



Ohio Attainment

2019 Annual Report



Department of
Higher Education

INTRODUCTION



Ohio faces an urgent and growing need for highly skilled, credentialed workers. Ohio's postsecondary attainment is not keeping pace with the needs of our economy, leaving a significant gap between employer needs and worker knowledge and skills. This well-documented "talent gap" threatens our state's continued economic competitiveness and growth. Economists have indicated that nearly 1 million more adults with postsecondary credentials will be needed to keep the state's economy moving¹.

Ohio's ability to attract and retain jobs is the key to our state's economic future and hinges on the educational attainment levels of our citizenry. To win the stiff global competition for business investment and jobs, Ohio must be among the leaders in developing individuals with the knowledge, skills, and postsecondary credentials that meet the needs of employers. To fulfill our state's workforce demand, we must include all Ohioans – from new high school graduates to adults in transition – and address existing inequities in workforce readiness and opportunity gaps.

In response, Governor Mike DeWine, Lt. Governor Jon Husted, Chancellor Randy Gardner and Superintendent Paolo DeMaria have made education and workforce development a top priorities for the state, and, together with the Ohio General Assembly, have made significant investments in support of the state's postsecondary attainment objectives. As outlined later in the report, the FY2020-21 State Operating Budget included numerous examples of student-centered financial and policy supports designed to elevate postsecondary attainment and Ohio's economic future.

¹ Projections from the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2018
<https://www.ohiohighered.org/attainment/projection-tool>

TOPLINE TAKEAWAYS

Steady progress continues

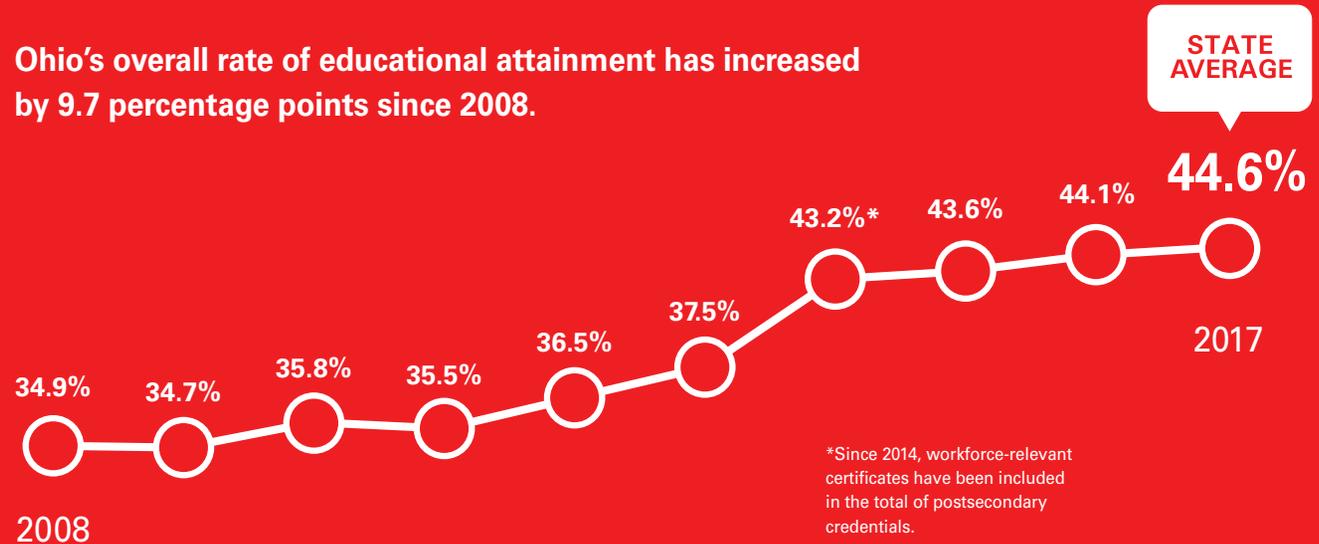
According to the Lumina Foundation's *A Stronger Nation 2019* report², Ohio's overall rate of educational attainment has increased by 9.7 percentage points from 2008 to 2017. In 2008, 34.9 percent of Ohio adults had a postsecondary (post-high school) degree or other credential of value in the marketplace. By 2017, that number had increased to 44.6 percent. While a portion of this increase can be attributed to the inclusion of workforce-relevant certificates in the total of postsecondary credentials in 2014, there was a more than a four-percentage-point increase in degrees among Ohioans, which is approximately a quarter-million more Ohio adults with degrees than if our attainment rate had remained stagnant since 2008.



