By 2005, that number had jumped to 664,659, an increase of 81%.[18]

It is worth considering phase four, then, as a possible model for the decades ahead.

The overlaps among postsecondary education, work, and post-work in phase four are the most commonly described elements of lifelong education. Through them, workers look to the postsecondary system to continuously upgrade their skills and knowledge. Retirees re-enter or partially enter the workforce in less demanding forms of their previous career concentrations or in new occupations. The latter circumstance, especially, creates the occasional need for retirees to leverage the postsecondary system to learn new knowledge.

The other areas of conjunction are less discussed but equally critical. First, the walls between the secondary and postsecondary systems are increasingly permeable. For traditional associate's, bachelor's, and graduate degree-bound students, various arrangements such as the advanced placement program lead to college credit via high school coursework. The number of AP exams scoring a "3" or higher (the level at which college credit is typically given) increased from 579,865 in 1997 to 1,460,806 in 2007.[19] For all types of postsecondary-bound students, other new options are increasingly available. These include dual secondary•postsecondary credit programs and even dual diploma and certification or degree programs. In the 2002-03 school year, there were an estimated 4,240 postsecondary institutions educating current high school students, with 812,700 students enrolled.[20]

Sadly, the shared functions between the secondary and postsecondary systems are not wholly the result of early awarding of college credit. The great success in achieving unprecedented postsecondary matriculation rates has been associated with increased levels of remedial teaching by the postsecondary system. This has not, however, been the result of substantial growth in the share of students who require remediation, as is commonly thought. The percentage of U.S. freshman in remediation remained the same between 1995 and 2000, at 28%.[21]

What has changed about remedial education is the intensity of the remediation that is necessary. In 1995, 33% of remedial students required at least one year of remedial coursework.[22] In 2000, 40% of remedial students required this much remedial coursework, with the percentage jumping from 55% to 63% among public two-year colleges.[23] In all, an estimated 670,000 freshman students were remediated in the Year 2000.[24] Absent major changes to the academic rigor required for a high

school diploma, there is no reason to expect this trend to abate.

The porous boundaries among work, primary education, and secondary education are the least appreciated aspects of the model described by phase four. Indeed, they seemingly fly directly in the face of the very knowledge economy motivation behind the vision of phase four. For native populations, there would be a clear paradox. However, very low educational attainment is common among foreign-born populations. The importation of large amounts of low-skill labor from the less-developed world has been an inexorable feature of developed world economies for the past few decades.

Were this labor completely temporary, there would be no need to give it special attention in the context of the educational system. Certainly a predictable, short-term residence for each low-skill immigrant has been the hope of many a developed world policymaker. Experience has rarely conformed to such hopes. Reconsidering the education system in light of millions of low-skill, probably long-term residents is thus of the highest priority.

The clearest responsibility would be to the children of immigrants. While Hispanic graduation rates will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, the overall results are discouraging and could imperil the graduation rate gains of the last few decades. These trends also threaten to render the fastest growing segment of the population isolated from the more lucrative segments of a labor market that operates according to the logic of phase four. Yet, in the face of rapid population growth among immigrants and Hispanics, there is a paucity of transferable and scalable local educational programs that have successfully overcome the problem of their high dropout rates. The national and most state political environments could hardly be less conducive to broad-ranging policy responses. A future which includes large numbers of immigrant children or children-of-immigrants who work and use the adult education system to earn a GED at the same time may thus have to necessarily be considered a success, even if it would be a kind of success by default.

The role of parental expectations in tolerating or even encouraging poor graduation rates among immigrant children and children-of-immigrants is, of course, a large one. It also reflects the low educational attainment levels of low skill migrant parents and adults. This is what creates the need to visualize overlaps between work and even the primary educational system. The educational gap between low-skill immigrants and many low-skill workers is not simply a language gap in many cases. Many immigrants experienced limited or even no primary education in their home nations.

Again, were it guaranteed that uneducated immigrants would soon return home, there would be little need to think of them in the context of adult education. The likelihood is of the opposite result. The new immigrant workforce could by political choice be educationally ignored and barred from the ability to upgrade their skills and knowledge. That strategy would eliminate the admittedly troubling conjunction between work and primary education in phase four of Figure 3. The social and economic risks from even passive marginalization will, however, be considerable.

III. INDIANA in CONTEXT

The increases to national educational attainment have affected Indiana and the Midwest. Nearly nine of every ten Hoosiers in their late twenties and early thirties have earned a high school diploma. There is still room for improvement, to be sure. Indiana appears to slightly lag its neighbors. The Midwest generally lags other parts of the country. However, an apparent ceiling for 25-34 year old diploma attainment—evidently around 92% based on trends in other states—is not that far off. In other words, with respect to earning a high school diploma, the system has produced some success for the general and younger population.

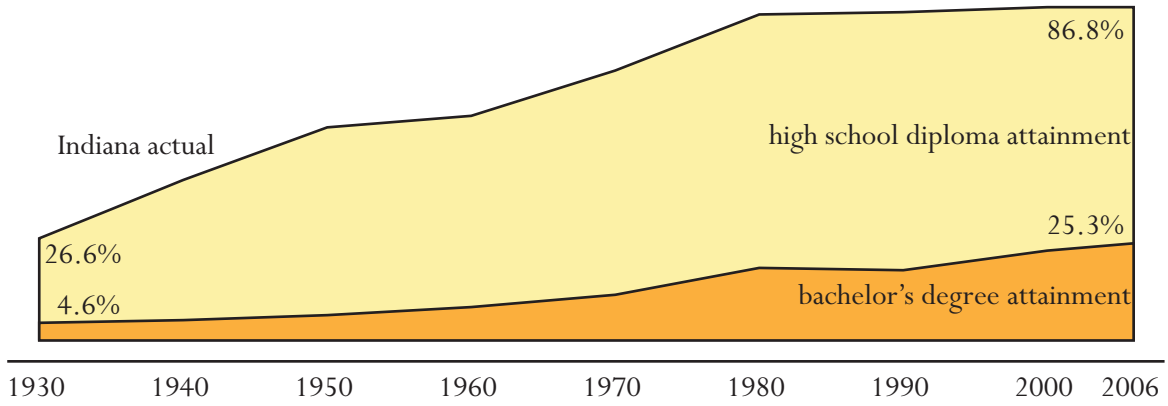
Figure 4. 25-34 year old peer state high school diploma and Bachelor's Degree attainment as a percent of Indiana, 1990-2006, and actual 25-34 year old Indiana high school diploma and Bachelor's Degree attainment, 1930-2006[25,iv]

high school diploma (% of IN)

	1990	2000	2006
Illinois	100.3%	97.9%	100.5%
Kentucky	92.7%	97.0%	100.0%
Michigan	101.7%	101.7%	103.5%
Ohio	103.1%	102.5%	102.9%
U.S.	97.7%	96.4%	99.0%

bachelor's degree (% of IN)

	1990	2000	2006
Illinois	140.5%	138.0%	129.4%
Kentucky	85.0%	88.9%	86.8%
Michigan	105.7%	111.3%	108.3%
Ohio	119.8%	110.9%	105.1%
U.S.	120.8%	116.2%	113.8%



[iii]As described in footnote iii, educational attainment data was not collected prior to 1940. Figure four thus uses the cohort reverse-projection method described in footnote iii. Also, educational attainment data prior to 1990 was reported by years of schooling completed, not level of schooling completed. Figure four thus uses four years of high school as a proxy for high school diploma and four years or more of college as a proxy for bachelor's degree attainment.

There are a number of concerns inherent in that definition of success, however.

- While the long-term trend in overall educational attainment has been positive, some detailed trend indicators are discouraging.
- Older populations continue to suffer unacceptably low rates of high school diploma attainment.
- While Indiana's total population shows relatively low racial and ethnic diversity, the nature of population change in Indiana is highly diverse and high school diploma attainment differs significantly across these groups.
- There are significant geographic divides that affect educational attainment in Indiana.

The context for successful adult education in Indiana is thus changing. The following pages examine these issues in more detail.

educational attainment

Figure 5 shows a more detailed picture of educational attainment for Indiana than is depicted in Figure 4. The immediate conclusion it prompts is a positive one. Educational attainment at all levels in Indiana is increasing and did so over both the 1990-2000 and 2000-2006 periods. Moreover, aside from the population with a master's degree or better, the educational attainment of Hoosiers increased relative to the U.S. from 1990-2006 (the final two columns).

Two chief areas of concern are implicit in Figure 5, however.

First, at lower levels of educational attainment, the increment of gain is slowing. The increment of gain is a simple measure of change: the annual average percentage point increase for a given indicator. For example, as shown, the percentage of the population with a high school diploma or better increased from 75.6% in 1990 to 82.1% in 2000 (by 6.5%) and from 82.1% in 2000 to 85.2% in 2006 (by 3.1%). This equates to a 0.7 percentage points annual average increment of gain from 1990 to 2000 (i.e., 6.5% divided by ten) but only a 0.5 percentage points annual average increment of

Figure 5. Educational attainment of the 25+ population in Indiana, 1990-2006, and as a percent of U.S. attainment[26,v]

	Indiana attainment…			*as a % of U.S…*	
	1990	2000	2006	1990	2006
hs diploma	75.6%	82.1%	85.2%	101.5%	102.3%
some college	37.4%	44.9%	48.2%	82.7%	90.3%
associate's	20.9%	25.2%	28.9%	78.7%	84.8%
bachelor's	15.6%	19.4%	21.7%	76.5%	80.9%
master's	6.4%	7.2%	8.0%	87.9%	83.6%
doct./1st prof.	1.8%	2.1%	2.3%	73.2%	81.7%

[v]Throughout this report, educational attainment figures will be expressed in a "cascading" fashion. This shows, for every level of attainment, the share of the population at that level or better. For example, in 2006, 28.9% of the population had an Associate's Degree or better (Bachelor's, Master's, Doctoral, or First Professional Degree). The difference between any lower and higher level is thus the percentage at the lower level. In the case of 2006 Associate's Degrees, the share would be 7.2% who had only an Associate's Degree (the 28.9% with an Associate's Degree or better less the 21.7% with a Bachelor's Degree or better).

gain from 2000 to 2006 (i.e., 3.1% divided by six). Similarly, the average annual increment of gain for those with some college or better has slowed from 0.8 percentage points during the 1990-2000 period to 0.6 percentage points during the 2000-2006 period. Fortunately, the average increment of gain increased for higher levels of attainment.

The other chief concern that arises from Figure 5 is that, while Indiana educational attainment has been increasing relative to the U.S., the rest of the country has not been standing still. Thus, the gap between Indiana and the U.S. is hardly slamming shut. Figure 5 allows a calculation of how fast the gap has narrowed over the 1990-2006 period. Using those rates of closure, we can forecast the dates at when Hoosiers will be as educated as the nation if the past is a perfect guide for the future.

