



Opening Doors and Opportunities With Education Beyond High School

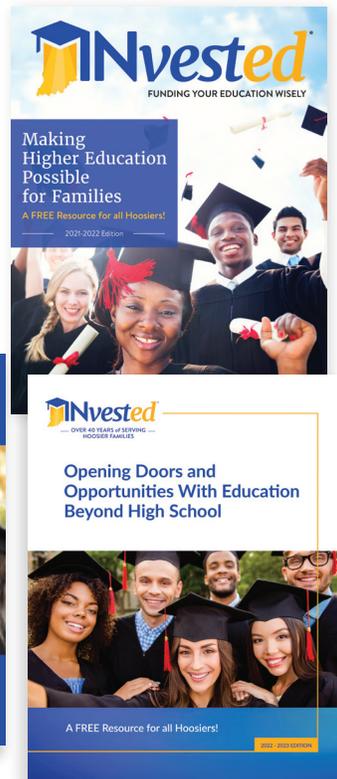
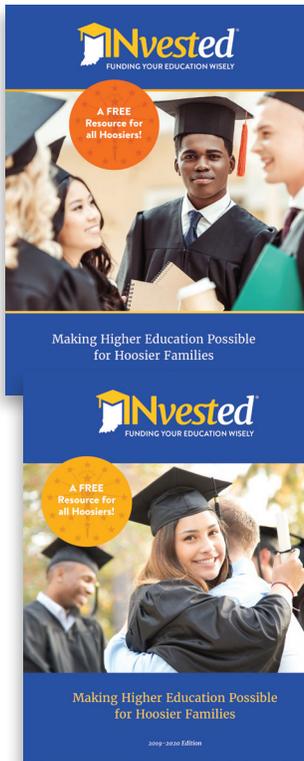
A FREE Resource
for all Hoosiers!

2023 - 2024 EDITION



— OVER 40 YEARS of SERVING —
HOOSIER FAMILIES

For over 40 years, INvestEd has provided students and families with solutions to continue and fund education beyond high school.



Welcome! We hope you'll find some valuable information within these pages as you plan to continue your education. You may have questions along the way and our **INvestEd** experts are ready to help.

Connect with us for FREE help!

Email: Outreach@INvestEdIndiana.org

Phone: 317.715.9007

Online: INvestEdIndiana.org

Follow @INvestEdIndiana



- WE'RE HERE TO HELP** 01
FREE help throughout the process
- BENEFITS OF EDUCATION** 02
Opportunities, earnings, & more
- CHOOSING A CAREER PATH** 03
Finding the right fit
- CHOOSING YOUR PROGRAM OR COLLEGE** 04
The right choice can save you time & money
- MORE EDUCATION, LESS DEBT** 06
Understanding your options
- MAXIMIZING FREE MONEY** 07
Finding grants & scholarships
- SAVING FOR YOUR EDUCATION/STUDENT EMPLOYMENT** 08
Additional ways to pay for your education
- EDUCATION LOANS & INCOME SHARE AGREEMENTS** 09
Key elements when evaluating options
- THE FAFSA** 10
Applying for Financial Aid
- MANAGING COSTS** 12
Making wise choices
- FINALIZING YOUR FUNDING PLAN** 13
Making informed decisions
- ADMISSIONS & FINANCIAL AID TIMELINES** 14
Stay on track
- KEY TERMS** 16

WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

Whether you're just starting to plan, looking for ways to pay for your education, or need help managing student loan debt, **INvestEd** is here every step of the way!



Investigate

career paths & choose the right program/college



Maximize

FREE money & minimize student loan debt



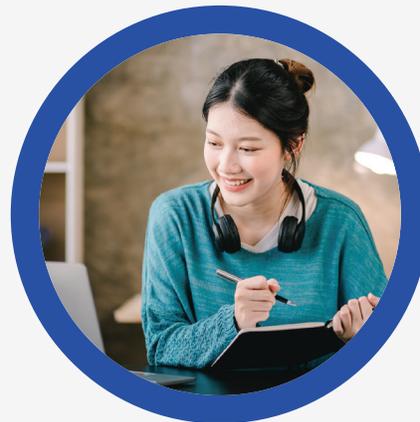
Apply

for financial aid & meet deadlines



Compare

financial aid offers & understand options to fill any funding gap



Manage

student loan debt & understand repayment options



Sign up for our e-newsletter for updates on key education planning topics. INvestEdIndiana.org/mailling-list



BENEFITS OF EDUCATION

There are many reasons to continue your education beyond high school.



► More Job Opportunities

70% of jobs will require education beyond high school by 2027.

