FINISH for YOUR FUTURE

Fulfilling Ohio's Adult Learner Promise:

Report of the Adult Learner Working Group, September 17, 2020

Speaker – National Governors Association & Educate for Opportunity Overview

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The National Governors Association

About NGA
Founded in 1908, the National Governors Association is the voice of the nation's governors. Our members are the governors of the 55 states, territories, and commonwealths. Though our members come from across the political spectrum, we're boldly nonpartisan.

What NGA Does
Through NGA, governors identify priority issues and deal with matters of public policy and governance. Our research arm, the NGA Center for Best Practices, helps in developing and implementing innovative solutions to public policy challenges, and our advocacy team ensures that states are a strong voice in Washington, D.C.

Educate **4 Opportunity**

Educate for Opportunity Goals & Timeline

OBJECTIVE: Increase upward mobility for Americans by supporting stronger pathways between education and work.

- **Assist states to identify successful program models** and scale those programs across the state, focusing on involvement from all postsecondary systems, including two- and four-year institutions;

- **Clarify the role governors play** in building connections between postsecondary education and the workforce for adult populations, highlighting strong leadership examples from across the country;

- **Facilitate state creation of innovative programs** and policies; and

- **Demonstrate how data can identify new outcome metrics** for adult-focused postsecondary education, including consumer satisfaction, and draw expectations for thorough data usage in states.

National & Ohio Context: Today's Students

- 2018 Ohio Attainment: 49.2%
- Ohio attainment has increased among all races age 25-64, but major gaps in equity persist
  - White Attainment: 40.5%
  - Hispanic Attainment: 27.4%
  - Black Attainment: 27%
- Wide range in Ohio attainment by county
  - Highest – Delaware, 65.2%
  - Lowest – Holmes, 12.7%

NATIONWIDE, TODAY'S STUDENTS ARE:

37% OLDER THAN 25

64% WORKING WHILE IN COLLEGE

24% PARENTING

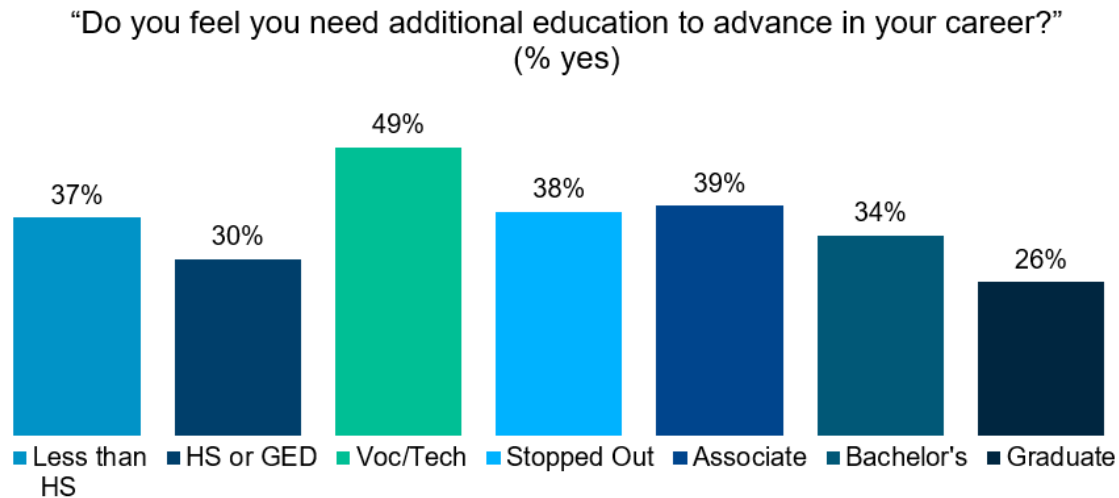**13%** LIVING ON CAMPUS

40% PART-TIME

Sources: Lumina Foundation and Higher Learning Advocates

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Ohio Context: Strada-Gallup Data

- National survey, over 10,000 Ohio responders ages 25 – 64 on the value they see in postsecondary education
- First, many Ohio adults 25-64 <u>don't see the need for further education</u> (each column is the % saying yes by highest degree held)

"Do you feel you need additional education to advance in your career?"
(% yes)