From this admittedly simplistic perspective, Figure 5 is a tad more depressing than it is at the first glance. Given the 1990-2006 rates of equilibration shown in Figure 5, it would take until the following dates for Indiana to reach true parity with the U.S.:

- the Year 2026 for some college or better,
- the Year 2045 for associate's degrees or better,
- the Year 2075 for bachelor's degrees or better, and
- the Year 2040 for doctoral or first professional degrees.

Of course, since the gap between U.S. and Indiana master's degree or better attainment actually increased from 1990 to 2006, the trends in Figure 5 cannot point to a date of equivalence.

This approach to examining educational attainment—the change in compositional share over time—helps to overcome some of the shortcomings typical of educational attainment change measures. This is especially true for approaches that look exclusively at a rate of growth. For example, the Indianapolis Metropolitan Area ranks first among major Midwestern Metropolitan Areas (those with one million or more people) in the rate of growth of every educational attainment cohort. That is useful information and certainly describes an advantage for metro Indianapolis. However, it is very much a function of the rate of growth for the whole population age 25 years and older, which ranks first among large Midwestern metros. As such, the fact that Indianapolis has the fastest growing population with a bachelor's degree or better is an important but incomplete and not very surprising indicator of the quality of educational attainment change in Indianapolis.

The nature of total population change in the entire State of Indiana is much nearer the other of the spectrum. Total 25 years and older population growth between 2000 and 2006 ranked 32nd among the 50 states. So, a comparison of educational change that simply measures the rate of growth of any single educational attainment cohort—for example, those with a bachelor's degree or better—may under-represent true improvement.

Another way to minimize the influence of total population growth is to measure the difference between a cohort's compositional share in one period versus another period. In Figure 5, for example, the percentage of 25 years and older Hoosiers with an associate's degree or higher jumped by 3.7 percentage points between 2000 and 2006. How that jump compares to the increases of other states is a strong relative indicator of the quality of educational attainment change. In this case—the population with associate's degrees or better—there was fairly mediocre improvement; Indiana's increase ranked 27th out of the 50 states.

There remains one shortcoming of this technique in that educational attainment is measured in comparison to the total 25 years and older population. Throughout the United States, the

total population without a high school diploma is declining in absolute terms (due to the deaths within older, less-educated populations). When comparing states, then, the difference between compositional shares is heavily influenced by the decline in high school dropouts. While that in itself is a positive, it can be valuable to minimize its influence. What may seem like strong performance by a state in improving its educational attainment may simply be a function of non-policy related declines in the number of those without a high school diploma (which could, itself, be an indicator of poor historical educational attainment through which there were high numbers of older dropouts).

Figure 6 addresses these shortcomings by examining educational attainment in the standard way, along with compositional change. The first panel of data, "as a % of total 25 years and older population...," represents this typical approach. The subsequent panels then compare the size of educational attainment cohorts to other bases of population. This more detailed picture has the added advantage of directly describing the ratio of populations at key educational break points, such as high school to some college or undergraduate to graduate school.

In that vein of inquiry, two implications of Figure 6 stand out.

First, the hint from Figure 5 that Indiana's master's degree or better population compares more favorably at the current moment in time than it does in terms of change-over-recent-time is echoed throughout Figure 6. The dynamics for the population with a doctoral or first professional degree are opposite in comparison to other states: low current attainment but relatively healty growth.

Figure 6. Indiana educational attainment and composition change, 2000-2006, various population bases[27]

	2006	rank	2000-06 chng.	2000-06 rank
as a % of total 25 years old+ population...				
hs diploma	85.2%	29th	3.1%	33rd
some college	48.2%	42nd	3.2%	7th
associate's	28.9%	41st	3.7%	27th
bachelor's	21.7%	42nd	2.3%	33rd
master's	8.0%	36th	0.8%	39th
doct./1st prof.	2.3%	42nd	0.2%	16th
as a % of 25 years old+ high school diploma or better population...				
some college	56.6%	45th	1.8%	2nd
associate's	33.9%	43rd	3.2%	18th
bachelor's	25.5%	44th	1.8%	30th
master's	2.7%	36th	0.7%	35th
doct./1st prof.	2.3%	40th	0.1%	13th
as a % of 25 years old+ some college or better population...				
associate's	60.0%	33rd	3.9%	41st
bachelor's	45.0%	36th	1.8%	44th
master's	16.7%	25th	0.7%	2nd
doct./1st prof.	4.8%	32nd	0.0%	20th
as a % of 25 years old+ bachelor's or better population...				
master's	37.1%	16th	-0.0%	41st
doct./1st prof.	10.6%	24th	-0.3%	13th

The second major theme in Figure 6 is much more concerning. As above, when measured against the total population or those with a high school diploma or better, Indiana's improvement generally ranks better than its current attainment. The general situation is reversed when the population base is set at a higher level of educational attainment.

When measured against the population with at least some college experience, higher educational attainment cohorts currently rank a tad worse than average. Their rate of change, however, is only a tad better than absolute worst. This is particularly true when the population base is "some college or better." The lone exception is for the population with a doctoral or first professional degree, for whom improvement compares better to other states than does their current share.

The meaning of these patterns are easy to interpret. In terms of the way in which Indiana is changing, it has a bad high school dropout problem and a very bad college dropout problem (and worsening graduate school completion relative to bachelor's degree completion). The college dropout problem shows up in a number of different measures of Indiana educational attainment change. These dynamics suggest that adult education in Indiana must increasingly be positioned to serve two masters: higher high school diploma attainment and lower college dropout failures.

Fairness demands that two caveats be attached to that policy implication from the data in Figure 6.[vi]

First, many college dropout events are not explicit failures in and of themselves. Employers increasingly demand postsecondary experience that results in an industry credential or certificate rather than an associate's or bachelor's degree. Indeed, Indiana's community college system is rapidly reorienting itself to meet this demand. Existing educational attainment data is simply unable to account for any difference between a failure dropout event and a dropout event associated with such certifications. However, the demand for industry credentialing as opposed to academic associate's degrees is hardly unique to Indiana and the ranks shown in Figure 6 are extremely low. The burden of proof for any argument that the college dropout data in Figure 6 is a sign of success for Indiana rather than a warning sign should thus be extraordinarily high.

The second caveat is that Figure 6 does not report longitudinal data. For example, the percentage of the population with a master's degree relative to the population with a bachelor's degree does not measure the percentage of bachelor's degree earners in Indiana who went on to earn a master's degree in Indiana. As a snapshot, the data are highly influenced by those who come into the state from outside it and those who leave the state to somewhere outside it. This flow amounts to thousands of individuals a year. There is no way to account for this important caveat to present trends, at least not until the 2010 census data are available. However, it is worth pointing out that the data is for the 25 years and older population and so does not include the recent college graduates who are

[vi] There is what would be a third plausible caveat not belabored in the text, except that it can be tested and dismissed, which expects that relatively high current educational attainment for a cohort should be associated with a relatively low value of change, and vice versa. In other words, states that are near the top would be "maxed out" and should be expected to post relatively small further gains. Similarly, it seems reasonable to expect that those with significant room to improve might improve very rapidly. This might be a good theory but it does not match reality. In the 850 cases generated by the data in Figure 6 for all states, there were only 344 instances in which states in the top half for current attainment showed change in the lower half or vice versa. In other words, when it comes to educational attainment, it is more a case of the rich becoming richer than it is the other way around.

the target of so much plausible "brain drain" speculation.

education by age

As alluded to in the previous section, educational experience varies with age. Indeed, much of the improvement shown in Figures 5 and 6 are an effect of this reality. As older and less educated populations retire, they take with them their relatively low rates of educational attainment. Left in their wake are the populations who were much more likely to stay in school.

As Figure 7 demonstrates, however, the most dramatic change in this regard—the retirement of the pre-Baby Boom generation—is more or less complete. The educational attainment gap between the pre-Baby Boom and Baby Boom generations is very large. The gap between the Baby Boom and subsequent generations is less significant.

While the differences between younger age cohorts are generally smaller, they are nonetheless real and occasionally appreciable. The largest of these gaps is for some college or better attainment: a 4% gap for between 45-64 year olds (49.3%) and 35-44 year olds (53.1%), as well as between 35-44 year olds (53.1%) and 25-34 year olds (57.2%). Since the gaps for associate's degree or better

Figure 7. Indiana educational attainment and compositional change, 2000-2006, by age[28]

	2006	rank	2000-06 chng.	2000-06 rank
18-24 year old population…				
hs diploma	80.4%	39th	3.9%	47th
some college	47.3%	28th	0.9%	34th
associate's	11.4%	33rd	1.3%	33rd
bachelor's	7.5%	26th	0.9%	23rd
graduate	0.4%	37th	0.0%	28th
25-34 year old population…				
hs diploma	86.8%	31st	0.0%	46th
some college	57.2%	31st	2.9%	4th
associate's	34.5%	33rd	3.4%	14th
bachelor's	25.3%	33rd	1.9%	18th
graduate	6.1%	35th	1.0%	24th
35-44 year old population…				
hs diploma	88.7%	29th	1.0%	37th
some college	53.1%	41st	3.0%	12th
associate's	32.8%	39th	3.9%	34th
bachelor's	23.4%	41st	2.4%	45th
graduate	7.2%	41st	0.6%	45th
45-64 year old population…				
hs diploma	88.1%	28th	3.5%	27th
some college	49.3%	44th	3.2%	18th
associate's	29.8%	44th	3.9%	27th
bachelor's	22.6%	45th	2.1%	24th
graduate	10.0%	31st	0.1%	35th
65 and older old population…				
hs diploma	73.6%	28th	8.1%	23rd
some college	30.5%	47th	4.6%	30th
associate's	16.6%	44th	3.9%	36th
bachelor's	14.0%	44th	3.0%	32nd
graduate	7.0%	33rd	1.7%	26th

and bachelor's degree or better attainment are less dramatic, this fits with the theme of an under-emphasized college dropout problem in Indiana.

There are a number of cases where the gaps work in the other direction. Forty-five-to-64 year olds are more likely to have a graduate degree than are 35-44 year olds and the latter are more likely to have a graduate degree than are 25-34 year olds. This is understandable. Mid-career executives go back to school to earn an MBA. Working teachers complete their master's degrees. Graduate work is just more likely than any other educational level to truly fall outside the parameters of the traditional education•age continuum.

In other words, the graduate degree attainment of 25-34 year olds is not a sign of eroding graduate school success among Indiana's youngest workers relative to Hoosiers in the midst of their careers. Instead, Indiana's younger adults fare better in comparison to their peers than do Indiana's older generations. Graduate school attainment of adults age 25-34 ranked 35*th* but graduate school attainment of adults age 35-44 year olds ranked 41*st*.

The troubling gap between older and younger generations is expressed by high school diploma attainment for 25-34 year olds. Their attainment is less than the attainment of older cohorts. Given that the realities of the knowledge economy were manifest before the very oldest of this cohort would have graduated high school in 1989 or 1990, let alone that the youngest of them would have graduated high school after the Internet Boom had made "the information economy" a common phrase, their lower high school completion rate is stunning.