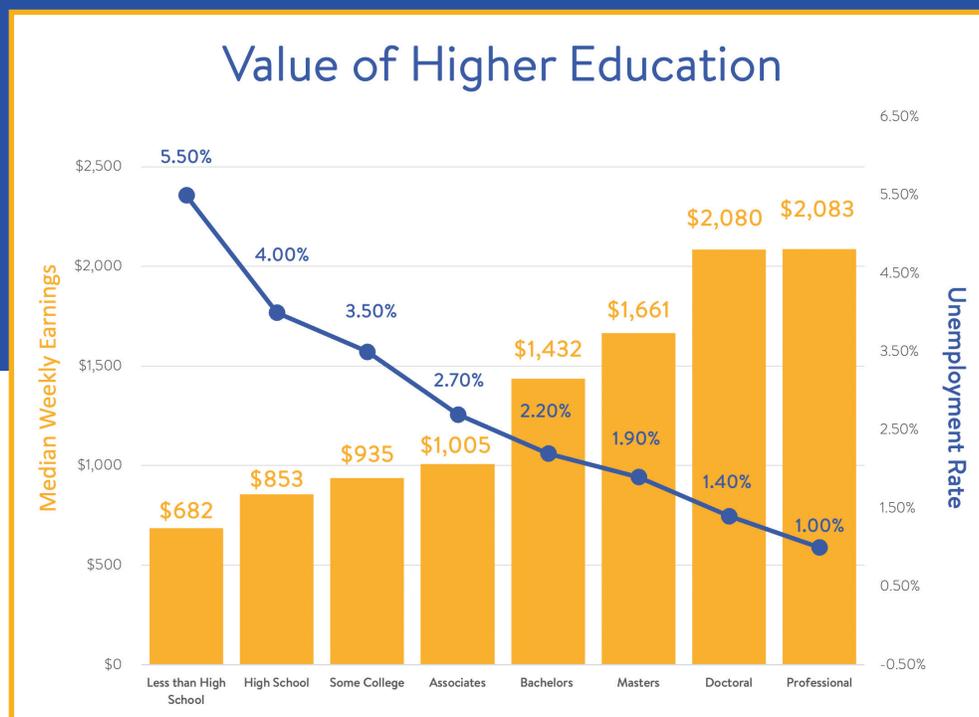
(Source: The Chronicle of Higher Education Jan 22, 2020)

► Higher Earnings

A person with a degree or certificate will earn more than someone with just a high school diploma. (See chart)

► Lower Unemployment Rate

In addition to earning more money, you are also less likely to be unemployed. (See chart)



(Source: Current Population Survey, U.S. Department of Labor, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics)



CHOOSING A CAREER PATH

Finding a career you enjoy that matches your skills can help reduce the cost and time to complete your education.

Tips to find the right career path:

- ▶ **Take a skills assessment** to help you discover your interests and strengths.
- ▶ **Explore careers** that match your personality traits, skills, and interests.
- ▶ **Research the salary** in a chosen career field as you review program/college costs.
 - Comparing future salary with anticipated debt is an important exercise throughout the planning process, and INvestEd can help! (Learn more about Managing Costs & Net Price on page 11 and at INvestEdIndiana.org/NPC)



Gain experience by:

- ▶ **Job shadowing** different career fields to see if a job is really what you think it is.
- ▶ **Volunteering** in your community. Serving others could lead to career inspiration and looks great on college and scholarship applications.
- ▶ **Interning** with local businesses and organizations.



INvestEd Tip: Check out FREE tools at INvestEdIndiana.org/choosing to help you find the right career path.

Indiana High-Growth, High-Income Jobs

Indiana has funding to help Hoosiers attain certification in high demand fields.