Ohio House Bill 49, enacted by the 132nd General Assembly in 2017, directed the Chancellor – in collaboration with the Ohio Department of Education – to prepare an annual report on postsecondary attainment in the state. The report is to be shared with the governor, the president and minority leader of the Ohio Senate, and the speaker and minority leader of the Ohio House of Representatives.

This document is the second of the required annual progress reports.

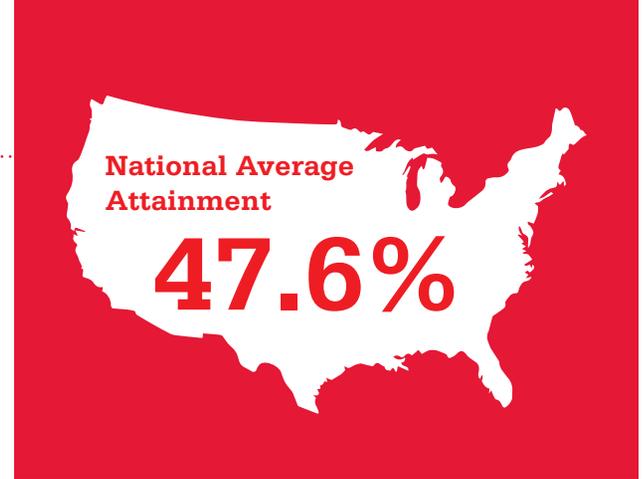
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² Lumina Foundation's *A Stronger Nation 2019* references degree attainment data from the US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2016 and certificate estimates tallied by the Georgetown University Center on Education and Workforce. For more on the methodology, please see <http://strongernation.luminafoundation.org/report/2019>.

