

New Report:

Select Findings on Public Support for Postsecondary Attainment



Study Methodology

From November 20-27, 2023, the bipartisan team of FM3 Research (D) and HighGround Consulting (R) conducted a survey of 613 randomly selected Arizona voters. Respondents were contacted via text messaging and telephones and interviews were conducted online and via landline and mobile telephone by live interviewers.

Voters were asked to share their opinions related to postsecondary attainment in Arizona



Arizona Voters' Perception of Education Beyond High School



Arizona Voters' Perception of Education Beyond High School

Ninety percent or more of Arizonans agree that...

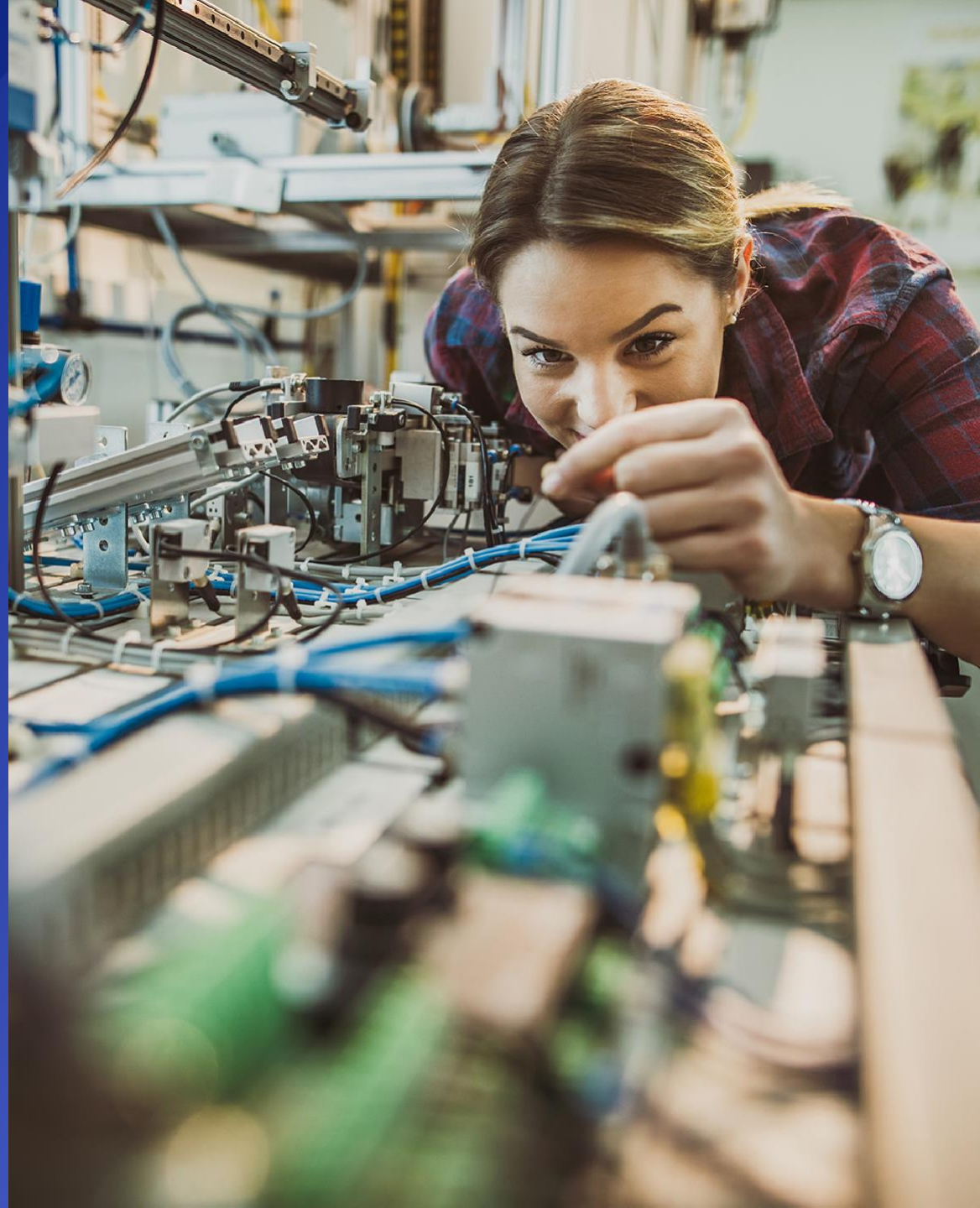
- Since not all students attend college, **we must foster other postsecondary education opportunities** that give students a chance to learn the skills necessary for success in a career and obtain industry certifications
- Every student should have access to a high-quality education **regardless of their zip code**
- It is important to provide **job retraining and new career paths** for adults as well as students just leaving high school

Arizona Voters' Perception of Education Beyond High School (continued)

Eighty percent or more of Arizonans agree that...