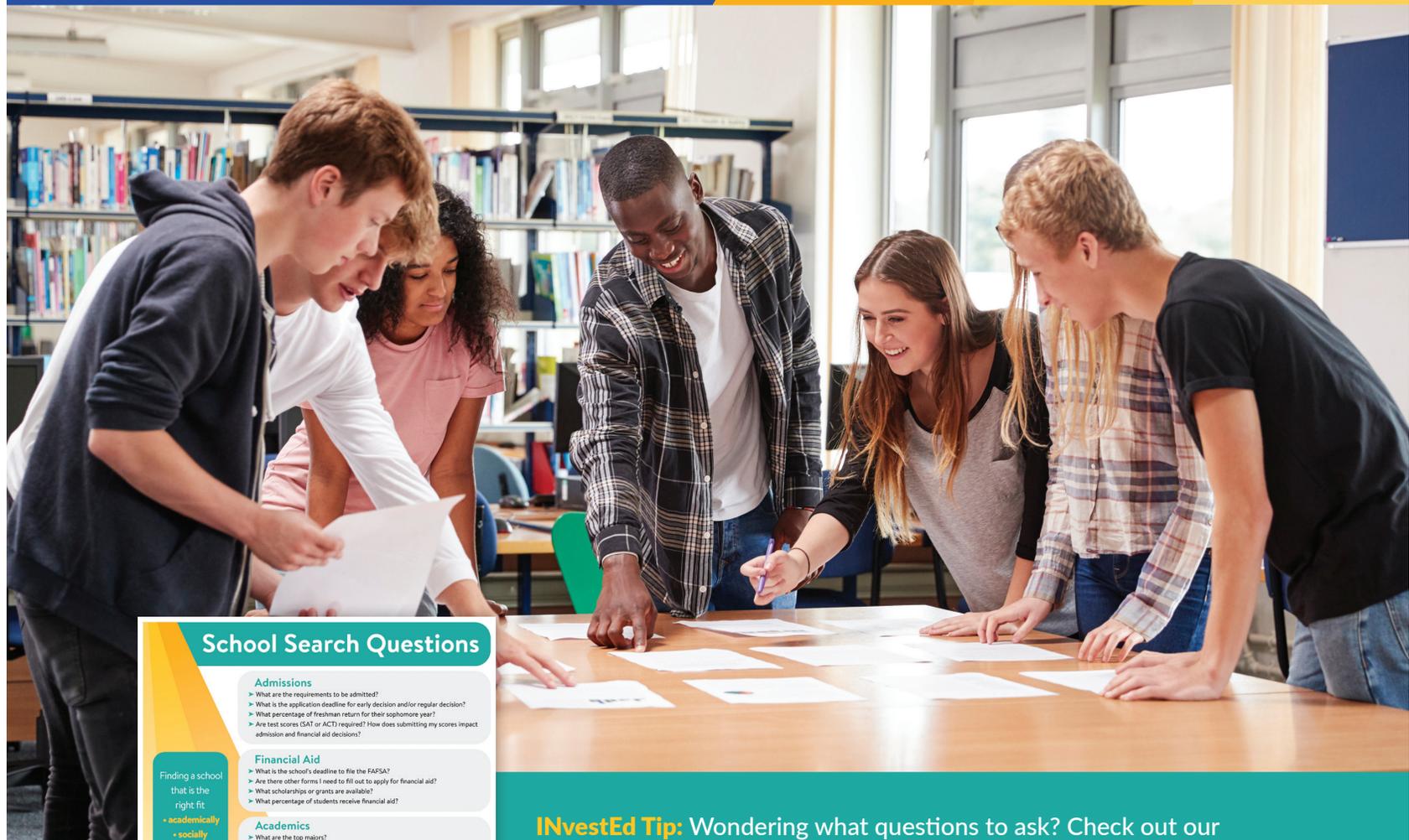
Questions on finding your career path? Connect with our team at **317.715.9007** or Outreach@INvestEdIndiana.org

CHOOSING YOUR PROGRAM OR COLLEGE

Finding the right fit is very important. At **INvestEd**, we encourage you to consider how a school fits:

Academically	Socially	Financially
Offers program or major for your career path	Feel part of the community (size, location, & facilities)	Program or school is affordable
Opportunities for experience like internships & practicums	Professional and personal networking opportunities	Potential debt is manageable once degree or certification obtained
Study abroad or intercultural experiences	Housing options	Ongoing scholarship opportunities





School Search Questions

Admissions

- What are the requirements to be admitted?
- What is the application deadline for early decision and/or regular decision?
- What percentage of freshmen return for their sophomore year?
- Are test scores (SAT or ACT) required? How does submitting my scores impact admission and financial aid decisions?

Financial Aid

- What is the school's deadline to file the FAFSA?
- Are there other forms I need to fill out to apply for financial aid?
- What scholarships or grants are available?
- What percentage of students receive financial aid?

Academics

- What are the top majors?
- What percentage of classes are taught by professors vs. teaching assistants?
- Are there hands-on opportunities like internships in my area of study?
- What kind of help can I get if I'm struggling academically?

Life on campus

- Are students required to live on campus?
- What are ways to get involved outside of the classroom?
- Are freshmen permitted to have cars on campus?
- What health care options are available when students get sick?

Life after college

- What kinds of career services do you offer?
- What is the job placement rate for recent graduates in my major?
- What is the average student loan debt for graduates?
- What is the average debt to starting salary ratio for students in my major?

Finding a school that is the right fit
 + academically
 + socially
 + financially
 means you are more likely to graduate on time and with less debt!

Contact INvestEd with any questions!
 Outreach@INvestEdIndiana.org
 317.715.9007
 INvestEdIndiana.org

INvestEd Tip: Wondering what questions to ask? Check out our College Search Questions at INvestEdIndiana.org/resources

Research Your Options:

Finding the right fit takes time and effort. Here are some suggestions from **INvestEd** to get you started:

- ▶ Use online tools like College Navigator & College Scorecard
- ▶ Attend College & Career Fairs
- ▶ Talk with your school counselor & teachers
- ▶ Visit program facility or college campus



Indiana has great schools to choose from!

Find more information at INvestEdIndiana.org/choosingcollege

MORE EDUCATION, LESS DEBT

Understanding your options and planning ahead may relieve the financial stress of continuing your education.