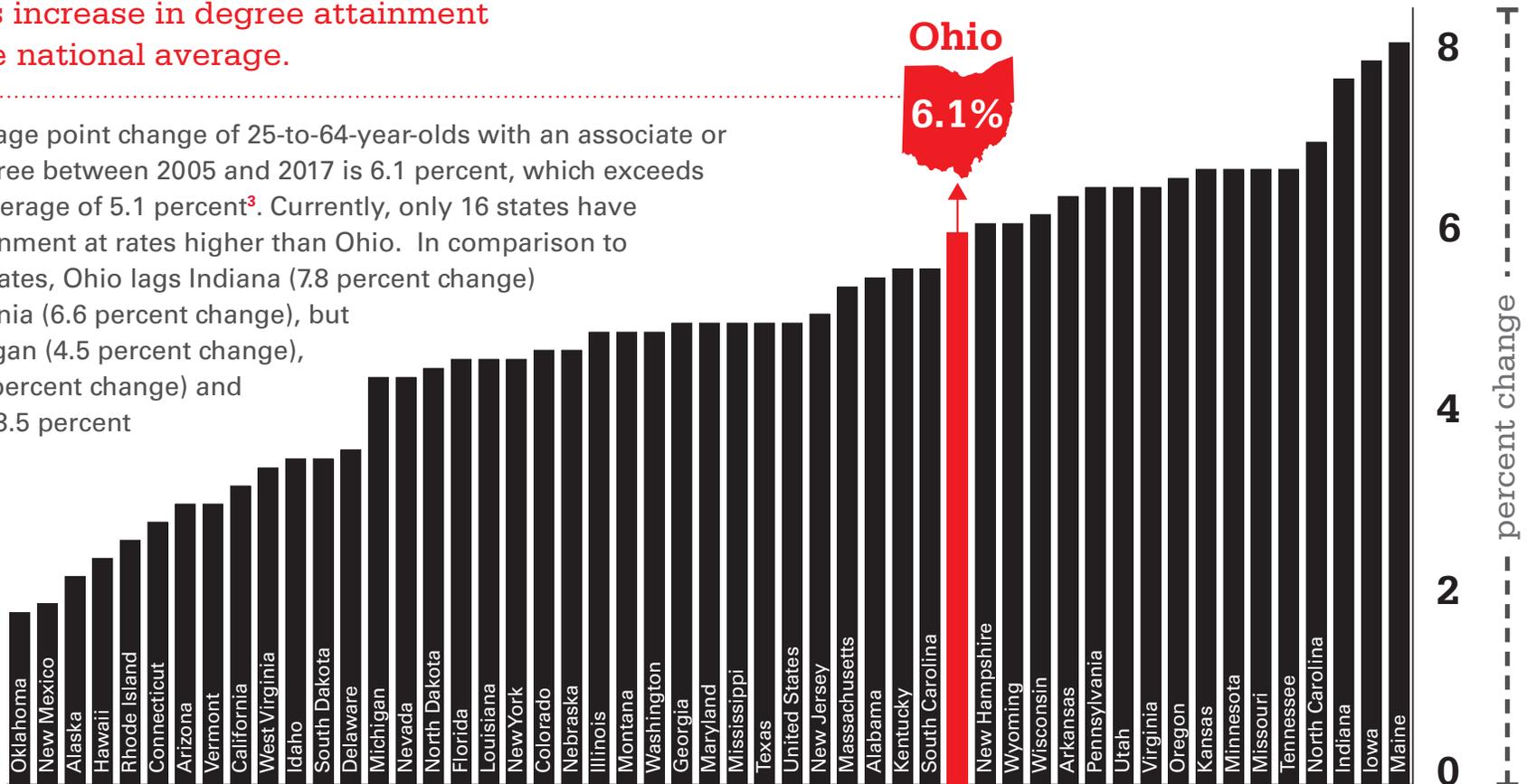
Ohio still lags the nation in postsecondary attainment.

While Ohio is making steady progress, the state still lags when compared to the national average. Ohio's 2017 educational attainment rate of 44.6 percent is three percentage points lower than the national average of 47.6 percent. Today, 31 states have higher attainment rates than Ohio.



But...Ohio's increase in degree attainment is above the national average.

Ohio's percentage point change of 25-to-64-year-olds with an associate or bachelor's degree between 2005 and 2017 is 6.1 percent, which exceeds the national average of 5.1 percent³. Currently, only 16 states have increased attainment at rates higher than Ohio. In comparison to neighboring states, Ohio lags Indiana (7.8 percent change) and Pennsylvania (6.6 percent change), but exceeds Michigan (4.5 percent change), Kentucky (5.7 percent change) and West Virginia (3.5 percent change).