- **Some education beyond high school is necessary** for a person to be successful in today's work world, whether that means attending a workforce certification program, a 2-year career-training degree or a 4-year degree
- People who have completed education or training after high school are usually **better off financially** than those who do not
- People who have completed education or training after high school usually have a **better quality of life** than those who do not

Arizona Voters' Perception of Post-High School Benefits



Arizona Voters' Perception of Post-high School Benefits

Ninety-five percent or more of Arizonans said the following benefits of post-high school education were important or most important to them:

- Helping people obtain better-paying jobs that can support a family
- Providing real world experience to students wanting to enter industries such as healthcare, computer science, aviation, and construction
- Addressing severe shortages of qualified workers, including classroom teachers, nurses, information technology specialists, and other personnel in high-demand industries
- Improving our quality of life by reducing crime, training our future workforce, and strengthening our communities

Arizona Voters' Perception of the **Statewide** **Attainment Goal**



We are working towards a unified goal

Background

Arizona is working toward a goal that, by 2030, at least 60 percent of Arizonans ages 25-64 will complete education beyond high school, including a degree, apprenticeship, or an industry-specific workforce certification program.

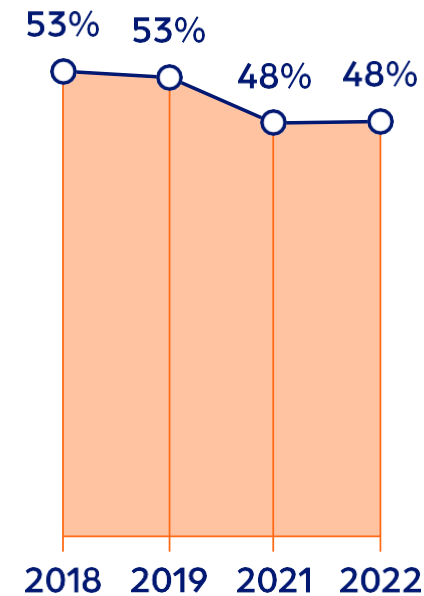
This goal, **named Achieve60AZ**, is directly related to projections that 70 percent of Arizona's job openings will require completion of education beyond high school.



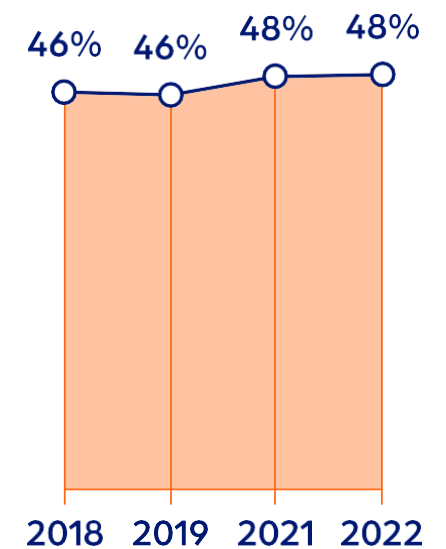
But the state's progress remains flat

- The Arizona Education Progress Meter, the state's widely accepted framework for measuring P-20 education, shows that **no progress has been made in increasing the number of students in postsecondary programs.**
- Similarly, the percent of Arizona students who have attained a degree or certificate also **remains flat.**
- These poll results demonstrate the public's desire for **swift progress.**