INvestEd travels across the state to help families all year round. See when we'll be at a location near you!
INvestEdIndiana.org/events

Steps to college funding:

- ▶ Maximizing FREE Money [pg. 7](#)
- ▶ Saving for Your Education [pg. 8](#)
- ▶ Student Employment [pg. 8](#)
- ▶ Education Loans & ISA Options [pg. 9](#)
- ▶ The FAFSA [pg. 10](#)
- ▶ Managing Costs [pg. 12](#)
- ▶ Finalizing Your Funding Plan [pg. 13](#)

We're happy to help!

Email: Outreach@INvestEdIndiana.org

Phone: [317.715.9007](tel:317.715.9007) | Online: INvestEdIndiana.org



MAXIMIZING FREE MONEY

Free money is a key component of wisely paying for education after high school.

Grants

Grants are typically based either on a student's financial need as determined by an application or the program they are pursuing. Find out more at INvestEdIndiana.org/grants



FEDERAL



STATE



INSTITUTIONAL

INvestEd Tip: Access ScholarTrack to monitor your state grant eligibility!



ScholarTrack

www.ScholarTrack.IN.gov

Scholarships

Scholarships are based on all kinds of factors like: career interest, volunteer activity, family heritage, academic standing, talents & abilities, and so much more!

Scholarship Search Options:

- ▶ FREE National Search Sites
- ▶ College/University
- ▶ Local/Community
 - School Counselor
 - Community Foundation
 - Business & Employer
 - Church & Civic Organizations



Check out the **INvestEd**
\$1,000 Scholarship Drawing!
INvestEdIndiana.org/1000

INvestEd Tip: Check out our Scholarship Search tool online at INvestEdIndiana.org/Scholarships and get started today!

SAVING FOR YOUR EDUCATION

Any money saved may mean less student loan debt to repay.

Ways to Save:

- ▶ **Put aside some money** from gifts (birthdays, graduation, & holidays).
- ▶ **Earnings** from job opportunities (during school & summer).
- ▶ **A 529 Direct Savings Plan** is a tax-free account for Indiana residents to set aside money for college. The State of Indiana provides a 20% tax credit (up to \$1,500) on annual contributions.
- ▶ **Coverdell Education Savings Account (ESA)** is an after-tax investment option with tax free withdrawals to use for educational costs. Maximum annual contribution is \$2,000 and beneficiary must use by age 30.



Tip: Saving for education beyond high school comes in many forms. Check out [INvestEdIndiana.org/saving](https://investedindiana.org/saving) for more details.

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

Working is a great way to help pay for school, gain practical work experience, and even help you get a job after graduation!



Student Employment Options:

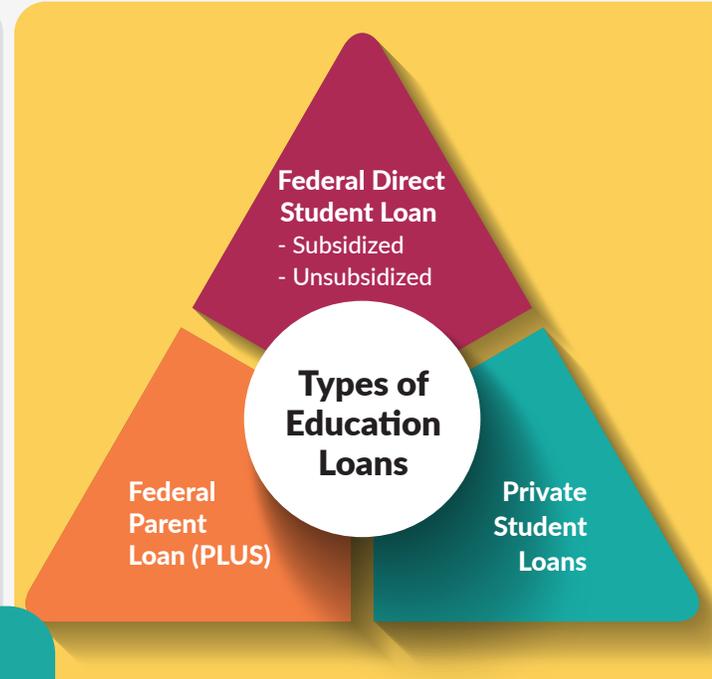
- ▶ **Working Part-Time** helps cover expenses, gain job experience, and network.
- ▶ **Federal Work Study** provides on or off campus jobs for students with financial need. Money earned does not count against you on the FAFSA.
- ▶ **Internships** may not always be paid positions, but studies show that over 80% of employers look for internship experience in their future employees.

EDUCATION LOANS

After you have exhausted all FREE money avenues, education loans may be needed.