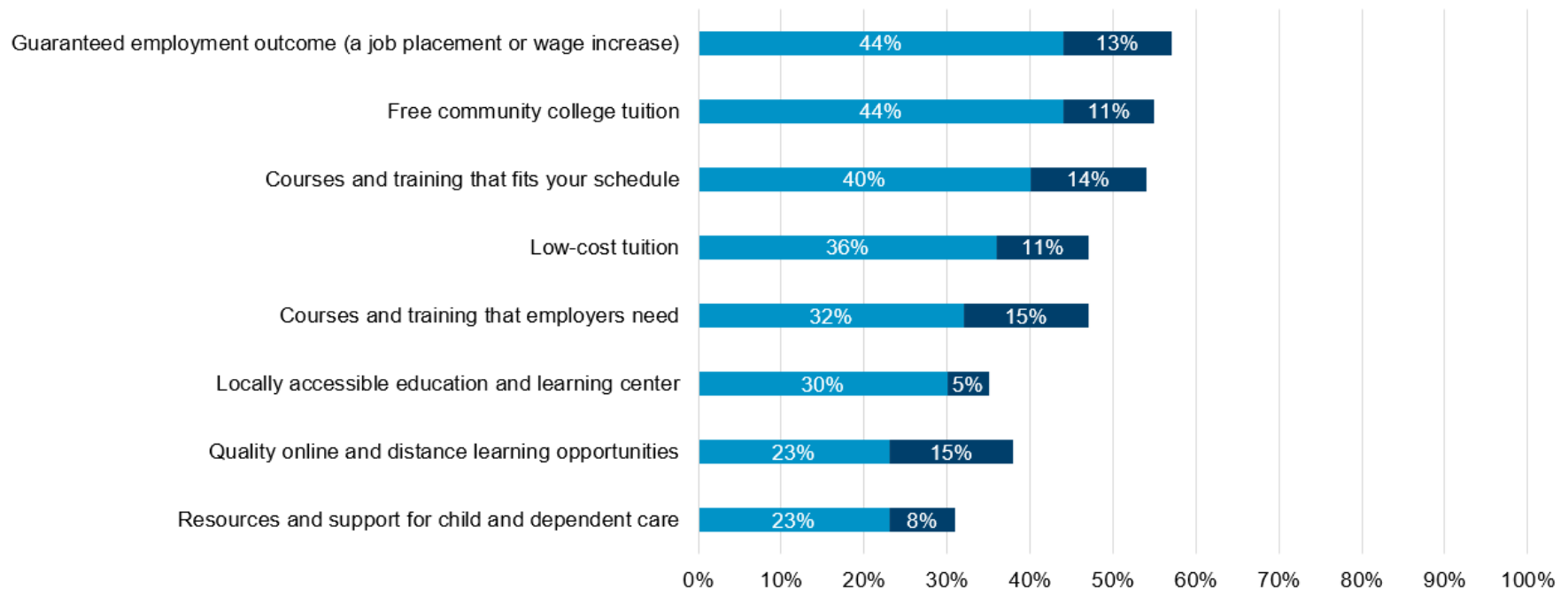| Less than HS	HS or GED	Voc/Tech	Stopped Out	Associate	Bachelor's	Graduate
37%	30%	49%	38%	39%	34%	26%

Ohio Context: Strada-Gallup Data

- Second, adults identified a range of reasons <u>why they took college courses but didn't complete their degree</u>
- Meta-trends:
  - Work/life/school balance
  - Finances
  - Change in priorities

Didn't have money/financial aid ran out	13.08%
Started working/could not balance work	9.36%
Other life event or personal problems	9.26%
Pregnant/had children	9.03%
Just wanted to learn more/didn't need degree	6.26%
Family obligations (e.g. family health)	5.18%
Classes/degree/school was not a good fit	5.05%
Got bored/lost interest/distracted	4.4%
Didn't need degree to obtain a job	3.93%
Wanted to get better job/pay/advance career	3.93%
Personal health reasons	3.89%
Didn't have enough time for classes	3.06%
Couldn't decide on career or field of study	2.69%
Family pressure	1.52%
Was not mature enough/too young	1.2%
Still enrolled in class/I haven't finished	0.91%
Classes were too difficult	0.84%
Deployed	0.46%
Lack of opportunities in the field I was studying	0.12%