To be sure, some of this gap is a function of those who will go on to earn their GED, just as the gaps in graduate degree attainment represent executives who will go on to earn their MBAs. The rank among states suggests that this notion is false comfort, however. Figure 7 shows that 35-44 year olds ranked 29th out of 50 states in their attainment of a high school diploma or better (itself far more a cause for grief than comfort); 25-34 year olds ranked 31st for this level and the change in composition for 25-34 year olds ranked an abysmal 46th. Moreover, as the next chapter will detail, Indiana's adult education students are relatively young compared to students in other states, making it less likely that GED awards will help Indiana close the gaps between this cohort and their peers in other states.

This line of analysis then becomes truly depressing when it is applied to 18-24 year olds. Their high school diploma or better attainment ranked 39th and the change in composition ranked 47th. As one takes a more dynamic picture of high school diploma attainment through detailed attainment-by-age patterns, the future for Indiana begins to look more worrisome than an all-age profile such as Figure 5 would suggest. Its younger populations are falling further and further behind their peers in other states.

On a happier note, the trends for postsecondary attainment are in the opposite direction. Indiana's younger cohorts compare more favorably to their peers in other states than do Indiana's older cohorts. The change in composition for 25-34 year olds is also relatively strong and ranks in the top 20 for some college or better, associate's degree or better, and bachelor's degree or better attainment.

This optimistic note is somewhat mitigated, though, by the presence of the college dropout theme. For Indiana's 25-34 year olds, those with some college or better attainment rank slightly more favorably (31*st*) than do those with an associate's degree or better (33*rd*) and bachelor's degree or better (33*rd*). This is particularly true when change is considered.

For 25-34 year olds with at least some college experience, the change in composition ranked 4th. For associate's degree or better and bachelor's degree or better, the changes ranked 14th and 18th, respectively.

Education by race and ethnicity

The general forces behind changes to educational attainment in Indiana have historically been those described in the prior section:

- the aging of the population,
- the increase in educational attainment for a given age cohort over time (e.g., 20 year olds in 2006 were more likely to have graduated high school than 20 year olds in the Year 1990), and
- the increase in educational attainment of a given cohort over time (e.g., 36 year olds in 2006 were more likely to have graduated from high school than 20 year olds in the Year 1990).

Future educational attainment change in Indiana will increasingly become the function of a different force: racial and ethnic diversification.

As has been noted for some time, the U.S. population is becoming increasingly diverse. However, the effects of national trends had been minimal in Indiana. This is rapidly changing, as Figure 8 shows.

In 1990, just less than nine-in-ten Hoosiers were white, non-Hispanic. Over the next decade, white non-Hispanics drove less than half of Indiana's total population growth, thereby subtracting nearly four percentage points from white, non-Hispanics' share of the total population. The trend accelerated in this decade. Between 2000 and 2006, white, non-Hispanics accounted for less than one-third of Indiana's total population growth.

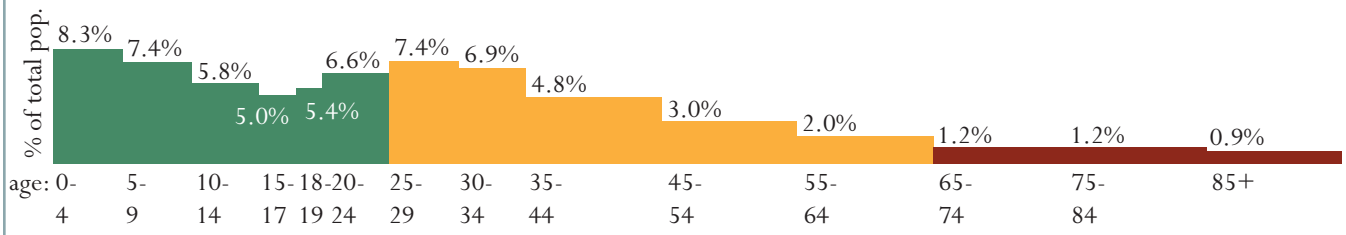
The role of domestic and foreign Hispanic immigration in driving part of this change should not be a surprise. The last ten years have seen Indiana become a "destination state" for Hispanic immigration. As a result, Hispanics now contribute more to Indiana's population change (36.4%) than any other racial or ethnic group. As Figure 8 shows, blacks and Asians have had an increasing impact on total population growth, as well.

Still, Hispanics are obviously the major demographic influence making Indiana a different place to live and work than it was over the 20th century. Part of the way it is becoming different relates to age or, more precisely, youth. Thirty-nine percent of white, non-Hispanic Hoosiers are under the age of 30.[29] For Hispanics, the age pyramid is radically different: 59% percent are under the age of 30.[30] Those of other races in Indiana also tend to be young, but not to quite the extent as are Hispanics, with 51% percent of non-white, non-Hispanics being less than 30 years old.[31]

Figure 8. Share of total Indiana population and share of total Indiana population growth, 1990-2006, by race and ethnicity[32]

	white, non-hisp.	black, non-hisp.	asian, non-hisp.	hispanic
1990 share	89.6%	7.7%	0.6%	1.8%
1990-2000 share of growth	47.4%	14.3%	4.1%	21.6%
2000 share	85.8%	8.3%	1.0%	3.5%
2000-2006 share of growth	30.8%	19.0%	9.2%	36.4%
2006 share	83.8%	8.7%	1.3%	4.7%

Figure 9. Hispanic share of total Indiana population by age, 2006[33]



As can be inferred by the percent of the population under age 30, Hispanics represent a much greater share of the total population at younger ages than they do older ages. This is shown in Figure 9. The graph also shows another important aspect of the new Hispanic Hoosiers. Their share of total population is highest among the very youngest ages. Of Indiana children less than five years old, 8.3% are Hispanic.

The Hispanic share of total population then declines until the age of 20, when it begins to again swell. Hispanics represent 7.4% of Hoosiers between the ages of 25 and 29. The data are not difficult to explain. The youngest ages are, of course, the children of Hispanic newcomers. The bulge in Hispanics' share of the total population in their twenties and thirties is a function of the large number who have come to Indiana for work. This is the Hispanic population that is especially low-skilled and poorly educated. For example, just 54% of 25-29 year old Hispanics possess a high school diploma.[34] This age cohort is also predominantly male: only 41% of Hispanic 25-29 year olds are women.[35]

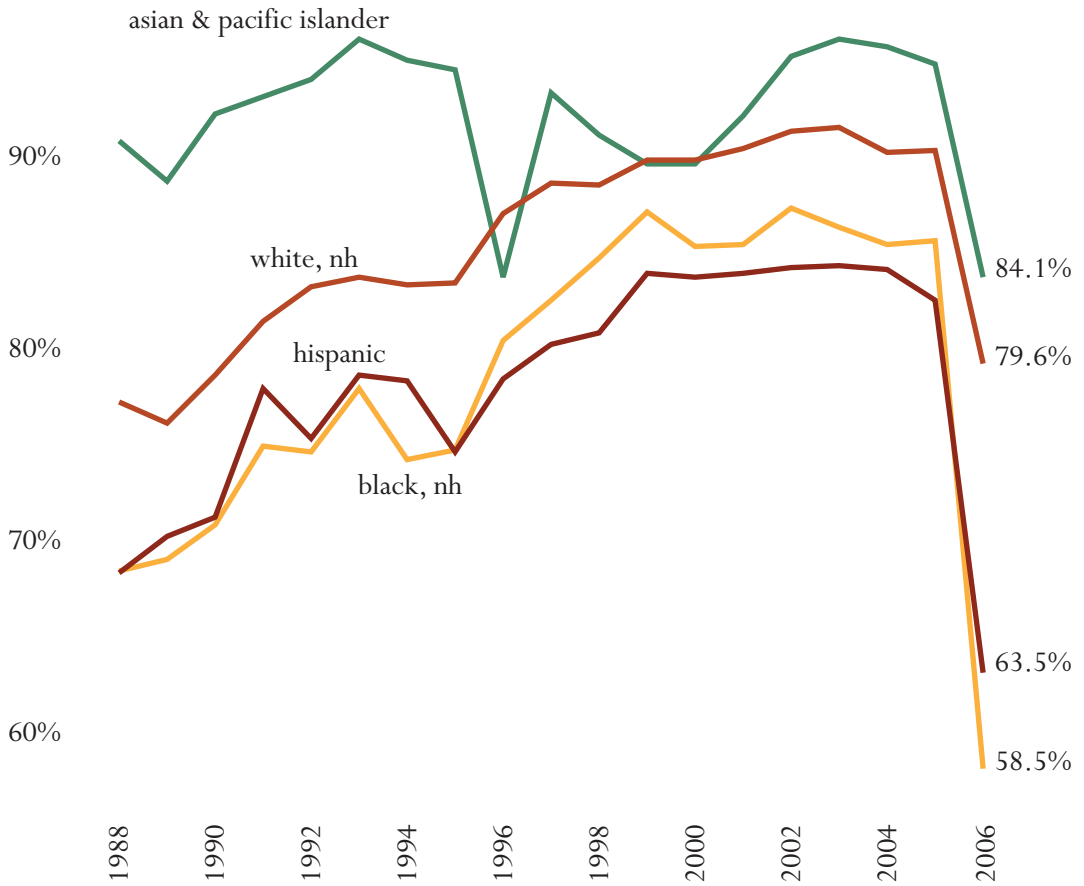
The incredibly low rate of educational attainment among young workers will have a significant dampening effect on overall Indiana educational attainment should current trends continue. It represents the opposite of the dynamic explained earlier, in which the departure of less-educated older Hoosiers from the labor force left a more-educated workforce in their wake. However, the far larger concern is the behavior of those young enough to enroll in Indiana's schools. This concern is demonstrated by Figure 10.

As is generally well known, black and Hispanic graduation rates compare poorly to those of whites and Asians. The problem has been traditionally severe in Indiana. In the 1988 school year, Asians bested black, non-Hispanic graduation rates by 22.4 percentage points and Hispanic rates by 22.5 percentage points. The gap with white, non-Hispanic students was less spectacular but still significant: 8.8 percentage points relative to black, non-Hispanics and 8.9 percentage points relative to Hispanics.

Over the course of the 1990's, the gap appeared to narrow, as shown in Figure 10. However, this was clearly a function of the former method for calculating high school graduation rates. When the formula was revised, the gap once again exploded and is now actually larger than it was in 1988. The Asian versus black, non-Hispanic gap stood at 25.6 percentage points in 2006, while the Asian versus Hispanic gap stood at 20.6 percentage points. The black, non-Hispanic rate lagged white, non-Hispanics by 21.1 percentage points and the Hispanic rate lagged white, non-Hispanics by 16.1 percentage points.