Evaluating loan options:

- ▶ **Know who the borrower is for each type of loan.**
Is it the student, the parent, or is a cosigner involved?
- ▶ **Know the costs.** Do the loans have fees and are the interest rates variable or fixed?
- ▶ **Know when interest begins to accrue.** Does the loan debt begin to grow immediately?
- ▶ **Know when repayment begins.** Is there a grace period or does repayment start once the loan is disbursed?
- ▶ **Know who you are borrowing from.** Are the loans from the government, a bank, or a nonprofit organization?



INvestEd Tip: Check out our Student Loan Comparison Worksheet as you evaluate your loan options and understand the potential repayment! [INvestEdIndiana.org/understanding](https://investedindiana.org/understanding)

INCOME SHARE AGREEMENTS

Another way to fund some of your education and repay later based on your income.

What is an Income Share Agreement (ISA)?

This is funding to help students cover some of their educational costs. The student signs an agreement with the college or program provider to repay a percent of their income for a set period of time after attendance or graduation.

Many factors impact ISA criteria including student program and projected income. While not all colleges or programs offer this option, for some it will be an alternative to private student loans or federal parent loans.



One example of an ISA is Accelerate Indiana. This program helps Indiana residents accelerate their careers through fast-paced training programs for high-wage, high-demand jobs. Visit accelerateindiana.org to learn more.

Need help understanding education loan or ISA options? Let INvestEd help!
Email us at Outreach@INvestEdIndiana.org or call 317.715.9007



The starting point to access federal, state, and institutional money.

THE FAFSA

Free Application for Federal Student Aid

Federal application filed annually to determine your eligibility for federal, state, and some institutional financial aid programs. Find out more info at INvestEdIndiana.org/FAFSA

Circle
this date:

APR **15**

Priority deadline for
State of Indiana grants

INvestEd Tip: Some colleges may have an earlier deadline to be eligible for their aid. Make sure you know the deadlines and submit the FAFSA on time!



WHO?

- ▶ Any high school senior
- ▶ Anyone planning to continue their pursuit of a degree or certificate in the upcoming school year



WHAT?

- ▶ Use our Create your Federal Student Aid Account (FSA ID) resource to create your account.
- ▶ Check out our FAFSA Checklist for a list of documents to help you file.

Find these resources and more at:
INvestEdIndiana.org/resources



WHEN?

- ▶ Opens **December 2023**
- ▶ Check with colleges for their specific deadlines.
- ▶ The priority deadline is **April 15th** for State of Indiana grants.



WHY?

- ▶ The FAFSA calculates a student eligibility index used by financial aid offices to determine what funds you can receive for the next school year.
- ▶ Learn more at: INvestEdIndiana.org/FAFSA or call 317-715-9007 for FREE FAFSA filing help.

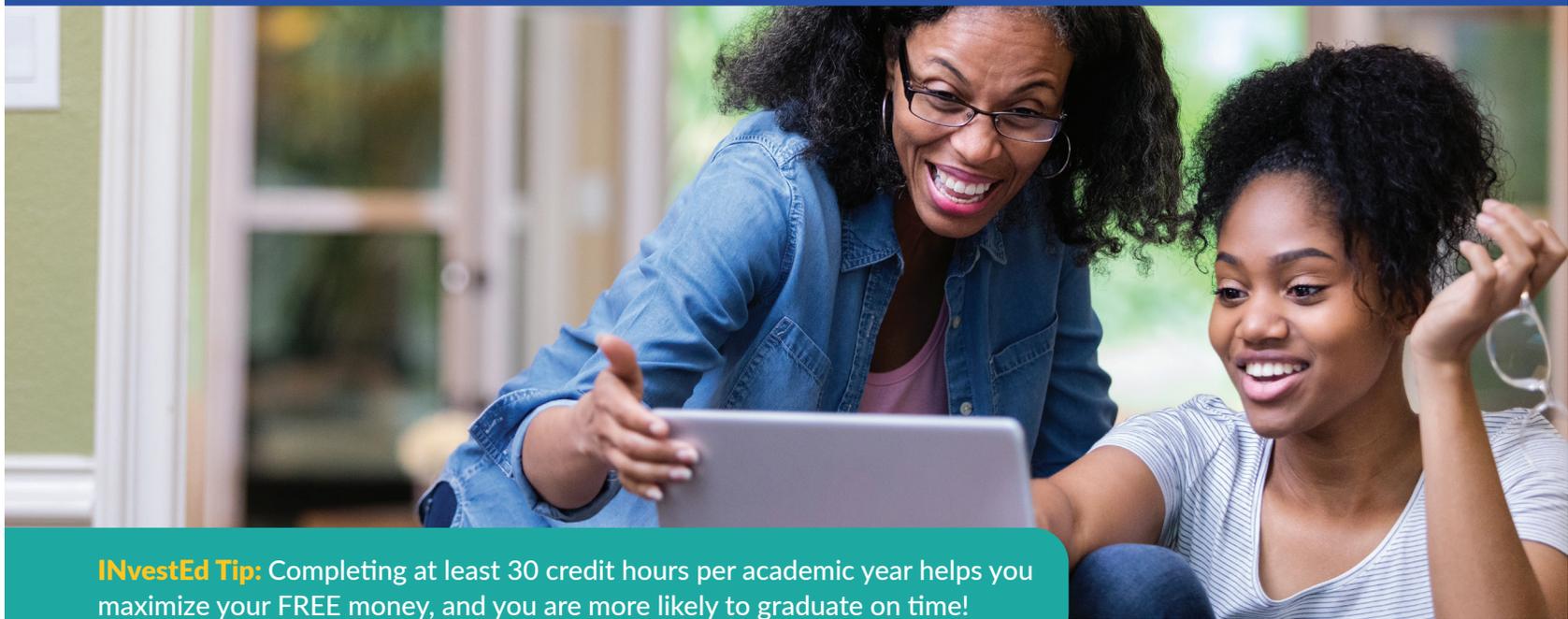
HOW?