Ohio Context: Strada-Gallup Data

- Third, adults indicated a variety of policies that would <u>positively impact their likelihood of re-enrolling in additional postsecondary education opportunities</u> (percent saying very high/high impact for each)
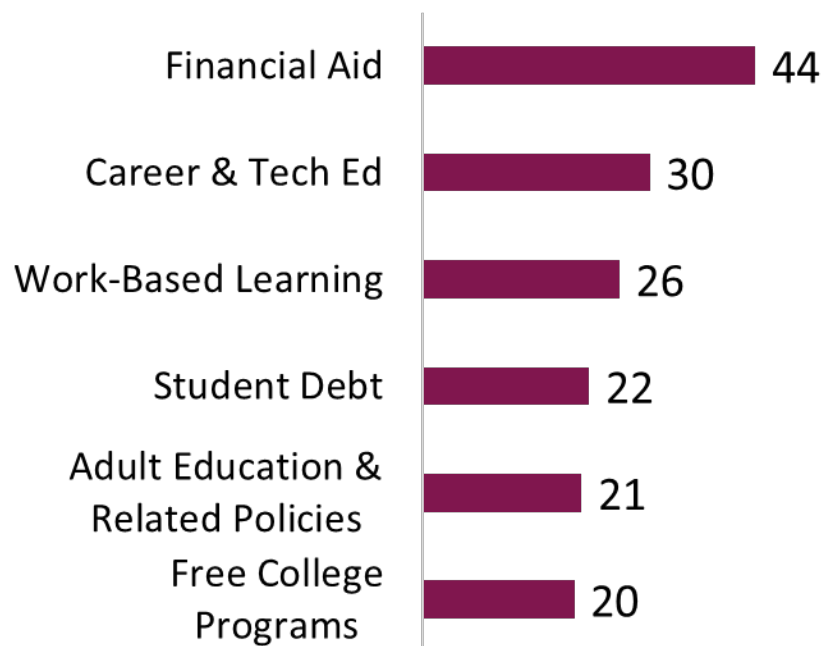
Policy	Light bar	Dark bar
Guaranteed employment outcome (a job placement or wage increase)	44%	13%
Free community college tuition	44%	11%
Courses and training that fits your schedule	40%	14%
Low-cost tuition	36%	11%
Courses and training that employers need	32%	15%
Locally accessible education and learning center	30%	5%
Quality online and distance learning opportunities	23%	15%
Resources and support for child and dependent care	23%	8%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

National Context: Pre- and Post-COVID Priorities

Pre-COVID
Relevant Trends – Select Topics, Governors Public Statements, 2019-2020 (number of states)

Topic	States
Financial Aid	44
Career & Tech Ed	30
Work-Based Learning	26
Student Debt	22
Adult Education & Related Policies	21
Free College Programs	20

COVID
Relevant Trends – Select Topics in Governors Emergency Education Relief Fund Usage (number of states as of 9/16)
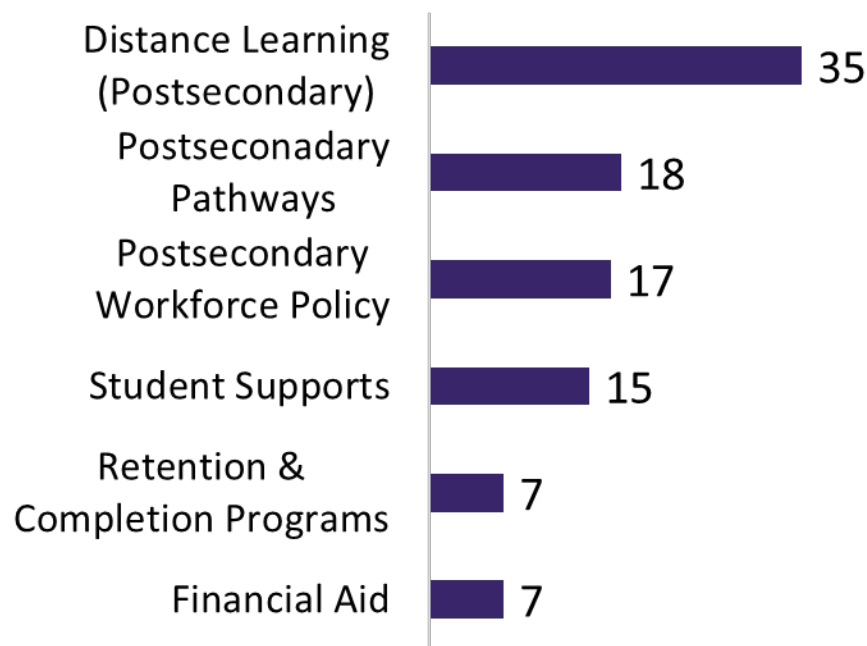
Topic	States
Distance Learning (Postsecondary)	35
Postseconadary Pathways	18
Postsecondary Workforce Policy	17
Student Supports	15
Retention & Completion Programs	7
Financial Aid	7

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The Adult Learner Working Group

- Supported by a Lumina Adult Promise grant awarded to Ohio

- Membership: leaders from post-secondary education communities, business and industry, community and non-profit groups

- Charge: review and prioritize recommendations to better serve adults seeking education after high school

Seven Guiding Principles

- Adult learner focused and addresses adult student needs

- All completions are valued and need to be increased

- Access and success must be improved

- Build upon existing initiatives and experiences

- Recommendations based on data

- Strategies using a systemic approach

- Maintain academic quality

Four Charges / Four Work Groups

- High Impact Practices

- Return on Investment

- Close Equity Gaps

- Policy Improvements

Subgroup reports are available in their entirely at:
https://www.ohiohighered.org/FFYF/reports

Report Format

- 24 recommendations spanning five pillars

- Additional section on the importance of ROI

- Actions steps for specific stakeholders

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FULFILLING OHIO'S ADULT LEARNER PROMISE