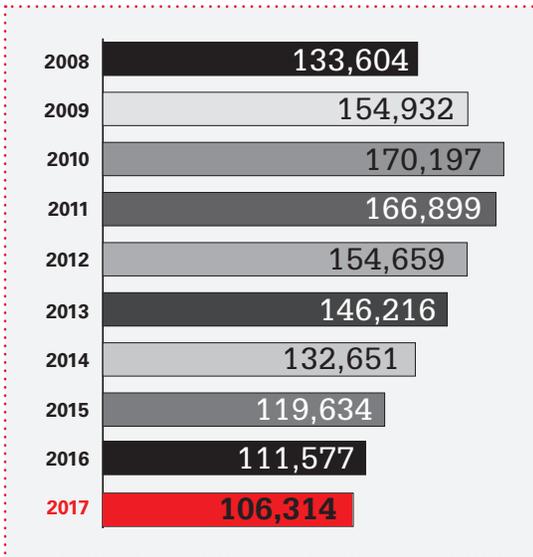
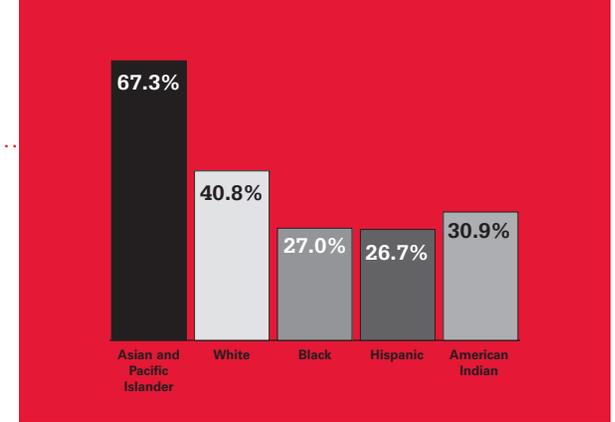


³ Ithica S+R: <https://sr.ithaka.org/publications/motivations-implications-and-approaches-to-state-postsecondary-attainment-goals>

Significant racial and ethnic gaps exist.

Even though educational attainment is increasing among all demographic groups, data show persistent and troubling gaps linked to race and ethnicity⁴. The National Center for Education Management Systems (NCHEMS)⁵ projects that closing Ohio's

gap in attainment between students of color and their white peers would result in almost 140,000 more credentials awarded to underrepresented minorities by 2025 than predicted based on our current rate of attainment.



Adult enrollment continues to decline.

Demographic projections estimate that Ohio will face a decline in the number of high school graduates in coming years⁶. But, Ohio has an untapped population of 3.7 million adults between the ages of 25 and 64 who do not have a postsecondary credential. Following the Great Recession, the number and proportion of adult students enrolling in postsecondary education and training has been in decline; in fall of 2017, only 23 percent of the nearly

460,000 students enrolled in Ohio's public postsecondary institutions were adults over age 25⁷. Nationally, that number is closer to 40 percent. Ohio must, therefore, implement strategies to help more adults enroll in – and complete – some form of postsecondary education. If Ohio were to increase the enrollment of adults to the average level of the top three states, almost 50,000 more individuals would attain credentials by 2025 than the present trend would predict⁸.

Ohio's males are not keeping up with female attainment rates.

NCHEMS⁹ projects that Ohio's eight-percentage-point difference between female attainment rates (48.6 percent) and male attainment rates (40.8 percent) will grow to an 11-percentage-point difference

if attainment patterns continue. If Ohio men obtain degrees and credentials at the same rate as women, almost 330,000 more people will be equipped with education and skills by 2025 than the present trend would predict.



⁴ 2019 Stronger Nation Report: <http://strongernation.luminafoundation.org/report/2019/#nation>

⁵ Projections from the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2018: <https://www.ohiohighered.org/attainment/projection-tool>

⁶ Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education. 2013. Knocking at the College Door. <http://www.wiche.edu/info/knocking-8th/profiles/oh.pdf>

⁷ Ohio Department of Higher Education, 2019. Headcount Enrollment by Student Level and Age. https://www.ohiohighered.org/sites/default/files/uploads/data/statistical-profiles/enrollment/HC_campus_by_student_type%20and%20age_08-17_1.pdf

⁸ Projections from the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2018 <https://www.ohiohighered.org/attainment/projection-tool>

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TOOLS FOR MOVING FORWARD



One of the most important strategies the State of Ohio can pursue to increase postsecondary education and credential attainment in the long term is to foster an excellent, tightly aligned and high-functioning education system that begins in pre-kindergarten and continues through high school to postsecondary education. Ohio's FY 2020-2021 operating budget, H.B. 166, includes

targeted investments across the education continuum that seek to achieve that end. Additionally, key state agencies are purposefully collaborating to accelerate progress toward increasing the percentage of Ohioans with postsecondary education and credentials as we move into the next decade. Following are several notable initiatives under way:

STRATEGY

Transform Ohio's high school experience to make learning more relevant and give students a head start on earning a postsecondary degree or other postsecondary credential, reducing the time and cost of earning a degree or certificate. This strategy is consistent with *Each Child, Our Future*, Ohio's five-year strategic plan for preK-12 education.