File online:
StudentAid.gov



Connect with us at Outreach@INvestEdIndiana.org
or 317.715.9007 for help!





INvestEd Tip: Completing at least 30 credit hours per academic year helps you maximize your FREE money, and you are more likely to graduate on time!

MANAGING COSTS

It's important to compare costs and understand potential aid available as you consider your options.

Net Price Calculators

Use this tool to give you an estimate of the costs and financial aid that may be available. The net price shows the potential amount you'll need to fund through:

- ▶ National or local scholarships
- ▶ Student employment
- ▶ Savings/out of pocket
- ▶ Education loans

Check out a college's net price calculator at INvestEdIndiana.org/NPC

Limiting Costs

- ▶ Dual Credit and Advanced Placement (AP) courses are ways to earn college credits at a reduced rate and potentially help finish your program early.
- ▶ Commuting may help save on living expenses. Whether you commute or live on campus, consider the costs and aid impacts of each.
- ▶ Taking classes during the summer or online may help you stay on track to graduate or finish early.

Net Price Calculators Provide Estimates As You Review Your Options

Cost of Attendance
- Free Money

= Net Price

Cost Comparison Sheet			
<small>Enter the costs and financial aid offers provided by the various colleges/programs you are considering to better compare your FREE money versus potential debt to attend each school.</small>			
School Name	1.	2.	3.
Tuition & Fees			
Food & Housing			
Books & Supplies			
Transportation			
Miscellaneous Personal Expenses			
Cost of Attendance			

Review options side by side:
INvestEdIndiana.org/resources

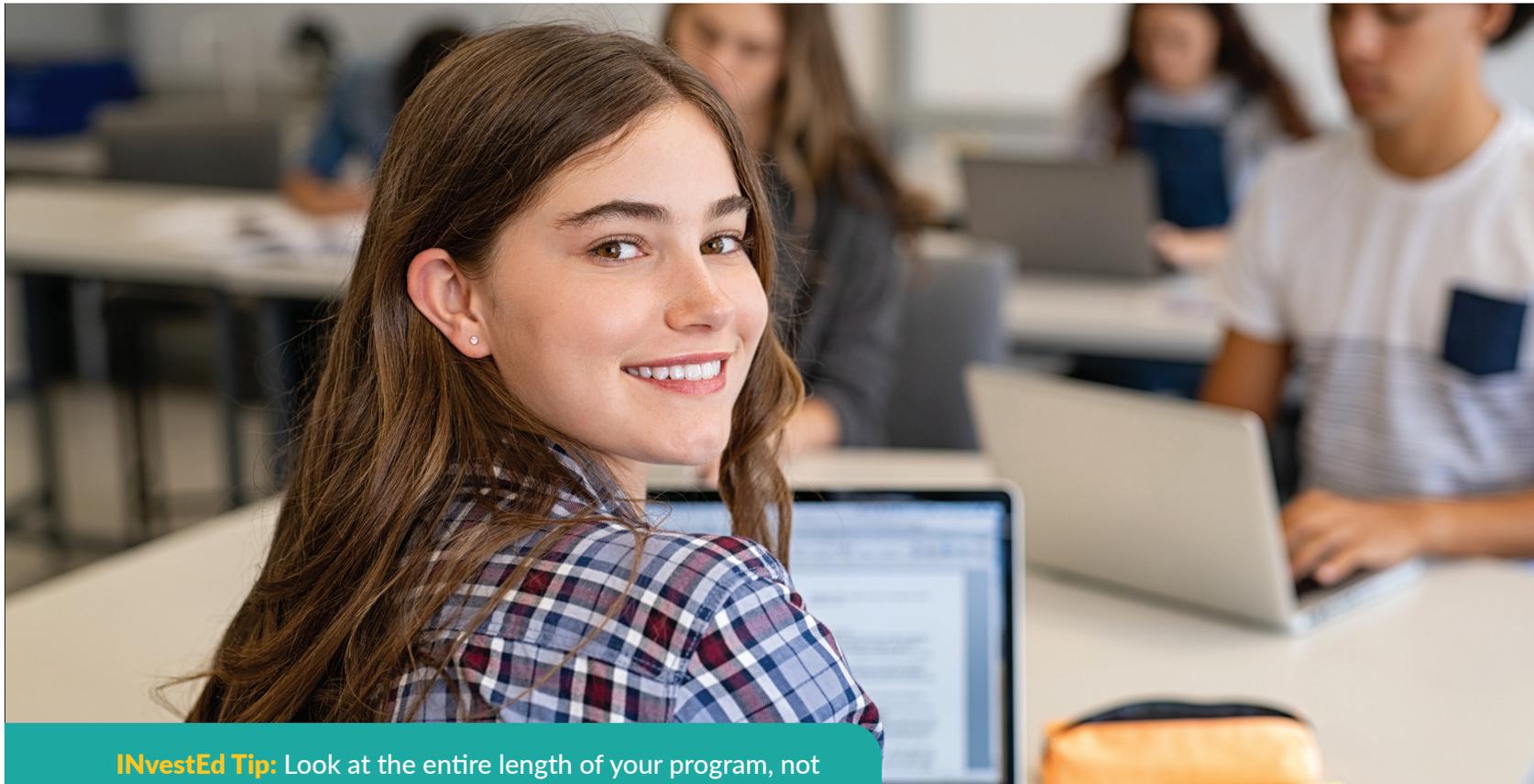
Work Study**			
Direct Loan - Subsidized			
Direct Loan - Unsubsidized			
PLUS Loan (Parent)			
Private/Alternative Loan			
Total Debt			
BALANCE			