Report of the Adult Learner Working Group

September 2020

Pillar 1: **Recommendations (1-5) that postsecondary institutions provide adult learners with flexible, customizable, student-centered and adult-friendly programs and supports**

- Increase the transparency of program costs and requirements and the ROI a student can expect to achieve

- Provide program formats that allow adults to balance their commitment to education with other responsibilities

- Enhance wraparound services

- Prepare faculty and staff to address the needs of adult learners

Pillar 2: Recommendations (6-11) that value adult learners' real-world, workplace knowledge, skills and experience

- Routinely assess student's prior learning

- Award credit for college-level learning that has been achieved outside the traditional classroom—including credit for training received in apprenticeships, the military, and career technical education

- Deepen connections with business and industry to ensure relevant and convenient learning opportunities for students

Pillar 3: Recommendations (12-17) that identify and close equity gaps

- Develop a campus definition of equity and a statement of commitment to equity-mindedness

- Provide financial literacy support, including helping adult learners make informed choices regarding grants, loans and other financing opportunities

- Create a state-level Digital Inclusion Coalition to ensure that all adult learners have affordable broadband access and educational technology

- Review and amend policies and practices that perpetuate inequality

- Implement strategies to increase faculty diversity and inclusive teaching

Ohio | Department of Higher Education

OhioHigherEd.org

Pillar 4: **Recommendations (18-20) that identify and address financial barriers to maximize adult learners' use of Ohio's wide array of postsecondary institutions**

- Provide a pathway for students with unpaid institutional debt to re-enter college under a "debt-forgiveness" program

- Increase FAFSA completion rates in adults

- Provide additional scholarship opportunities focused on adult learners

Pillar 5: Recommendations (21-24) that clarify opportunities, enable success and document progress

- Launch a statewide marketing campaign targeting adult students

- Create a self-navigating portal to provide information for potential students

- Create a standing Adult Learner Advisory Group to hold ODHE and Ohio's institutions accountable for advancing the strategies needed to support adult learners

- Publish an Adult Learner Report annually to track Ohio's progress

Review Strategies & Initiatives Through ROI

- Think beyond the conventional budgeting process

- Evaluate costs while considering potential future revenue gains of increased adult learner enrollment and success

- Identify opportunities for investment in new initiatives

Use an ROI model to think long-term about the costs and benefits of deploying the recommendations in this report

See: https://www.ohiohighered.org/FFYF/reports
ROI Subgroup Report (pages 12-19) and Full Report (p 38 -39)

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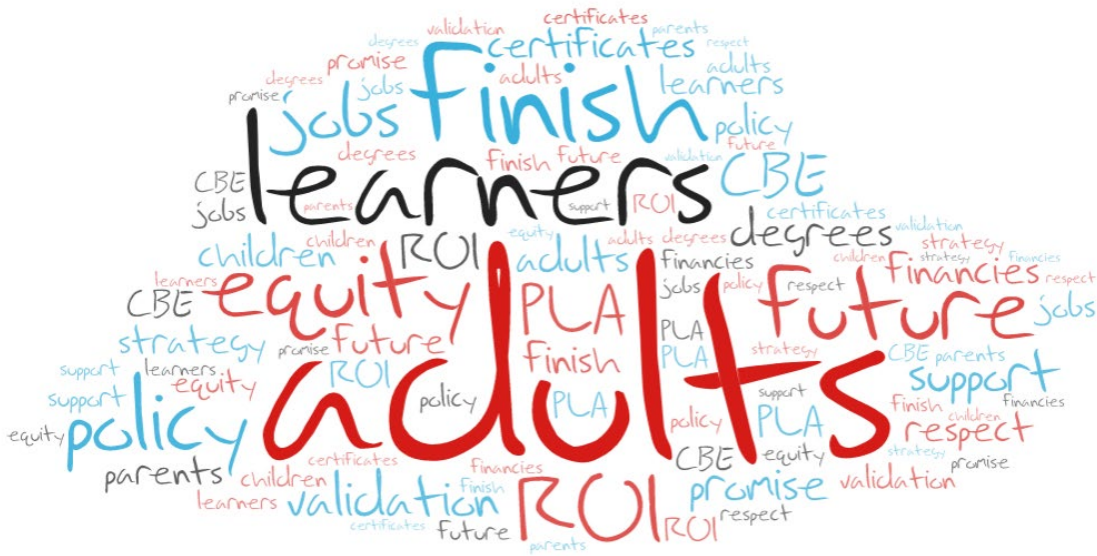# Adult Learner Report Overview

Next Steps for Three
Target Audiences:

- Governing Boards of Postsecondary Institutions

- Campus-Level Leaders, Faculty, and Staff

- State Policymakers

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Your Questions?

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Thank You!!

The Working Group Report, the Overview and all four Subgroup Reports can be found at:

https://www.ohiohighered.org/FFYF/reports