College Credit Plus helps high school students save money and get a head start on earning college credit. Students earn college and high school credits at the same time by taking college courses from community colleges or universities. The program promotes rigorous academic pursuits and provides a wide variety of options to college-ready students. Taking a college course from a public college or university is available at no cost to public and private school students; families do not pay for tuition, books, or fees. If students choose to attend a private college or university, they may have limited costs.

Teacher Credentialing Grant Program, enabled by Ohio's FY 2020-2021 operating budget, allocates up to \$3 million for grants for high school teachers to become qualified to teach College Credit Plus courses in a high school setting. The Teacher Credentialing Grant program is an important enabler to the success of College Credit Plus, ensuring that students across Ohio have greater access.

Articulated credit through Career-Technical Assurance Guides (CTAGs) helps career-technical education students earn postsecondary credit that can be transferred among Ohio's community colleges and universities. Through CTAGs, students who complete approved secondary career technical education courses and programs are guaranteed college credit when enrolling at one of Ohio's public colleges and universities, and therefore will not need to repeat technical content in their postsecondary pursuits.

Advanced Placement (AP) program offers college-level curricula and examinations to high school students. Ohio's public colleges and universities guarantee college credit to students who earn qualifying scores on the examinations.

International Baccalaureate (IB) coursework exposes students to a breadth and depth of knowledge and helps them become active, compassionate, lifelong learners. IB students can choose to earn an IB diploma, an Ohio IB Honors Diploma, and college credit.

High School Industry-Recognized Credential programs offer school districts reimbursement and additional funding to prepare students to earn qualifying industry-recognized credentials that may also be used to help students earn their high school diploma and successfully transition to postsecondary education.

STRATEGY

Strengthen efforts to offer multiple pathways to earn a high school diploma.

Newly enacted high-school graduation requirements expand pathways and options available to students to qualify for a high school diploma and demonstrate readiness for college, career, the military, or other self-sustaining professions. Specifically, Ohio's recently enacted high school graduation requirements expand the role of College Credit Plus (CCP) and industry-recognized credential programs (K-12), both of which are key components that students may use to satisfy the new graduation requirements.

STRATEGY

Strengthen and clarify pathways for adult students to return to school and receive credentials.

Finish for Your Future is coalescing policy and practice to create a blueprint for ways in which Ohio can better serve adult learners pursuing postsecondary credentials. With support from the Lumina Foundation and the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE), Finish for Your Future builds upon established initiatives to create a framework for improvement of adult learner engagement and outcomes. A report, coming in 2020, will outline high impact practices and make recommendations for better serving adult students. Additionally, these recommendations will inform efforts to develop communication tools to increase awareness of educational opportunities available to adults.

Pathways to High School Credentials for Adults are needed for the nearly 1 million working-age adults in Ohio without a high school diploma. Although Ohio has several groundbreaking options for adults to receive high school credentials and be on the path to postsecondary attainment, there are fewer resources to help adults choose which pathway best fits their goals.

- » **The Adult Diploma Program** provides job training and a new pathway for adults ages 22 or older to earn a high school diploma and industry credentials aligned to one of Ohio's in-demand jobs.
- » **The 22+ Adult High School Diploma** encourages adults to earn a high school diploma by helping them identify and enroll in courses and assessments needed to graduate.

- » Finally, **Aspire** offers free adult basic education services for individuals who need assistance acquiring the skills to be successful in postsecondary education and training, and employment, including providing free services to individuals preparing for a high school equivalence certificate.