Contact INvestEd with any questions!
 Outreach@INvestEdIndiana.org
 317-715-9007
 INvestEdIndiana.org

FINALIZING YOUR FUNDING PLAN

A significant factor in making your final decision is deciding how you'll cover the cost.



INvestEd Tip: Look at the entire length of your program, not just the current year, as you review your funding options.

Steps to finalize your plan

- ▶ Review your FAFSA Submission Summary (FSS) - FAFSA output that identifies any errors or issues
- ▶ Respond to requests from schools for any additional documentation
- ▶ Compare your financial aid offers – clearly identify FREE money, student employment, and loans
- ▶ Contact the Financial Aid Office if your family situation has changed since filing the FAFSA
- ▶ Contact INvestEd as you review your options to cover any remaining balance

Finalizing Financial Aid

After Filing the FAFSA

- Review FAFSA Submission Summary (FSS)** by logging into your FAFSA at [StudentAid.gov](https://studentaid.gov) to view comments identifying errors or additional steps you need to take.
Note: To review the FSS, student must login with their FSA ID.
- Make FAFSA Corrections** to update incorrect information or add additional schools.
Note: Any changes to the FAFSA must be signed with the appropriate FSA ID(s) and submitted.
- Register for ScholarTrack** at scholartrack.in.gov and review your state of Indiana grant eligibility.
Note: Grant eligibility may not be available until after the April 15th priority deadline.
- Contact each school** to which you are accepted and still considering to determine if they need any additional information and respond by each deadline.

DEADLINES
Check with each school about their individual deadlines.

VERIFICATION
The financial aid office may need to confirm some of your FAFSA information.

FAFSA SUBMISSION SUMMARY (FSS)
Review your summary anytime there are changes to your FAFSA.

Compare and Finalize Financial Aid Offers

- Use INvestEd's Cost Comparison Sheet at [INvestEdIndiana.org](https://investedindiana.org) to compare financial aid offers.
- Review borrowing options using INvestEd's Student Loan Comparison Sheet available at [INvestEdIndiana.org](https://investedindiana.org)
- Talk with each school's financial aid office regarding the steps required to accept your offers, obtain work study jobs, and secure loans.

Contact INvestEd with any questions!

 Outreach@INvestEdIndiana.org
317-715-9007
[INvestEdIndiana.org](https://investedindiana.org)

Check out [INvestEdIndiana.org/finalizing](https://investedindiana.org/finalizing) for more information.

ADMISSIONS TIMELINE

Fall Junior Year:

- Talk with your school counselor to find out if you are on track to continue your education beyond high school. Take challenging coursework, the PSAT, Advanced Placement (AP) and Dual Credit Courses.
- Check out [INvestEdIndiana.org/choosingcollege](https://www.investedindiana.org/choosingcollege) for resources as you investigate different schools.
- Find opportunities to volunteer in your community. Volunteering looks great on admission and scholarship applications.

Spring Junior Year:

- Register for the SAT, ACT, or both. Achieving a good score on these tests may reward you with more opportunities for grants and scholarships.
- Continue researching schools and begin narrowing your list to 5 or 6.
- Visit college campuses. Make appointments with both the Admissions and Financial Aid Offices, attend some classes, and spend the night, if you can.

