

## OHIO ATTAINMENT GOAL 2025



### *Joint Statement of*

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It is our joint mission to give Ohioans the best opportunity to succeed in the careers they choose, whether that opportunity requires an industry-approved certificate, an advanced degree or some other credential of value in the labor market. Driven by this mission, our agencies work together to inform traditional and nontraditional students – of varying income levels, family backgrounds and ethnicity – about pathways available to working-age Ohioans to pursue their careers. We also collaborate to remove barriers to success and provide support to help job-seekers achieve their goals.

The keys to meeting these complementary needs are education and work. A carefully trained and prepared vocational and professional workforce satisfies the needs of both workers and employers. Employers must articulate their workforce needs and expectations, and educators must prepare the workers of tomorrow for the careers of tomorrow. Success will require government and our education system to work closely with business and industry to forecast future workforce needs and identify the specific knowledge, skills and competencies required for success.

Preparing for the demands of current and emerging occupations and careers creates economic opportunity. It's what opens doors to jobs and careers. It's what helps create competitive businesses and a strong economy. And it's what paves the way to prosperity – for individuals, for communities and for our state.

This has never been truer than it is today – or than it will be tomorrow.



## An imperative to raise educational attainment levels

We face many challenges as a state and nation. Few are more imposing than ensuring an adequate supply of knowledgeable, highly skilled, globally competitive workers. This is particularly true in a world in which two-thirds of children in grade school today are predicted to work in jobs that have yet to be created.

Ohio's short-term and long-term economic development efforts are rightly focused on job retention and job creation. Our ability to grow jobs is the key to our state's economic future and hinges on the educational attainment levels of our citizenry. To win the global competition for business investment and jobs, Ohio must be among the leaders in producing individuals with the knowledge and skills that meet the needs of employers seeking to fill in-demand jobs.

This will be no easy task. A severe and well-documented "talent gap" threatens our state's continued economic competitiveness and growth. Ohio has a substantial shortage of working-age adults (ages 25-64) with the postsecondary education credentials required to obtain and succeed in current, evolving and future jobs. These credentials of value include a range of education and training opportunities, from certificates and apprenticeships to associate and bachelor's degrees and beyond.

If we do nothing, the gap will only grow in coming years. At our current rate of awarding postsecondary degrees and certificates, Ohio will fall well short of closing the gap. To develop the number of highly skilled workers with postsecondary credentials required to meet employer needs, Ohio will need to develop, by 2025, an estimated 1.3 million more adults with high-quality postsecondary credentials.

Urgent and focused action is needed. The Ohio Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation reports that 56 percent of Ohio's "in-demand" occupations currently require a certificate or degree; unfortunately, Ohio's current postsecondary attainment rate is just 43.2 percent. Moreover, the education requirements of in-demand jobs are anticipated to increase over the next 10 years. Consequently, as we work to increase overall postsecondary attainment, we must make sure that the credentials Ohioans are earning align with the jobs that are available, the jobs we want to attract, and the jobs Ohioans want to have.

## A target to guide our collective efforts

In response to the workforce development imperative, the State of Ohio has formally established a bold statewide goal for raising education attainment levels:

**65 percent of Ohioans, ages 25-64, will have a degree, certificate or other postsecondary workforce credential of value in the workplace by 2025.**

Our intention is that this goal will keep the state's eyes fixed on this priority and remind us how we must align our policies and practices toward increasing education attainment. Postsecondary learning is key to individual opportunity, competitive advantage and economic prosperity – for individuals, for businesses and for the state. Ohio's Attainment Goal 2025 stakes out a specific target for optimizing those benefits.



## A strong link to our individual and shared missions

Achieving Ohio's Attainment Goal 2025 will require a concerted, statewide effort from the K-12, postsecondary and adult learning sectors of the state's education and workforce training system. Fortunately, there is strong alignment among the vision, mission and goals of these providers.

- The shared vision of the **Ohio State Board of Education** and the **Ohio Department of Education** is that all Ohio students will graduate with the knowledge, skills and competencies necessary to successfully continue their education and/or be workforce-ready and successfully participate in the global economy as productive citizens. Our K-12 system supports Attainment Goal 2025 by establishing rigorous college- and career-ready academic standards, providing student support services, offering real-world learning experiences aligned with workforce needs and expectations, and reducing dropout rates.
- The **Ohio Department of Higher Education** advises the Governor on higher education policy and implements the Governor's plan to make college more affordable and drive the state's economic advancement through Ohio's public colleges, universities and adult workforce education and training centers. Our institutions of higher education support Attainment Goal 2025 through a number of initiatives designed to increase completion rates for Ohio's postsecondary students and assist in closing the unemployment gap by filling Ohio's in-demand jobs with skilled, educated and experienced Ohioans.
- The mission of the **Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation** is to grow Ohio's economy by developing a skilled workforce, promoting effective training programs, and connecting Ohio employers with qualified workers for in-demand jobs. The Office of Workforce Transformation supports Attainment 2025 by providing Ohio workers, businesses and training institutions with reliable data about current and future workforce job and skills needs, and connecting students and job seekers to information and training for employers' in-demand jobs.

## A joint endorsement of Ohio Attainment Goal 2025

The state agencies we represent endorse Ohio Attainment Goal 2025 and pledge, individually and collectively, to work with each other and with other education, workforce development and community stakeholders, to close Ohio's talent gap by raising our state's postsecondary education attainment level. Success in this endeavor will lead to a strong economy, strong businesses and strong communities, families and individuals.