

North Carolina's talent pipeline is in a state of emergency.

The data shows that while some metrics are trending in the right direction, the majority are flatlined or lagging. The good news is... there is a path forward. [myFutureNC's 2022 Educational Attainment Report](#) forecasts needs and solutions.

1 in every 9
16 to 24-year-olds
are not in school or
working.

An average of
9,500
students drop out
of high school each
year.

Almost half of
North Carolinians
do not earn a
family-sustaining
wage.

Community college
enrollment is
down 13%
from pre-pandemic
numbers.

NEEDS FORECAST 1

Career Planning

Our state's education systems must deliver learning experiences that meet students' interests and provide pathways to success. We know that students are most engaged when they can see firsthand the real-world application of their knowledge and skills. All North Carolina middle and high school students deserve the opportunity to engage in well-guided career planning to ensure that every student has the resources they need to envision their future.

[Policy Digest](#)

NEEDS FORECAST 2

Raise the Dropout Age

Our state is one of only 15 that allows students to drop out at age 16 and has the nation's shortest required attendance span. Raising the high school dropout age from age 16 to 18 would better encourage and prioritize high school graduation.

[Policy Digest](#)

NEEDS FORECAST 3

Scholarships for Short-Term Training & Higher-Wage Careers

In North Carolina, jobs requiring a short-term credential or some college will increase by 8.1% by 2028, yet community college enrollment remains down from pre-pandemic levels. Those who need training most cannot afford it; federal Pell grants and state need-based grants do not cover required training for many trades and short-term credentials. Providing last-dollar scholarships to those pursuing short-term credentials will encourage enrollment and provide economic opportunity.

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Executive Summary

North Carolina is blessed with an economy that continues to boom. We were recently recognized as [America's Top State for Business in 2022](#), and we have one of the most robust education infrastructures in the nation. **Yet we still have individuals without the training and skills needed for the good-paying jobs that our employers are struggling to fill.** Bridging the needs of our growing economy and North Carolinians in need of upward mobility is more urgent than ever.

To meet the needs of the state's talent pipeline and to create opportunities for all North Carolinians, myFutureNC focuses our efforts in four key areas.

Accountability Partner: We recognize the goal of 2 million by 2030 will not happen without all educators, business leaders, local and state policymakers and citizens coming together. We must hold one another accountable by tracking and measuring progress of key metrics toward the state's goal of 2 million by 2030.

Data-Research Hub: In order to equip leaders at the local, regional, and state levels with accurate data and research, myFutureNC partners with [Carolina Demography at UNC](#), education sectors, and commerce to produce and share the following data products widely.

- [Degree Ticker and Progress Toward 2 Million by 2030](#)
- [County Profiles](#)
- [County Explorer Tool](#)
- [Data Trends Workbook](#)
- [FAFSA Tracker](#)
- [Promising Attainment Practices Database](#)
- [Recommended County Attainment Goals](#)
- **Key Performance Indicators:** The myFutureNC Commission identified and prioritized 18 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in four key transition areas:
 - Academic Readiness
 - College & Career Access
 - Postsecondary Completion
 - Labor-Market Alignment

Action Accelerator: While we are state-led, the work must be locally owned and driven. Therefore, myFutureNC is proud to be within arm's reach of our communities from the mountains to the sea and everywhere in between. myFutureNC partnered with the [UNC School of Government's nclIMPACT Initiative](#) to establish [15 Local Educational Attainment Collaboratives](#) representing 42 counties throughout North Carolina. In partnership with Carolina Demography, [Recommended County Attainment Goals](#) have been proposed for every county to consider, and these cross-sector partnerships have either adopted those local goals or set their own to feed into the statewide 2 million by 2030 goal.

Policy Advocate: Through our partnerships with education sectors and the business community, ongoing data analysis, and boots-on-the-ground efforts through our regional impact managers, we identify and advocate for effective policies that will meet the education and workforce needs to ensure North Carolina's residents, employers, and communities thrive.



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To ensure North Carolina remains economically competitive now and into the future, in 2019, with bipartisan support in the General Assembly, the state of North Carolina adopted one of the most ambitious goals in the nation – to have 2 million North Carolinians ages 25-44 to hold an industry-valued credential or postsecondary degree by 2030.

myFutureNC, a 501(c)(3) non-profit, is responsible for aligning and coordinating local, regional, and state actions to dramatically increase the attainment of short-term credentials and postsecondary degrees.