Summer after Junior Year:

- Write sample essays in preparation for admission and scholarship applications. Tell your story in 300 words or less.

Fall Senior Year:

- Narrow your list of college options to 3 or 4. File your admission applications and make note of important deadlines. Schedule initial or return visits with faculty, Admissions, and Financial Aid.
- Gather recommendation letters and fine tune your personal essays for admissions and scholarship applications.
- If you are looking to improve your scores or take the test for the first time, register and prepare for the fall SAT or ACT. Higher scores may lead to better financial aid offers.

Winter Senior Year:

- Follow up with the places you are applying to and confirm that they have received your admissions application.

Spring Senior Year:

- Narrow down your list of schools to find the right fit. Be sure to note any college decision deadlines.
- Check deadlines for sending in your required deposit, housing application, or any other forms requested by the school and remember to let the other schools know that you won't be attending.

Summer after Senior Year:

- Note important dates for the upcoming school year like course registration days and freshman orientation.

FINANCIAL AID TIMELINE

Fall Junior Year:

- Start or continue saving money for your education and work with a trusted adult to set up a savings account like a 529 Direct Savings Plan.

Spring Junior Year:

- Begin searching for scholarships by:
 - Talking to your school counselor about scholarship options.
 - Reviewing community foundation scholarships, so you can begin to make yourself a better applicant your senior year.
 - Registering on national search sites.
- Investigate the costs and possible aid at each of the schools you're interested in using their net price calculator. [INvestEd](#) provides links and tools to help at [INvestEdIndiana.org/NPC](#)
- Create a resume and apply for summer jobs. Find a job in an area related to your career interest, if possible.

Summer after Junior Year:

- Save as much money as possible from your summer job and put it into savings. Money saved now means borrowing less later.
- Begin discussions with a trusted adult regarding options available to cover education costs.
- Look for volunteer opportunities to enhance your scholarship applications.

Fall Senior Year:

- Continue discussions with a trusted adult about the financial options available to cover costs, as well as continuing scholarship searches. Find tips at: [INvestEdIndiana.org/scholarships](#)
- Create the FSA (Federal Student Aid) accounts for the student and contributor(s) to be ready to file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) when it opens in December.

Winter Senior Year:

- Fill out the FAFSA as soon as it's available at [StudentAid.gov](#). To be eligible for State of Indiana aid, file the FAFSA by the priority deadline of April 15th. **Note: Some schools may have an earlier deadline.**
- Continue searching and applying for scholarships. In fact, keep looking for scholarships until you have completed your degree or program. This is free money that doesn't have to be paid back, which means less you have to borrow.
- Follow up with the schools you are applying to and confirm that they have received your FAFSA. Ask about any additional financial aid forms that may be required.
- Confirm your federal, state, and institutional eligibility for scholarships and grants. Use the Finalizing Financial Aid document available at [INvestEdIndiana.org/finalizing](#) for guidance.

Spring Senior Year:

- Review your financial aid offers and compare costs using our Cost Comparison worksheet available at [INvestEdIndiana.org/NPC](#)
- Finalize your funding plan with the Financial Aid Office and complete all paperwork prior to orientation.

KEY TERMS

▶ **COA (Cost of Attendance)**

Total estimated cost of education for the year established by the school or program. Included elements: tuition & fees, food & housing, books & supplies, transportation, and miscellaneous personal expenses.

▶ **CSS Profile (College Scholarship Service Profile)**

Additional financial aid application used by some colleges to determine a student's eligibility for institutional financial aid.

▶ **SAI (Student Aid Index)**

Eligibility index calculated by the FAFSA and used by financial aid offices to determine what funds you can receive for the next school year.

▶ **FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)**

Annual federal financial aid application that is filed each year and is used to determine eligibility for federal, state of Indiana, and some institutional aid.

▶ **FAFSA Contributor**

Anyone asked to provide information on the FAFSA. This could include the student, parent, parent's spouse, or student's spouse.

▶ **FSA ID**

Username & password FAFSA contributors make to sign and submit the FAFSA.

▶ **FADDX (FUTURE Act Direct Data Exchange)**

Link from FAFSA to IRS to pull in student and/or contributor tax return information.

▶ **FSS (FAFSA Submission Summary)**

Output once the FAFSA is processed identifying any errors or next steps applicants need to complete.

College Planning Toolbox

You can use this FREE tool to track information based on your family as a whole or individual students.

Tools to help:

- ▶ Financial center to track savings & project costs
- ▶ Calendar to set reminders
- ▶ Scholarship search tool
- ▶ Review school options & costs

Check it out here!

INvestEdIndiana.org/resources/college-planning-toolbox





A FREE Resource for all Hoosiers!

Connect with us:

317.715.9007
Outreach@INvestEdIndiana.org
INvestEdIndiana.org

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