The math to conceptualize the extreme challenge posed by Figure 10 is not difficult. Blacks and, especially, Hispanics compose an ever larger share of Indiana's school populations. This means the

Figure 10. Indiana high school graduation rates by race and ethnicity, 1988-2006[36,vii]



dampening effect of black and Hispanic dropout behavior will become ever more influential on the state's overall graduation rates. Indeed, this effect is already occurring, as suggested by the previously discussed trend in which high school diploma attainment among the young is declining relative to prior generations. To make matters worse, the future size of the state's Hispanic immigrant population is difficult to predict. It is entirely plausible that the growth witnessed in recent years will level off. It is also entirely plausible that the growth witnessed in recent years is merely the tip of the iceberg.

The stark picture and implications of Figure 10 cannot be ignored. Traditional primary and secondary and adult education policy will need to become more attuned to the complexities of an increasingly diverse student body. It will be an enormous task, as an increasing number of Indiana's schools can attest.

[vi]As mentioned in the text, Indiana's graduation rate formula underwent a major revision that had major consequences on the graduation rates that were reported. Figure 10 clearly demonstrates the practical severity of the resultant adjustment. Obviously, the data do not mean that the "true" graduation rate plummeted by 20 or 30 points within a single year.

Complicating that task further is the way that geography affects the age, racial, ethnic, and achievement dynamics that have been discussed in this chapter. This is the subject of the next section.

education and geography

Education across Indiana is no geographically consistent matter. Where someone lives in this state strongly affects the likelihood that he or she earned a high school diploma or a college degree. The latter differences are particularly striking. For example, a Hamilton County resident in the Year 2000 was six times more likely than a Switzerland County resident to have a bachelor's degree and a full ten times more likely than a Pike County resident to hold a doctoral or first professional degree.[37]

Figure 11 shows Indiana county data for high school diploma attainment. The ratios may not be so large as they are for college degrees but they are dramatic all the same, with a nearly 35% spread between Hamilton and LaGrange County in Northeastern Indiana. Figure 11 also demonstrates an important element of the distribution of high school diploma attainment in Indiana; it is highly skewed. Of Indiana's 92 counties, only 29 had high school diploma or better attainment that is above the state average of 82.1%.

There is a clear pattern to this distribution. Among the 29 counties that had Year 2000 attainment rates above the state average:

- six—Hamilton, Hendricks, Boone, Hancock, Johnson, and Brown Counties—are metropolitan suburbs of Indianapolis;
- two, Porter and Jasper Counties, are metropolitan suburbs of Chicago;
- one, Floyd County, is a metropolitan suburb of Louisville;
- three are home to Indiana cities large enough to spawn extensive suburbanization but not so large as to dominate an entire county with urban education dynamics—Allen (Fort Wayne), Vanderburgh (Evansville), and St. Joseph (South Bend) Counties;
- four are further suburbs of Fort Wayne and Evansville: Wells, Warrick, Whitley, and Posey Counties; and
- two, Monroe and Tippecanoe Counties, are the homes of the state's major research universities.

Suburbanization and universities thus accounted for 18 of the 29 counties above the state average in the Year 2000.

The counties on the other end of the spectrum are not hard to characterize, either. A popular conception might be that Indiana's lowest ranking counties would be the state's two largely urban areas, Lake and Marion Counties. In fact, these two counties rank roughly in the middle. Instead, the lowest educational rates are in Indiana's rural areas. Of the 29 counties with the lowest rates of attainment, 26...all but Elkhart, Wayne, and Grant Counties...have a population below 60,000 people.

Admittedly, a few of these low attaining rural counties are increasingly suburban. Though they were not all official metropolitan suburbs in the Year 2000, Switzerland (Cincinnati), Ohio (Cincinnati), Washington (Louisville), and Newton (Chicago) Counties are all now classified as such. Still, anyone who drives across the rural expanses of these new suburban counties is surely not confused about whether they made a wrong turn and ended up in Westchester, New York.

The problem of the rural poor and populations who are literally hard to reach has been the subject of increasing attention in recent years in the U.S. and throughout the world. The nature of the global knowledge economy preferences large metropolitan areas like no time in history. Indeed, sometime in 2008, a true majority will live in cities for the first time in human history.[38] This has its

Figure 11. High school diploma attainment by Indiana County for the 25 years and older population, 2000[39]

Hamilton	94.2%	Miami	81.9%	Pulaski	79.8%
Hendricks	88.5%	Cass	81.8%	Rush	79.6%
Monroe	88.5%	Wabash	81.7%	Henry	79.6%
Porter	88.3%	Knox	81.7%	Randolph	79.6%
Boone	88.3%	Marion	81.6%	Grant	79.2%
Tippecanoe	87.8%	Kosciusko	81.6%	Greene	79.2%
Hancock	87.8%	Delaware	81.6%	Decatur	79.1%
Wells	87.3%	Blackford	81.3%	Ripley	78.9%
Warrick	86.3%	Putnam	81.2%	Newton	78.7%
Benton	86.3%	Vermillion	81.2%	Jay	78.5%
Whitley	86.2%	Spencer	81.2%	Ohio	78.4%
Johnson	85.7%	Jefferson	81.0%	Wayne	78.1%
Montgomery	85.7%	Vigo	81.0%	Lawrence	77.4%
Allen	85.7%	Gibson	80.9%	Noble	77.3%
Warren	85.0%	Sullivan	80.8%	Jennings	76.2%
Huntington	85.0%	Lake	80.7%	Franklin	76.1%
DeKalb	84.7%	Morgan	80.7%	Elkhart	75.7%
Posey	84.4%	Fountain	80.7%	Pike	75.6%
Steuben	84.3%	LaPorte	80.6%	Washington	75.2%
Bartholomew	83.8%	Parke	80.5%	Owen	74.9%
Tipton	83.7%	Harrison	80.3%	Perry	74.8%
Brown	83.6%	Fulton	80.2%	Martin	74.2%
Howard	83.3%	Dubois	80.2%	Orange	73.8%
Carroll	83.2%	Madison	80.1%	Fayette	73.7%
Vanderburgh	83.1%	Clinton	80.1%	Starke	72.0%
St. Joseph	82.4%	Adams	80.0%	Daviess	71.8%
Floyd	82.4%	Union	79.9%	Switzerland	71.4%
Jasper	82.4%	Clark	79.9%	Scott	71.4%
Clay	82.3%	Shelby	79.8%	Crawford	70.6%
White	82.1%	Jackson	79.8%	LaGrange	60.2%
Dearborn	82.0%	Marshall	79.8%	**Indiana**	**82.1%**

benefits, of course, but creates new challenges. Intense density causes its problems. An intense lack of density causes problems, too.

Many are beginning to react to these problems in a novel way, by encouraging the population's "de-ruralization." Matthew Quirk in the December, 2007 *The Atlantic* points to the association between increasing urbanization and falling poverty in less-developed countries.[40] Bill Testa, vice president of the Chicago Federal Reserve, suggests a similar effect for the United States. As a result, he explicitly advocates that policymakers urge people to move away from areas of lower opportunity and into areas of higher opportunity.[41]

However, Indianapolis, Indiana is not Lagos, Nigeria and Bill Testa's advice probably will not headline U.S. political platforms anytime soon. It would be neither socially nor politically tenable in the U.S. to view urbanization as the sole means of solving the problems of under-education and poverty in America's rural areas. (Not that either Mssrs. Quirk or Testa advocate any such view). The increasing urbanization and related suburbanization of the U.S. and Indiana will continue and could plausibly accelerate without anybody's encouragement. Finding a way to manage its educational implications is thus of the highest priority.

It seems clear that, at this point, a kind of "creaming" by major metropolitan areas is occurring in the U.S. Even if policymakers are not, highly-skilled and educated workers most certainly are following Bill Testa's advice. In a knowledge economy, the opportunities for them in large cities relative to rural areas are very high. Absent an educational and training response to increase the size of the mid-skilled and educated in rural areas (those with industry-demanded training and postsecondary achievements but not necessarily bachelor's or higher degrees), the advantages of urban areas for the highly educated will only increase.

The effect would, of course, be further distance between the quality-of-life, -work, and -income of rural Indiana and the areas surrounding Chicago, Louisville, Cincinnati, and, especially, Indianapolis. Such migration will occur regardless. Much of it is even desirable, as Bill Testa points out and, closer to home, the post-1970s prosperity of Indianapolis makes clear. Yet, to take a totally laissez-faire approach toward it could invite unintended consequences.

The obvious consequence could be a critically uneducated workforce in rural areas. Another potential consequence would be more counter-intuitive. One does not need to look far to find evidence of massive and accelerative in-migration that results from limited opportunities for the poorly educated instead of the strong opportunities for the highly educated that is associated with metropolitan "creaming." The explosion in low-skill Latino immigration (and much immigration to the U.S. besides) is precisely a response to this type of condition. The effect has altered Indianapolis at a pace that would have seemed unimaginable a few scant years ago. And any scenario in which Central Indiana would be inundated by both foreign and domestic under-educated populations would have to rank as one of the state's true potential nightmares.

As it is, from the perspective of geography, Indiana must confront a series of critical trends, not least among them:

- extremely rapid Hispanic growth in non-urban areas (for the effect of this trend, see Elkhart County's 79th ranking in high school diploma attainment in Figure 11);
- extremely rapid Hispanic growth in urban areas (particularly Marion County);

Figure 12. High school graduation rates by county, 2006[42]

Dubois	90.3%	Warren	82.2%	Newton	77.0%
Boone	89.4%	Rush	81.9%	Vanderburgh	76.8%
Ohio	89.0%	Pike	81.6%	Noble	76.8%
Wells	88.7%	Shelby	81.4%	Tippecanoe	76.4%
Posey	88.7%	Marshall	81.4%	Jasper	76.0%
Whitley	88.4%	Bartholomew	81.3%	Jackson	76.0%
Hamilton	87.9%	Dearborn	81.2%	Lawrence	75.9%
Martin	86.4%	Delaware	81.1%	Clay	75.5%
Hendricks	85.9%	Morgan	81.0%	Jay	75.4%
Hancock	85.8%	Allen	80.7%	Kosciusko	74.8%
Spencer	85.7%	LaGrange	80.7%	Fulton	74.8%
Randolph	85.6%	Union	80.5%	Crawford	74.1%
Carroll	85.5%	Blackford	80.4%	Floyd	74.1%
Benton	85.2%	Huntington	80.3%	Clark	72.8%
Tipton	85.0%	Henry	80.2%	Lake	72.7%
Ripley	85.0%	Sullivan	80.1%	Elkhart	72.4%
Franklin	84.8%	Orange	80.1%	Starke	72.2%
Porter	84.7%	Brown	80.0%	White	72.0%
DeKalb	84.6%	Vermillion	79.5%	Vigo	71.8%
Pulaski	83.6%	Miami	79.3%	Grant	71.0%
Decatur	83.6%	Knox	79.3%	LaPorte	70.8%
Johnson	83.4%	Owen	79.0%	Fayette	70.3%
Adams	83.4%	Steuben	79.0%	Madison	70.3%
Parke	83.3%	Monroe	78.7%	Jefferson	70.2%
Fountain	83.0%	Greene	78.3%	Jennings	70.1%
Harrison	83.0%	Wabash	78.2%	Marion	68.7%
Warrick	83.0%	Perry	78.2%	Scott	68.2%
Cass	83.0%	Putnam	78.2%	Switzerland	67.8%
Gibson	82.9%	Washington	77.7%	Wayne	67.6%
Howard	82.7%	Daviess	77.3%	St. Joseph	66.4%
Montgomery	82.3%	Clinton	77.2%		

- the consequences of suburban "flight"; and
- the overall increasing educational gap between rural and metropolitan Indiana that is the major theme of this section.