As part of the **Educate for Opportunity** initiative supported by the National Governors Association, the Ohio Department of Education, and ODHE will collaborate to help build clearer choices for on-ramps to high school credentials for adults.

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) measures student learning that has occurred outside the college classroom to determine whether it is appropriate for college credit. Methods of assessment include: individualized portfolio assessments; standardized exams; institutional exams; or credit recommendation guides, such as for military training and experience or apprenticeship programs. Institutions can then award credit for the knowledge aligned to students' academic programs of study, shortening students' time to degree.

Competency-Based Education (CBE) awards credit based on mastery of skills rather than time in the classroom. The establishment of Western Governors University Ohio, which serves more than 91,000 students nationwide, and the success and growth of CBE programs at Sinclair Community College and other colleges and universities in Ohio, brings greater awareness to online competency-based education as an option for adults.

The **Military Strategic Implementation Team** works with ODHE and other state agencies to ensure that Ohio's veterans and service members are awarded college credit for the training, experience, and coursework they have completed in the U.S. Armed Forces or the National Guard, and to facilitate the connection of veterans and service members to educational opportunities in the state.

STRATEGY

Strengthen efforts to prioritize and incentivize positive outcomes.

Performance Funding prioritizes results. Ohio's State Share of Instruction (SSI) funding for higher education focuses on student success — on course completion, degree completion, and progress metrics — as well as some medical, doctoral, and research set-asides. Working collaboratively with state leaders, Ohio's public colleges and universities have embraced a nationally praised higher education funding model that prioritizes and incentivizes outcomes (student progress and completion) rather than inputs (such as enrollment). The performance-based funding model for higher education is working as intended. Between 2013 and 2018, the number of degrees and certificates awarded by Ohio's public colleges and universities increased by 16 percent.

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STRATEGY

Continue Ohio's investment in college access, affordability, and workforce alignment, with special attention given to programs that support economically disadvantaged students and students of color.

The FY 2020-2021 State Operating Budget included major investments by the Governor and the General Assembly in support of Ohio's postsecondary attainment objectives. Highlights include:

State Share of Instruction (SSI), the state funding allocated to Ohio's public colleges and universities, increased 2.1 percent to \$2.02 billion in FY20 and will increase an additional 1 percent to \$2.04 billion in FY21.

The **Ohio College Opportunity Grant (OCOG)**, the state financial aid program for economically disadvantaged students, increased 25.1 percent to more than \$122 million in FY20 and an additional 21.2 percent to over \$148 million in FY21.

Choose Ohio First (COF) Scholarship Program, Ohio's scholarship program for students pursuing STEM or STEM education careers, received a 127.5 percent increase to just over \$28 million dollars in FY20 and another 42.6 percent increase to more than \$40 million for FY21.

Tech Cred gives businesses the chance to upskill current or future employees for better jobs in technology-focused fields by providing \$30 million in state funding for up to 20,000 technology-focused credentials over the next two years.

Innovative Workforce Incentive Program gives K-12 education entities \$34 million over the next two years in incentive and start-up grant dollars to establish and prepare students to earn qualifying industry-recognized credentials.

High School Industry-Recognized Credential reimbursement dollars allow schools to be reimbursed for credentialing costs for students. Up to \$16 million over the next two years is available for qualifying credentials at a predetermined rate.

The **RAPIDS (Regionally Aligned Priorities in Delivering Skills) program** provides \$8 million of capital funding to support collaborative projects among Ohio's public higher education institutions to purchase equipment needed to strengthen the education and training of students and maximize workforce development across defined regions of the state.

Community College Acceleration Project, a partnership between ODHE, the Community College Association, and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, was created to better coordinate financial, academic and personal support services for students eligible for benefits from federal, state, and local social service agencies. This project leverages federal SNAP Education and Training funding to support wraparound services to enhance student success.

FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) Completion, a necessary step to determine eligibility for federal, state, and institutional financial aid, is being facilitated by a partnership between ODHE, the Ohio Department of Education, and InnovateOhio to help high school counselors know which students have completed the FAFSA and which students need additional encouragement, and help, to do so. Additionally, the state's FY 2020-2021 operating budget includes \$150,000 over the biennium to help Ohio's schools and districts promote FAFSA completion among students and families.

STRATEGY

Help all students be successful in not only going to college, but also completing college.

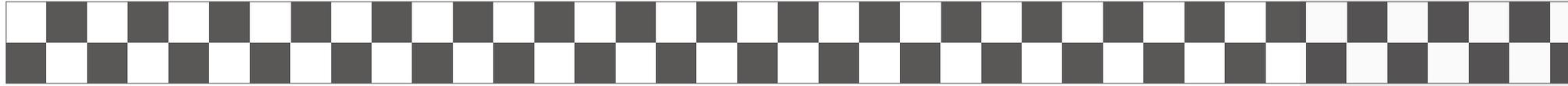
Ohio Strong Start to Finish (OhioSSF) is a collaboration between ODHE, the Inter-University Council of Ohio, the Ohio Association of Community Colleges, and the public colleges and universities in Ohio to significantly increase the number of students completing gateway mathematics and English courses within their first academic year. Currently, slightly more than 20,000 (33 percent) first-time students at participating colleges and universities complete college-level mathematics and English in their first year; OhioSSF is committed to increasing that number to just over 31,000 (50 percent) by 2021, while reducing equity gaps for economically disadvantaged students, students of color, rural students, and students over age 25.

SUCCESS (Scaling Up Community College Efforts for Student Success) is a research-based partnership between MDRC, ODHE, and two Ohio community colleges. Informed by CUNY's ASAP initiative (which has been successfully replicated in Ohio at three community colleges), as well as other student success research, these comprehensive approaches to student support will build capacity and inform Ohio about best ways to provide advising and other wraparound services to ensure increased completion of credential programs.

The **Ohio Mathematics Initiative** is a collaborative effort of mathematics faculty members from Ohio's public colleges and universities and high schools to rethink mathematics courses, curricula, and the relationship of mathematics to other disciplines. In partnership with ODHE and the Ohio Department of Education, the community has worked to develop and promote multiple entry-level courses and pathways aligned with academic disciplines; co-requisite remediation as an alternative to lengthy developmental sequences; high school transition courses designed to help students transition from high school into college-level mathematics remediation free; and the discussion of Algebra 2 Equivalent Pathways in high school.

Guaranteed Transfer Pathways allow students to complete the first two years of a bachelor's degree at a lower-cost community college before transferring and completing the final two years at one of Ohio's public universities. The pathways provide clear guaranteed pathways to bachelor's degree completion for more than 50 major-specific pathways.