The next two Figures demonstrate just how intense that overall theme is becoming.

Unfortunately, the ability to acquire up-to-date educational attainment for rural counties is limited. So, Figure 11 showed attainment in the Year 2000. Post-2000, the trends for which data is available do not suggest an elimination of the geographic challenges highlighted by Figure 11.

Just as with the percentage of the 25 years and older population who have already attained a high school diploma, the success of current students in earning a diploma varies widely across Indiana. This is shown in Figure 12, which shows Year 2006 graduation rates. The graduation rate gap between the highest and lowest performing county is nearly 35 percentage points. Also, due to family background, those counties with strong current educational attainment tend to exhibit strong current graduation rates. It becomes a case of the rich getting richer.

Figure 13 demonstrates the way that this is occuring from high school graduation to intermediate college completion. As mentioned, post-Census educational attainment data is not available for every county. Instead, it is available only for counties or other geographic entities of more than 60,000 in population, which, in Indiana, excludes quite a few.

Figure 13 is an attempt to circumvent this limitation by using metropolitan statistical areas when it allows for the inclusion of more counties. While this obviously obscures the finer grained detail of Figure 11, metropolitan dynamics were a major theme present in overall high school diploma attainment rates. To the extent that metropolitan statistical areas are, in a sense, a description of a contiguous workforce, the use of metropolitan statistical areas can help to clarify. Still, as the yellow in Figure 13 shows, significant portions of Indiana are excluded.

A clear pattern nonetheless emerges. The more populous areas of Indiana tend to compare favorably with the U.S. in high school diploma attainment. This is consistent with previously discussed data in which Indiana has a higher level of high school or better attainment than the U.S. as a whole.

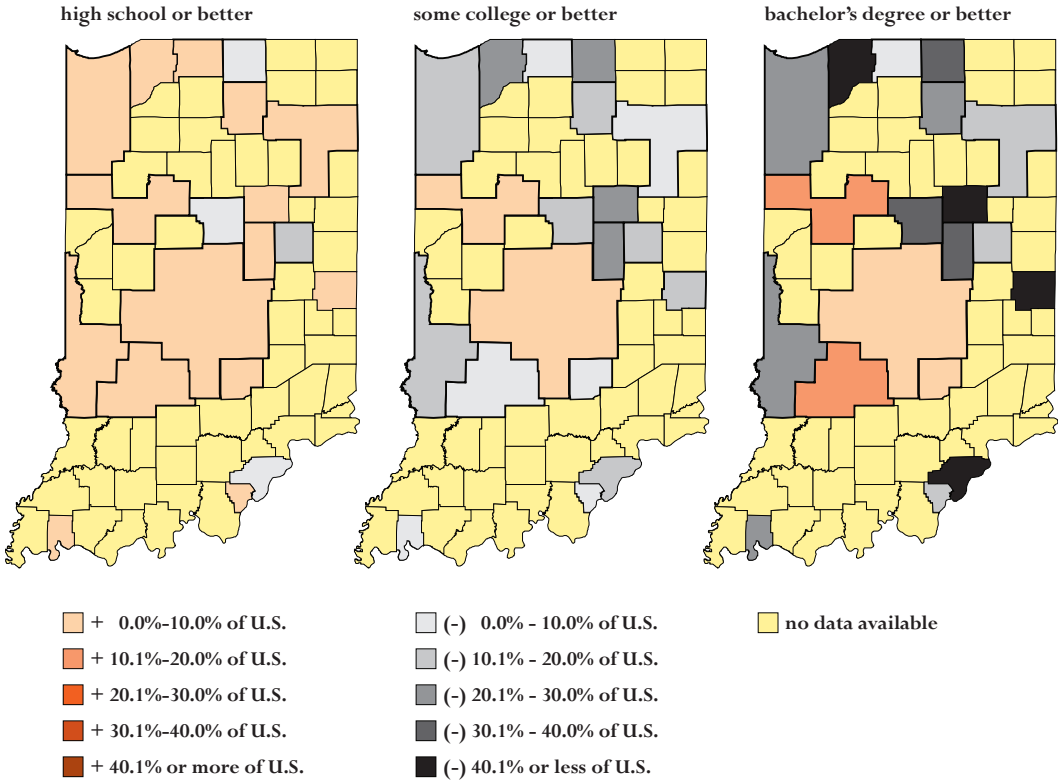
However, while only a few areas lag the nation in current attainment—Elkhart, Delaware, and Clark Counties and the Kokomo Metropolitan Statistical Area—only a few areas outpaced the nation in the size of compositional change for this educational attainment cohort. In other words, the current circumstances are fortunate; the trends are not.

The "some college or better" panel then introduces a critical issue in Indiana. The areas competitive with the rest of the nation in terms of postsecondary experience are concentrated in Central Indiana. Only the Indianapolis and Lafayette Metropolitan Statistical Areas have some college or better attainment that exceeds the nation's. The same is generally true for the population who complete their undergraduate work with a bachelor's degree, except that Bartholomew County's and the Bloomington Metropolitan Statistical Area's rates also best the U.S. percentage.

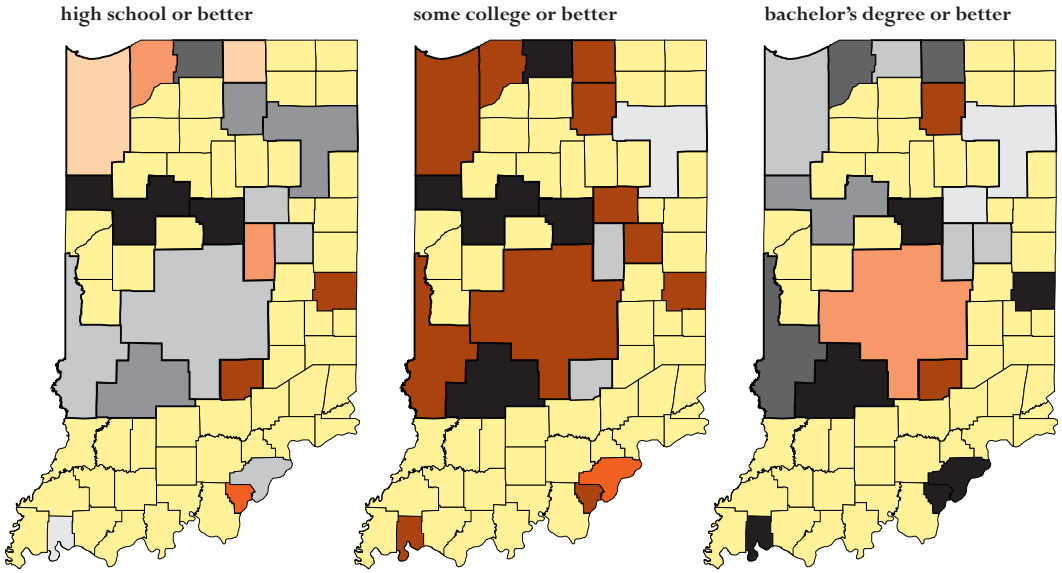
The comparison between the "some college or better" and "bachelor's degree or better" panels suggests a further issue of concern. The areas shaded in grayscale (those that lag the nation) generally become darker as one moves from measuring some college or better attainment to measuring bachelor's degree or better attainment. For these areas, the relative gap between them and

Figure 13. 2006 educational attainment relative to the U.S. and 2000-06 change in composition relative to U.S.[43]

2006 share



2000-06 change in composition



the U.S. average increases as one moves toward an examination of the higher level of attainment. Only St. Joseph and Delaware (and Bartholomew) Counties do not become darker in that movement.

The fact that such a dynamic fits with the college dropout problem discussed throughout this chapter is hardly a coincidence. And it is particularly echoed by examing the same movement for the bottom row of maps that depict the change in composition.

A large swathe of Indiana is apparently increasing their exposure to postsecondary education by a much greater amount than is true of the rest of the U.S. Most impressively, the extent to which this increase outpaces the nation is considerable. All or parts of the Gary, LaPorte, Elkhart, Warsaw, Marion, Muncie, Terre Haute, Indianapolis, Richmond, Louisville, and Evansville areas saw a change in composition that was at least 40% greater than the amount of change in composition in the U.S. Again, Indiana is becoming increasingly successful at matriculating its high school graduates in college.

The problem is what happens after they matriculate. The only areas of Indiana to see an increase in bachelor's degree or better attainment that was higher than the U.S. increase were Indianapolis, Columbus, and Warsaw. In terms of the present circumstance and trends, the only two areas of the state that have better current attainment and exhibit a better improvement in attainment than the U.S. as a whole are Indianapolis and Columbus. Moreover, the two areas' dynamics can hardly be divorced; Columbus is actually part of a larger Census Bureau definition of a contiguous workforce known as a "Combined Statistical Area." In other words, the Greater Indianapolis economy drives the existing circumstance and degree of change for both areas.

The example of Columbus clarifies the challenge for Indiana. It must ensure that the workforce's education across the state allows it to benefit from the dynamism of places like Chicago, Cincinnati, Columbus, Louisville, or Indianapolis in just the way that Columbus has. The fact that, not that many years ago, Columbus faced difficulties as steep as or steeper than any faced by an Indiana community today—Bartholomew County lost population in every year from 1980 to 1986—shows that the types of problems outlined in this chapter can be solved.

Columbus' revitalization did not happen by accident, however. In addition to a strong economic development strategy, the city focused explicitly on the education and skills of its workforce. This meant not just attraction, trusting that population migration will eventually wipe away deficiencies, and not just looking to the future represented by the K-12 system. It meant the whole workforce, future and existing, and creating new organizations such as the *Community Education Coalition* and new institutions such as the *Columbus Learning Center*.

Indiana must learn from Columbus' success and the strategy which created it: a focus on the entire workforce, future and current. Given the challenges, just a few of which are outlined in this chapter, the effort will require an education and training system more dynamic and flexible than what it is today. Primary and secondary schools, universities and community colleges, Department of Workforce funded programs and institutions, and adult education must all reinforce each other even while seeking new ways to administer their individual responsibilities. The final pages of this report introduces significant themes that may affect that goal.

IV. THEMES IN ADULT EDUCATION

The final chapter of this report discusses various aspects of Indiana's formal adult education system. Unlike the prior three chapters, there is no overarching theme or narrative. Instead, the hope is to introduce issues that prompt thought and discussion. The nature of preparing and training today's adult workforce is growing every more complex. This chapter is meant to serve that complex reality and place the adult education system in the context of the trends and issues described by the prior chapter.

The adult education system as analyzed in this chapter is the formal system. It is the system charged with adminstering funds allocated under the U.S. Workforce Investment Act, Title II — Adult Education and Family Literacy Act and those allocated under (IC 20-30-6-1). It is charged with **Adult Basic Education** to address basic skill needs, **Adult Secondary Education** to provide those who did not finish high school with an opportunity to complete credits toward a high school diploma, **General Educational Development** to provide those who did not finish high school with an opportunity to earn a high school equivalency diploma, **English as a Second Language** to provide non-English speakers with English language instruction, **Family Literacy** to help students develop a positive attitude toward education, and **Workplace Literacy** to give local employers the ability to provide workplace literacy instruction to their employees.

As such, it is important to note the role of both federal and state policy in shaping the landscape of adult education in Indiana. For example, as will be explained subsequently, Indiana's workforce education programs exceed the instructional hours for "work-based projects" as defined by the U.S. Department of Education in the context of the U.S. Workforce Investment Act, Title II described above. While Indiana adult education is fundamentally shaped by federal requirements, Indiana maintains the ability to programatically and institutionally address many of the issues raised by the following pages. Above all, the findings of this report suggest that Indiana must seek ways to emphasize educational attainment to a greater degree than does the U.S. Department of Education, which places highest value on basic skills.

The scope of adult education in Indiana

The next pages describe detailed characteristics of Indiana's adult education student population and its performance. In 2005-06, there were 42,493 adult education learners.[44] Compared to other states, this was the 14th largest student population in the country.

The total number of students in the system has remained remarkably stable. In 2004-05, the adult education population in Indiana stood at 43,498.[45] In 2000-01, the number of adult education learners was 42,135.[46]

The total budget allocated from the U.S. government has remained stable, as well. The Fiscal Year 2000 allocation was just over $8.8 million in nominal dollars.[47] The Fiscal Year 2004 allocation was approximately $10.1 million in nominal dollars.[48] In real terms, this represented an increase of 4.4% over the period. However, there has been a significant increase in Indiana's federal allotment for English Language and civics adult education, from $119,727 (FY2000) to $381,000 (FY2004) in nominal dollars, a real dollar rise of 190%.[49]

42,493

The total number of adult education learners in Indiana in 2005-06.

The age of adult education, part one

One of the most outstanding characteristics of Indiana's adult education system is the youth of its student body. Fully 27% of total participants in adult education were between the ages of 16-18 in 2005-06.[50] This is obviously an age range when students would hopefully be in a traditional high school setting and making small teenage-ish errors in judgment instead of attempting to correct for the massive life error in judgment of dropping out of high school. Indiana's high youth proportion in 2005-06 was not a one-year blip. It ranked third in that proportion in 2004-05 with a 27% share.[51]

From a certain perspective, capturing a high number of recent dropouts has advantages. The sooner an adult earns a high school diploma, the sooner he or she can gain access to better jobs, as well as begin to pay higher taxes and reduce the likelihood of the negative crime and health costs associated with dropouts, as detailed in the first chapter.

It is worth considering whether the high concentration of teenage learners in the adult education system might condition those who are mulling whether to dropout to view the social costs as less punitive. For that matter, the high concentration of recent and likely low-performing traditional high school students prompts a worry that Indiana schools see the matter from a different perspective but in a similar vein. However, Indiana's new legislation limiting the number of acceptable reasons for a dropout even may reduce the high proportion in adult education.

In any event, there is no doubt that it is better to catch a dropout earlier rather than later. However, the system must remain especially vigilant about becoming too oriented to students who should still be in a traditional school. Indiana's population is becoming older and more indebted to domestic and foreign, particularly Hispanic, immigration for growth. The cultural dynamic must naturally evolve in response.

4:

Indiana's rank in 2005-06 among all states and the District of Columbia in the proportion of adult education students between the ages of 16 and 18.

The age of adult education, part two

It should be no surprise that the high concentration of teenagers in Indiana's adult education system is associated with a relatively low concentration of working-age adults. Only 37% of adult education students in Indiana were between the ages of 25 and 44 in 2005-06.[52] The national average is 45% and the adult education systems that feature a high concentration of 25-44 year olds reads contains most of the knowledge economy archetypes.[53] The top fifteen states are Nevada, Colorado, Arizona, Washington, Minnesota, New Jersey, Texas, Massachusetts, Illinois, Virginia, New York, Oregon, California, Michigan, and the District of Columbia.[54]

The low number of 25-44 year olds in the system is particularly concerning in light of the low rate of high school diploma attainment among these ages in Indiana. As shown in Figure 7, the share of the 25-34 year old Hoosier population with a high school diploma ranks 31st among the 50 states and the share of the 25-44 year old population with a diploma ranks 29th. Worse, the degree of 2000-06 change shown in Figure 7 ranks 46th for 25-34 year olds and 37th for 35-44 year olds.

The low proportion of working-age adults in Indiana's adult education system and the tepid consequent impact on the educational attainment of working-age Hoosiers would be less concerning if they were associated with high educational attainment among younger Hoosiers. This is not the case. As Figure 7 demonstrated, Indiana's 18-24 year old population is associated with the worst high school diploma attainment rankings of any Indiana age cohort. Year 2006 high school diploma attainment for 18-24 year olds ranked 39th. Year 2000-06 change for 18-24 year olds ranked 47th.

So, even if Indiana's approach is to catch dropouts earlier rather than later, too many young dropouts are still missed and too many working-age adults are left out of the system altogether.

42:

Indiana's rank in 2005-06 among all states and the District of Columbia in the proportion of adult education students between the ages of 25 and 44.

The goals of adult education, part one

By federal law, a registrant to Indiana's adult education offerings must choose from outcome goals. There are five "core" goals, progress on which affects federal incentive funding levels. Students **must** choose a goal of basic skill improvement and **may** choose a further core goal, so long as that goal is reasonably attainable within the program year (with enrollment allowable at any point in a program year). However, the Indiana Division of Adult Education indicates that approximately 75% of adult learners are not eligible to choose a high school or GED diploma or acceptance into postsecondary education or job training as a reasonable goal, due to their demonstrated entering abilities:

- improve basic skills,
- enter employment,
- retain employment,
- obtain a high school or GED diploma, and
- gain a place in postsecondary education or job training.

In addition, there are seven "secondary" goals that a student may choose, so long as that goal is reasonably attainable within the program year:

- achieve a work-based project goal,
- leave public assistance,
- achieve citizenship skills,
- increase involvement in children's education,
- increase involvement in children's literacy activities,
- vote or register to vote, and
- increase involvement in community activities.

2: ***The number of program goals an adult learner can choose that would* directly *target the educational attainment deficits described in this report.***

From the perspective of benefits to Indiana's workforce (and taxpayers), these measures can be separated into four groups. One goal addresses basic skills: improve basic skills. Two goals directly address educational attainment: the goals to obtain a high school or GED diploma and placement in postsecondary education or training. Four goals directly or indirectly address employment opportunities: enter employment, retain employment, achieve a work-based project goal, and leave public assistance. The remaining five goals address social, civic, or indirect educational values.

The goals of adult education, part two

The core outcome measures described on the previous page are tracked and reported by the U.S. Department of Education for all states. The first core measure—improve basic skills—is in turn separated into two progress indicators by the U.S. Department of Education. These are the percentage of adult basic and secondary education learners who complete "one level of instruction" and the percentage of English literacy learners who complete "one level of instruction."

There are six levels of instruction in adult basic and secondary education:

- beginning literacy ABE,
- beginning basic ABE,
- low intermediate ABE,
- high intermediate ABE,
- low ASE, and
- high ASE.

Indiana's committed 2004-05 goals for completion of each of these levels was 32%, 37%, 41%, and 42%, respectively, as determined by passage of standardized tests.[55] Actual 2004-05 completion was 38%, 46%, 50%, and 49%.[56] Thus, Indiana exceeded each of its committed goals.

For all adult basic and adult secondary learners, the completion rate between 2003-04 and 2005-06 was 47%.[57] This was above the national rate of 39%.[58] In all, 48,164 adult basic and adult secondary Hoosier learners completed one level of instruction over this period.[59]

15:

The rank of Indiana's 2003-04/2005-06 percentage of Adult Basic and Adult Secondary Education learners who completed one or more "levels of instruction."

The goals of adult education, part three

The second progress indicator for improvement of basic skills that is reported for all states concerns English literacy. The indicator reported is, again, the percentage of learners who complete one or more levels of instruction. There are six levels of instruction in English literacy education:

- α beginning literacy ESL,
- α beginning basic ESL,
- α low intermediate ESL,
- α high intermediate ESL,
- α low advanced ESL, and
- α high advanced ESL.

Indiana's committed 2004-05 goals for completion of each of these levels was 37%, 41%, 39%, 47%, 41%, and 51% respectively.[60] Actual 2004-05 completion was 45%, 44%, 49%, 51%, 43%, and 48%.[61] Thus, Indiana exceeded all its goals.

14: ***The rank of Indiana's 2003-04/2005-06 percentage of English literacy learners who completed one or more "levels of instruction."***

5: ***The number of Indiana English literacy learners who completed one or more "levels of instruction" in 2005-06 as a percentage of the Year 2006 Indiana adult population who spoke English "not well" or "not at all."***

For all English literacy learners, the (unweighted) average yearly completion rate between 2003-04 and 2005-06 was 45%.[62] In all, 11,337 English literacy learners completed one level of instruction over the three year period, with 4,320 completing one level in 2005-06.[63] Unfortunately, this represented just 5% of the total 18 years old and older population in 2006 who spoke English "not well" or "not at all."[64]

The goals of adult education, part four

The second core outcome measure is the percentage of adult learners who identify a high school or GED diploma as their program goal and successfully meet it. Indiana ranked high on this measure at 2nd in the nation over the 2002-03/2004-05 period.[65] Between 2002-03 and 2004-04, an unweighted average of 85% successfully met their goal of a diploma.[66]

However, relatively few adult ed learners identify a high school or GED diploma as the goal of their program or are eligible to choose it based on their abilities. Just under 6,000 learners earned a diploma in 2004-05.[67] This represented only 14% of all adult learners, a rate lower than 17 other states.[68] The number is truly scant in comparison to the total number of Indiana high school dropouts. In 2005, there were an estimated 697,789 Hoosier dropouts over the age of 17.[69]

3: ***The rank of Indiana's 2003-04/2005-06 unweighted three-year average percentage of learners who completed a goal of earning a high school or GED diploma after program exit.***

14: ***Learners who completed a goal of earning a high school or GED diploma after program exit* as a percent *of all adult learners in 2005-06.***