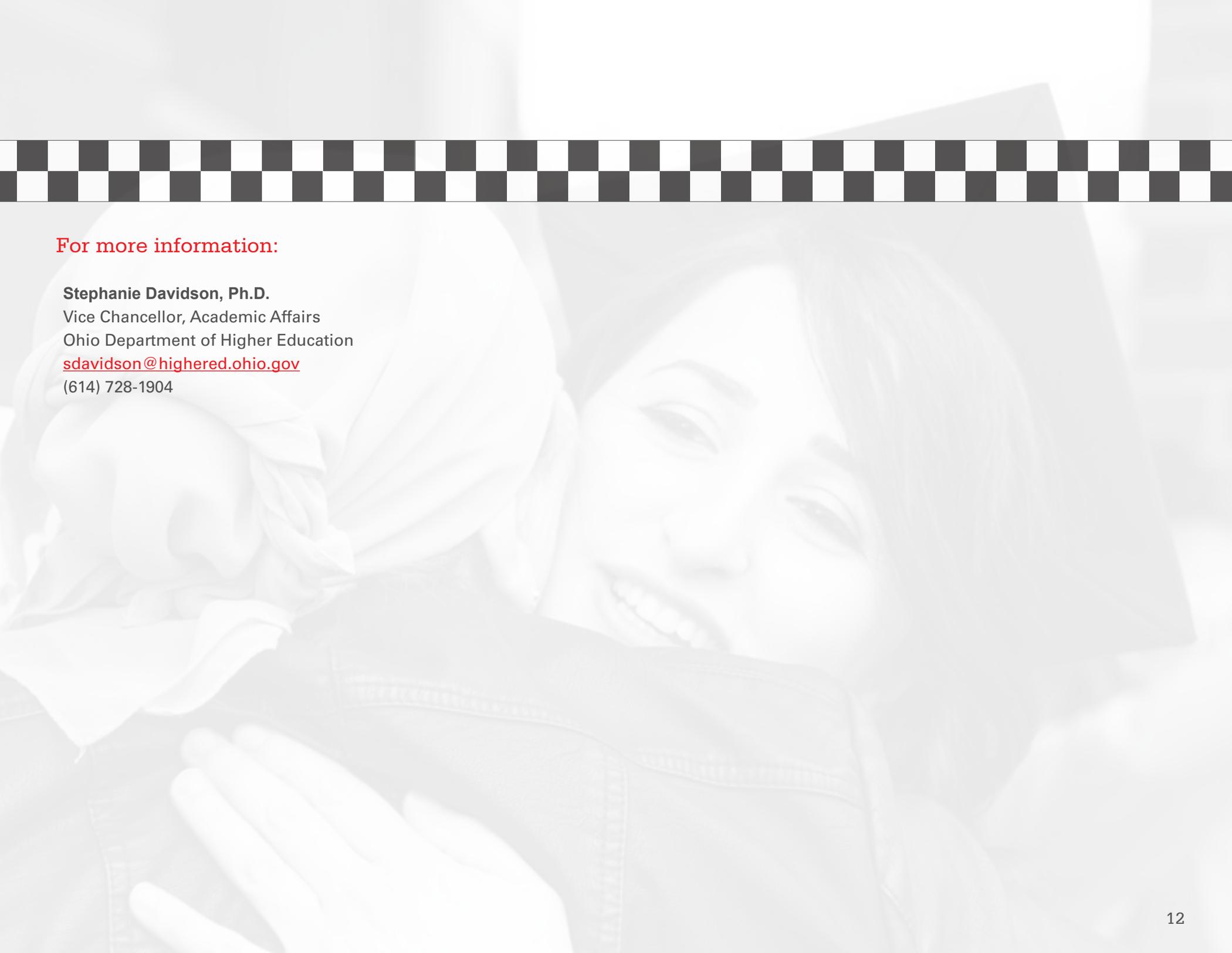
LOOKING AHEAD



To summarize, Ohio has made progress—the number of working age adults with a postsecondary degree, certificate, or other credential of value in the workplace has slowly increased over the past 10 years for all major racial and ethnic groups. However, at our current rate of degree and certificate production, we will not meet employer needs and disturbing gaps in postsecondary attainment will persist for underrepresented minorities.

If Ohio hopes to meet its workforce needs, urgent efforts are needed to significantly accelerate credential attainment as we move into the future. Areas of focus should include:

- Communicating the necessity and value of postsecondary credentials to the prosperity of individuals, communities, and our state.
- Working creatively and collaboratively to keep the cost of postsecondary education affordable.
- Engaging adult/nontraditional learners, many of whom have earned some postsecondary credits but have not completed a certificate or degree, with particular attention to developing resources that would help adults choose pathways that best fit their interests and goals.
- Employing evidence-based practices known to enhance student success, particularly those that have been shown to reduce equity gaps.
- Expanding data-sharing partnerships with other state agencies for the purpose of studying and improving postsecondary attainment and employment outcomes.



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