The goals of adult education, part five

The third core outcome measure is the percentage of adult learners who identify acceptance into postsecondary education or job training as their program goal and successfully meet it. Again, Indiana ranks high on this measure at 1st in the nation over the 2003-04 / 2005-06 period.[70] Between 2003-04 and 2005-06, an unweighted average of 92% successfully met their goal of admission to higher education or training.[71]

However, a very small small number of adult ed learners identify acceptance into higher education as the goal of their program or are eligible to choose it based on their entering abilities. Only 1,441 learners completed this goal in 2005-06.[72] This accounted for just 3% of all adult learners, a portion that was lower than in 16 other states.[73]

1: ***The rank of Indiana's 2003-04/2005-06 unweighted three-year average percentage of learners who completed a goal of entering into postsecondary education or job training.***

3: ***Learners who complete a goal of entering postsecondary education or job training* as a percent *of all adult learners.***

The goals of adult education, part six

The fourth core outcome measure is the percentage of adult learners who identify entry into a job as their program goal and successfully meet it within one quarter of program exit. Indiana ranks well on this measure at 2nd in the nation over the 2003-04 / 2005-06 period.[74] Between 2002-03 and 2005-06, an unweighted average of 86% successfully met their goal of entry into a new job.[75]

However, a relatively small number of adult ed learners identify job entry as the goal of their program. Just 3,623 learners completed this goal in 2005-06.[76] This accounted for 9% of all adult learners, though it is important to note that a low rate was true of most states, as Indiana ranked 8th in the nation in this respect.[77]

2: ***The rank of Indiana's 2003-04/2005-06 unweighted three-year average percentage of learners who complete a goal of entering into employment within the first quarter of program exit.***

9: ***Learners who complete a goal of entering entering into employment* as a percent *of all adult learners.***

The goals of adult education, part seven

The final core outcome measure is the percentage of adult learners who identify retention of a job as their program goal or earn employment within one quarter of program exit and retain the same job through the third quarter after program exit. Indiana ranks high on this measure at 3rd in the nation over the 2003-04 / 2005-06 period.[78] Between 2003-04 and 2005-06, an unweighted average of 95% successfully retained a job after program exit.[79]

Again, however, as a percentage of all adult learners, a small fraction meet this goal. Only 1,853 learners retained employment after program exit in 2005-06, representing just 4% of all adult learners.[80] That share ranked 17th in the nation.[81]

3: ***The rank of Indiana's 2003-04/2005-06 unweighted three-year average percentage of learners who complete a goal of retaining employment within the first quarter of program exit or entering employment by the first quarter and retaining it through the third quarter after program exit.***

4: **As a percent *of all adult learners,* *learners who complete a goal of retaining employment within the first quarter of program exit or entering employment by the first quarter and retaining it through the third quarter after program exit.***

The goals of adult education, part eight

As described earlier, adult education learners are able to choose from among a number of goals for their program, generally grouped as either "core" or "secondary" goals. In 2005-06, Indiana learners chose their "main" goals in the following manner.

- enter employment: 4,918 instances (11.6% of the total)
- retain employment: 2,379 instances (5.6% of the total)
- obtain GED or diploma: 9,001 instances (21.1% of the total)
- placed in postsecondary education or training: 1,912 instances (4.5% of the total)

The above yielded 18,210 total instances in which a diploma, postsecondary, or employment-related core outcomes were a goal choice of adult education learners.[82] This represented 42.9% of all learners.

273:

The additional number of 2005-06 instances in which Indiana adult ed learners chose a secondary outcome as their goal compared to the number of instances in which they chose a core outcome directly related to diploma attainment, postsecondary acceptance, or job earning or retention as their main goal.

For secondary outcomes, Indiana learners chose their "main" goals in the following manner.

α achieve work based project:	0 instances (0.0% of the total)
α leave public assistance:	477 instances (1.1% of the total)
α achieve citizenship skills:	3,243 instances (7.6% of the total)
α increase involvement in children's education:	3,349 instances (7.9% of the total)
α increase involvement in children's literacy activities:	3,911 instances (9.2% of the total)
α vote or register to vote:	1,751 instances (4.1% of the total)
α increase involvement in community activities:	5,752 instances (13.5% of the total)

Those choices yielded a total of 18,483 times when a secondary outcome was a goal of a program learner (in addition to the required goal of basic skill improvement).[83] This was 43.5% of all learners and represented a total that was 273 instances greater than the number of times that learners chose the core goals described on the previous page. It should be noted, however, that the "0" value for work-based project goals is due to differing standards for workforce training and education. In the U.S. Department of Education's definition, a work-based project is one associated with a *maximum* of 30 hours of instructional time. Indiana's conception requires a *minimum* of 40 hours of instructional time.

Participants in adult education, part one

The prior pages demonstrated that goals directly related to diploma attainment, postsecondary access, or work are chosen less frequently by adult education learners than many might assume. The gap between educational attainment needs and current participation can be further expressed in the relationship between the number of learners

1 :

The number of white adult secondary education participants* per 100 *white high school dropouts aged 25 and older.

1 :

The number of Hispanic adult secondary education participants* per 100 *Hispanic high school dropouts aged 25 and older.

4 :

The number of black secondary adult education participants* per 100 *black high school dropouts aged 25 and older.

and the number of dropouts. The ratio is much lower than what might be expected and differs strongly among the races.

On the one hand, there is some positive news in the ratios shown on the previous page. The prior chapter discussed the way in which the white population accounts for an ever dwindling share of the total population. As such, the fact that the ratio between black Adult Secondary Education particpants and the black 25 and older dropout population is four times higher than the white population's ratio is encouraging.[84] On the other hand, it is obviously discouraging that the Hispanic ratio is so low (actually lower than the white ratio) when Hispanics represent the fastest growing segment of the population.[85]

Participants in adult education, part two

The data for Hispanics is even more troubling when one considers growth in this population relative to the change in their participation in adult education. In the 2001-02 school year, there were 8,324 Hispanics in the Indiana adult education system.[86] In the 2005-06 school year, the number of Hispanic adult education learners had increased to 9,732, a jump of 17%.[87]

The above numbers may seem like a respectable increase but they pale in comparison to the growth of the Hispanic population, even when merely considering 25 years and older Hispanic dropouts. In 2002, there were an estimated 51,033 Hispanic dropouts aged 25 years and older in Indiana.[88] By 2006, the number had mushroomed to 65,377, an increase of 28%.[89] In absolute terms, as shown below, the size of the Hispanic adult ed population grew by 12,936 individuals less than did the size of the Hispanic 25 years and older dropout population in just the last four years.

As suggested by Figure 9, a comparison to the 25 years and older dropout population actually minimizes the extent to which adult education is failing to keep pace. The Hispanic share of the 18-24 year old population is higher than the Hispanic share of the 25 years and older population. Unfortunately, data is not available for attainment by ethnicity for ages 24 years and younger.

12,936

Difference between the absolute growth of the Hispanic 25 and older high school dropout population and the absolute growth of the Hispanic population in the adult education system over the 2002-06 period.

Conclusion

The chief indicators that measure Indiana's adult education system's performance suggest some mixed conclusions. Indiana typically ranks quite well in comparison to other states, particularly in terms of the percentage of adult learners who meet goals in relation to high school or GED diploma attainment, postsecondary access, and entering into or retaining employment. Indiana ranks generally well in the number of individuals who meet these goals. These healthy indicators are offset, however, by less favorable rankings in the percentage of adult learners who choose these targets as the main outcome goals of their programs.

When the population of adult learners is further examined by its age and racial or ethnic composition, there is another set of mixed conclusions that emerges. Indiana's adult education system educates an extraordinarily high number of very young adults and, unsurprisingly, a very low number of adults in the prime working ages (25-44). The racial and ethnic composition shows a relatively higher likelihood of black dropouts utilizing adult education to gain a high school or GED diploma than whites. However, the relatively low likelihood that Hispanics use the system to offset their education attainment deficiencies is troubling.

A geographic perspective also demonstrates a complicated picture. Some counties post a strong ratio between the number of adult learners to adult dropouts. The ratio in other counties is lower to a surprising degree. That fact is even more discouraging when one considers that the counties with the highest ratios—Tippecanoe, Bartholomew, and Porter Counties—have relatively healthier educational attainment profiles. Rooted as it currently is in the K-12 structure, the adult education system may not be optimally responsive to geographic need.

The most concerning conclusions arise from that kind of comparison: between the number of adult learners flowing through the system relative to the educational characteristics of Indiana's population. While many outcome measures of the adult education system in Indiana are relatively positive, the adult educational attainment context of Indiana is relatively negative. When detailed age and racial or ethnic cohorts are taken into account, there are a number of signs that suggest that this context may become relatively worse in the years ahead. There are a number of trends that suggest that this is likely to be especially true for areas outside Central Indiana.

As such, good performance relative to other states may not be good enough for Indiana. The adult education system has both coincided with and contributed to a dramatically improved educational attainment landscape in the U.S. and here in Indiana. As small differences in a state workforce's skills and education produce ever greater differences in economic potential, Indiana must become open to radical change in its systems for education and training. Despite the state's reputation for systemic conservatism, the Strategic Skills Initiatve of the Department of Workforce Development and K-12 innovations such as granting charter authority to the Indianapolis Mayor show that Indiana is capable of initiating significant changes to its approach.

Creativity and leadership will be important. The federal monies that are so critical to adult education do not come without strings. As always, the regulations that ensure accountability reduces providers' flexibility as they mesh federal and state dollars to serve local needs. Moreover, Indiana's budget outlook makes it naive to look toward any improvement rooted in substantial state funding increases.

The challenges for Indiana, then, are too great to consider change only in the context of one system or bureaucracy. For the adult education system, its footprint—the size of the adult education population—is too small to overcome the more worrisome trends that confront the state. The most necessary changes will be those that free each component of Indiana's education and training system to magnify the efficacy of all the others. There is no other way to provide the permeability between work and education systems that will characterize true lifelong education and no other way to satisfy an economy that will demand unprecedented improvement in the skills and education of Indiana's population.

There are positive steps that have been taken in Indiana. The Strategic Skills Initiative and the continuing evolution of the state's community college system are positive examples of the kinds of necessary change described above. The formal adult education system itself can point to momentum. The previous topic page that described the frequency of goal choices among adult learners mentioned the differences between the U.S. and Indiana definitions of work-based project goals. Indiana's more rigorous concept, the Workforce Education Project, is aimed at the kinds of linkages described in the prior paragraph, in this case with an emphasis on links to employers and on-site learning. The result has served 226 companies and improved the basic skills of 4,452 employees.[91]

Still, the difficulties that remain, as well as the ones that appear to be heading Indiana's way, are enormous. Adult education here and anyplace else is an amorphous process. It

occurs within the formal adult education system, the focus of this paper. It occurs as a result of training supported by the Department of Workforce Development. It takes place in colleges and universities and is undergoing significant institutional change in the state's community college system, including the phenomenal rise in Ivy Tech State Community College's overall enrollment. To the extent that one can be an adult education student at 16 years old, the role and performance of Indiana's high schools are critical elements of the system. Above all, there is the continuous education in which so many adults engage that takes place outside the confines of publicly-subsidized training. As Figure 1 demonstrates, this may be the most important element of all.

Indiana's task is to account for all of these realms in the context of the challenges ahead and then determine how to best endow each of them with the ability to support the others. The current "formal" adult education system, the Indiana Department of Education's Division of Adult Education, is responsible for some real examples of success. The size of its student body and the number of learners who meet diploma, postsecondary, and work-related goals nonetheless leaves the current formal system insufficiently equipped to individually address the full size of Indiana's educational attainment deficits.

APPENDIX A:

PERCENTAGE OF ADULT EDUCATION LEARNERS AGE 16-18, 2005-06

Florida	32%	Maryland	14%
Vermont	30%	Arkansas	13%
Wyoming	28%	Oregon	12%
Louisiana	28%	South Carolina	12%
Indiana	27%	Utah	12%
Maine	26%	Missouri	12%
Alabama	26%	Wisconsin	12%
Montana	24%	Kentucky	12%
North Dakota	24%	Texas	11%
Mississippi	23%	Pennsylvania	11%
Connecticut	22%	Colorado	11%
Kansas	21%	Ohio	9%
Alaska	20%	Rhode Island	9%
Georgia	20%	DC	9%
South Dakota	19%	Arizona	9%
New Hampshire	18%	California	8%
West Virginia	18%	Virginia	8%
North Carolina	18%	Illinois	7%
Oklahoma	17%	New Jersey	6%
Hawaii	17%	Massachusetts	5%
Iowa	17%	Washington	5%
Tennessee	17%	Nevada	5%
Delaware	16%	New York	4%
Nebraska	16%	Minnesota	3%
Idaho	15%	Michigan	3%
New Mexico	15%		

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Adult and Vocational Education. National Reporting System.

APPENDIX B:
PERCENTAGE OF ADULT EDUCATION LEARNERS AGE 25-44, 2005-06

Nevada	57%	Ohio	44%
Colorado	53%	Arkansas	42%
Arizona	53%	Iowa	42%
Washington	53%	West Virginia	42%
Minnesota	53%	Kansas	41%
New Jersey	53%	North Carolina	41%
Texas	52%	Georgia	41%
Massachusetts	52%	Tennessee	40%
Illinois	51%	Delaware	40%
Virginia	50%	Connecticut	40%
New York	50%	South Carolina	40%
Oregon	49%	South Dakota	40%
California	49%	New Hampshire	39%
Michigan	49%	Hawaii	37%
DC	48%	Mississippi	37%
New Mexico	48%	Indiana	37%
Rhode Island	47%	Alabama	36%
Maryland	47%	Montana	35%
Idaho	46%	Florida	35%
Nebraska	46%	Maine	34%
Missouri	46%	Vermont	33%
Oklahoma	45%	Wyoming	32%
Kentucky	45%	Louisiana	32%
Wisconsin	45%	Alaska	32%
Pennsylvania	44%	North Dakota	31%
Utah	44%		

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Adult and Vocational Education. National Reporting System.

APPENDIX C:

PERCENT OF ADULT BASIC AND SECONDARY STUDENTS WHO COMPLETE AT LEAST ONE LEVEL OF INSTRUCTION, 2003-04/2005-06

North Dakota	73%
Kansas	63%
Iowa	62%
Ohio	56%
Wyoming	56%
Kentucky	51%
Colorado	50%
Arkansas	49%
New Hampshire	49%
Wisconsin	49%
Rhode Island	49%
South Dakota	48%
Alaska	47%
Maine	47%
Indiana	47%
Louisiana	47%
Virginia	47%
Oregon	47%
West Virginia	46%
Alabama	46%
South Carolina	46%
Maryland	45%
Vermont	45%
Arizona	45%
Florida	44%
Tennessee	44%
Oklahoma	43%
Connecticut	42%
Nevada	42%
Texas	40%
Nebraska	38%
Georgia	38%
Missouri	37%
North Carolina	37%
Delaware	36%
Pennsylvania	36%
Idaho	35%
Montana	33%
Illinois	32%
Mississippi	32%
New Jersey	32%
Minnesota	32%
New York	31%
New Mexico	31%
California	29%
Hawaii	27%
Massachusetts	26%
Michigan	26%
Utah	23%
DC	22%
Washington	20%

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Adult and Vocational Education. National Reporting System.

APPENDIX D:

PERCENT OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE STUDENTS WHO COMPLETE AT LEAST ONE LEVEL OF INSTRUCTION, 2003-04/2005-06

DC	71%	Washington	39%
North Dakota	64%	Virginia	39%
Kansas	61%	Connecticut	38%
Ohio	55%	Iowa	37%
Arizona	53%	Oklahoma	37%
Kentucky	50%	Maine	37%
West Virginia	48%	Georgia	36%
Alabama	47%	New York	36%
Michigan	47%	California	36%
Arkansas	46%	Illinois	34%
Rhode Island	46%	New Hampshire	32%
Indiana	45%	Missouri	32%
Colorado	45%	Louisiana	32%
Nevada	45%	Oregon	32%
Wyoming	45%	Alaska	32%
Texas	44%	Minnesota	31%
Wisconsin	43%	North Carolina	31%
Montana	43%	Florida	30%
South Dakota	42%	Idaho	30%
Maryland	41%	New Mexico	30%
Tennessee	40%	Pennsylvania	30%
South Carolina	40%	Delaware	27%
Nebraska	39%	Hawaii	27%
Massachusetts	39%	Mississippi	25%
New Jersey	39%		

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Adult and Vocational Education. National Reporting System.

APPENDIX E:

UNWEIGHTED THREE-YEAR AVERAGE OF PERCENT WHO COMPLETE A GOAL OF EARNING A HIGH SCHOOL OR GED DIPLOMA

Hawaii	95%	Delaware	62%
Vermont	93%	Alabama	62%
Indiana	89%	Tennessee	61%
South Dakota	86%	Wisconsin	61%
Virginia	84%	Louisiana	59%
Iowa	83%	Nebraska	58%
Maine	82%	Rhode Island	57%
Arizona	80%	Washington	56%
New York	79%	Oklahoma	55%
Kentucky	78%	Colorado	54%
North Dakota	78%	DC	53%
New Hampshire	78%	New Mexico	51%
Maryland	77%	Massachusetts	51%
Florida	74%	Pennsylvania	47%
Alaska	73%	Minnesota	46%
Wyoming	73%	North Carolina	45%
South Carolina	72%	Idaho	45%
Ohio	71%	Nevada	44%
West Virginia	71%	Oregon	41%
Arkansas	70%	Missouri	39%
Connecticut	69%	Michigan	34%
Kansas	67%	Illinois	31%
Georgia	65%	California	28%
Texas	65%	Utah	24%
Montana	63%	New Jersey	23%
Mississsippi	63%		

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Adult and Vocational Education. National Reporting System.

APPENDIX E:

UNWEIGHTED THREE-YEAR AVERAGE OF PERCENT WHO COMPLETE A GOAL OF ENTERING POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION OR TRAINING, 2003-04/2005-06

Indiana	92%	California	53%
Arizona	87%	Montana	53%
New York	83%	South Carolina	52%
North Dakota	83%	Iowa	50%
Ohio	82%	Alabama	50%
Hawaii	79%	Oregon	49%
Vermont	79%	Michigan	48%
Delaware	78%	Rhode Island	47%
New Hampshire	74%	Nevada	45%
DC	74%	Utah	42%
South Dakota	73%	Idaho	42%
Colorado	70%	Nebraska	41%
Wisconsin	69%	Louisiana	39%
Mississsippi	68%	Massachusetts	38%
Kentucky	68%	Minnesota	36%
Alaska	64%	Pennsylvania	33%
Washington	64%	Missouri	31%
New Mexico	62%	Florida	28%
Wyoming	62%	Virginia	24%
Arkansas	62%	North Carolina	22%
Maine	60%	Illinois	20%
Georgia	59%	Maryland	19%
Connecticut	59%	Texas	19%
Kansas	58%	New Jersey	18%
Tennessee	57%	Oklahoma	14%
West Virginia	57%		

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Adult and Vocational Education. National Reporting System.

APPENDIX F:

UNWEIGHTED THREE-YEAR AVERAGE OF PERCENT WHO COMPLETE A GOAL OF ENTERING EMPLOYMENT AFTER PROGRAM EXIT, 2003-04/2005-06

New Hampshire	91%	Maryland	59%
Indiana	86%	Delaware	58%
New York	81%	Colorado	55%
DC	80%	Idaho	55%
Arizona	78%	Massachusetts	53%
Alabama	77%	Oregon	53%
Rhode Island	77%	Missouri	53%
Iowa	76%	Minnesota	52%
North Dakota	76%	California	52%
Ohio	75%	Washington	51%
Hawaii	70%	Pennsylvania	50%
Arkansas	69%	Vermont	50%
Oklahoma	67%	Wisconsin	50%
Wyoming	67%	Maine	49%
Kansas	66%	South Dakota	48%
Kentucky	66%	Illinois	46%
South Carolina	66%	West Virginia	46%
Michigan	64%	New Mexico	45%
Nevada	63%	New Jersey	39%
Tennessee	63%	Utah	38%
Montana	62%	Nebraska	38%
Louisiana	61%	Florida	37%
Georgia	61%	Texas	35%
Connecticut	60%	Virginia	32%
Alaska	60%	North Carolina	18%
Mississsippi	60%		

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Adult and Vocational Education. National Reporting System.

APPENDIX G:

UNWEIGHTED THREE-YEAR AVERAGE OF PERCENT WHO COMPLETE A GOAL OF RETAINING EMPLOYMENT AFTER PROGRAM EXIT

New Hampshire	96%	Georgia	64%
Rhode Island	96%	Delaware	62%
Indiana	95%	Colorado	62%
Hawaii	94%	New Mexico	61%
DC	89%	Michigan	60%
Iowa	88%	Montana	60%
California	87%	Maine	60%
Arizona	84%	South Dakota	59%
Nevada	83%	Maryland	59%
North Dakota	83%	Wisconsin	58%
Illinois	82%	Mississsippi	58%
South Carolina	82%	New Jersey	56%
Alabama	81%	Nebraska	56%
Louisiana	80%	New York	54%
Kansas	78%	Pennsylvania	54%
Florida	76%	Virginia	54%
Oklahoma	76%	Utah	53%
Alaska	75%	Tennessee	53%
Arkansas	75%	Texas	49%
Ohio	73%	Washington	48%
Missouri	72%	Massachusetts	46%
Kentucky	69%	West Virginia	44%
Wyoming	68%	Oregon	44%
Connecticut	67%	North Carolina	22%
Idaho	66%	Vermont	0%
Minnesota	64%		

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Adult and Vocational Education. National Reporting System.

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