Post-High School Enrollment



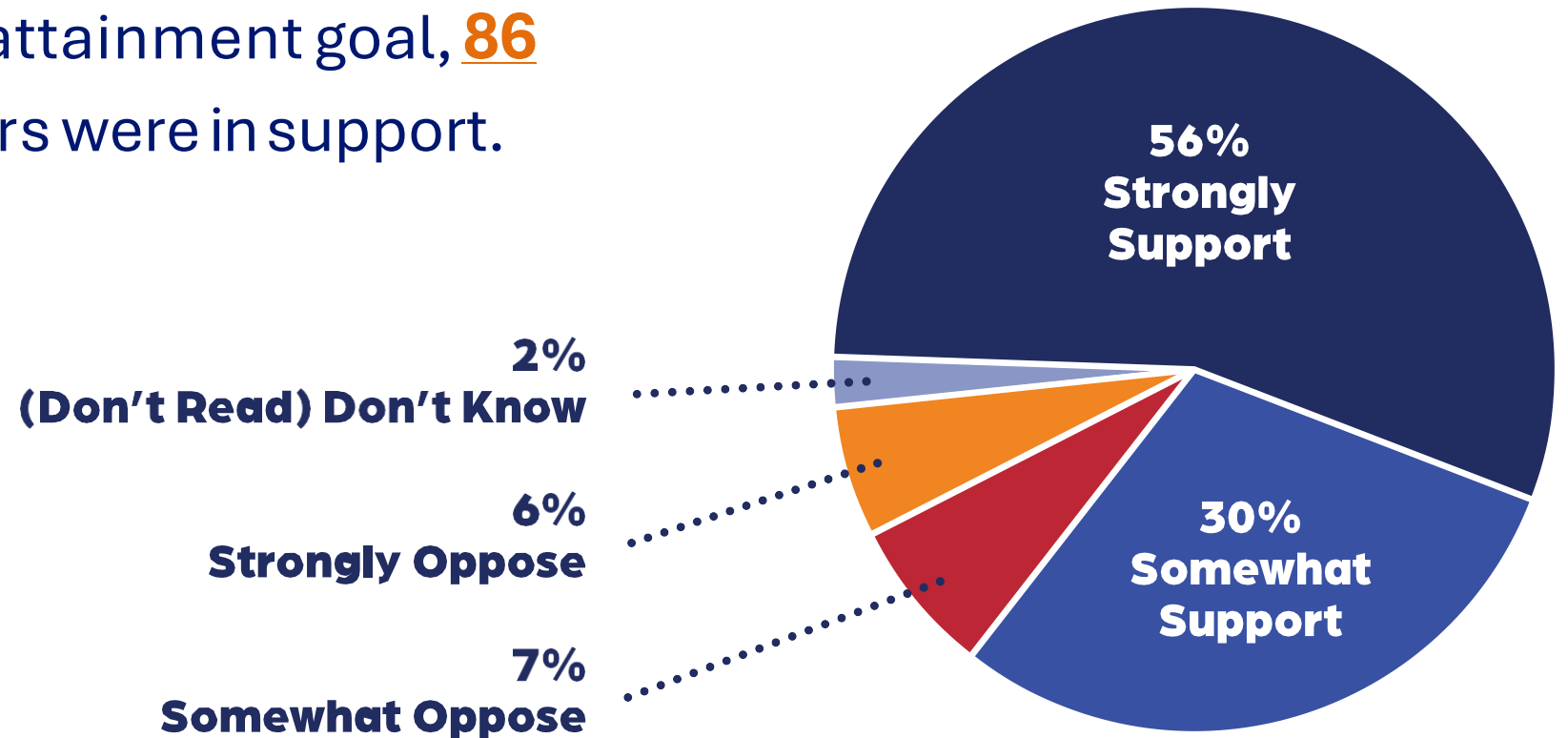
Attainment



Source: Center for the Future of Arizona

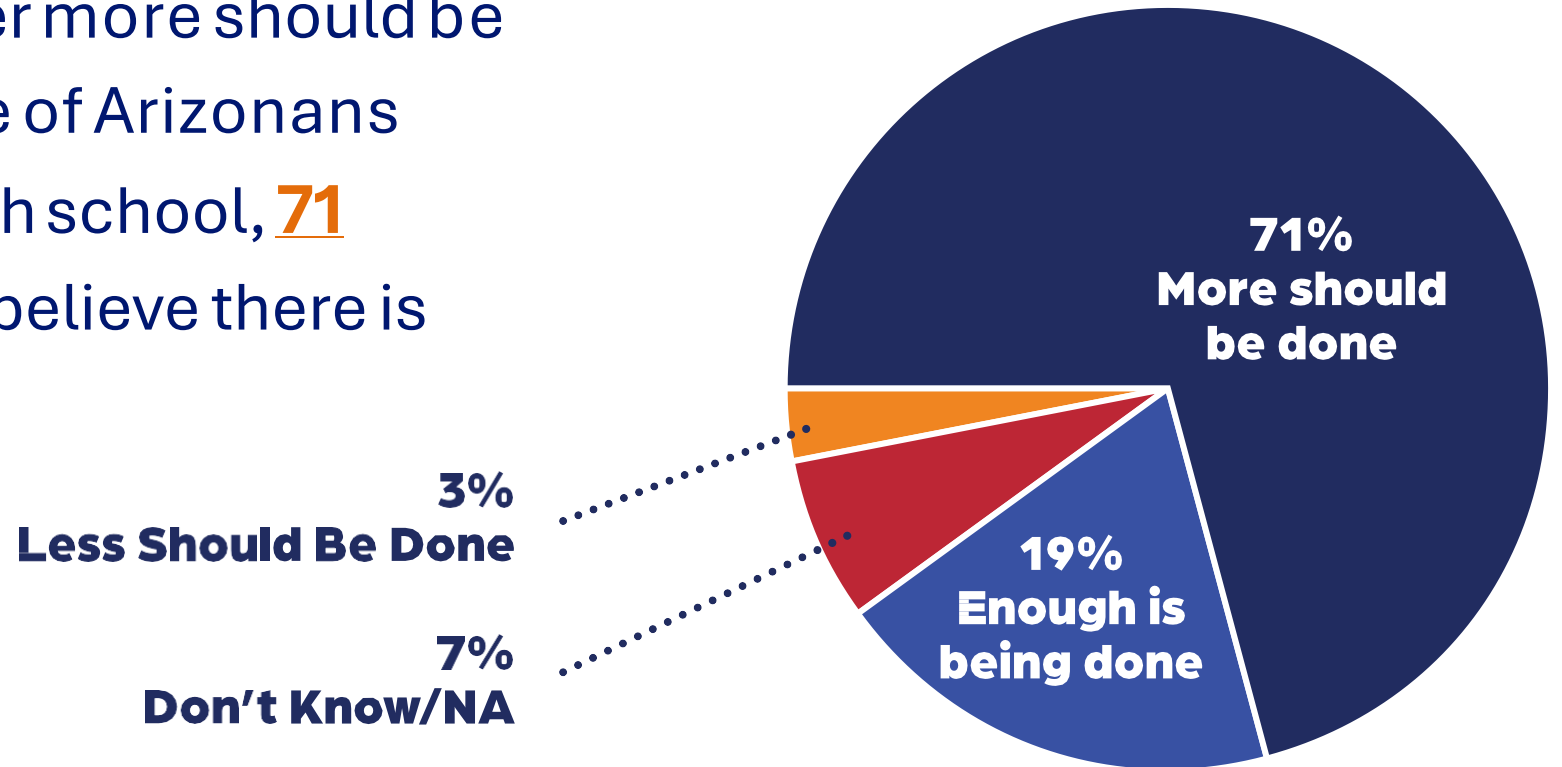
And yet, Arizonans of all beliefs support Achieve60 AZ

When asked about the attainment goal, **86** percent of Arizona voters were in support.



And they want action. Now.

When asked about whether more should be done to increase the share of Arizonans with education beyond high school, **71** percent of Arizona voters believe there is more work to do.



So, we asked Arizona voters how they want us to achieve this goal.

More than **80** percent of Arizonans believe the following proposals would be effective in achieving our statewide attainment goal...

1

Expand access to technical training and education programs during high school that lead to a credential.

2

Expand dual-enrollment programs that allow high school students to earn college credit while still in high school.

3

Ensure every high school in Arizona has college or career advisors and counselors to help students plan their path after high school.

4

Expand pre-high school services to help students and families identify interests, strengths, and aptitudes that will inform their education choices.

5

Increase academic counseling and support services at community colleges to help students transfer to 4-year colleges and universities.

Words have power and can lead to action.

In an effort to understand which messages resonate best with Arizona voters and therefore help us maximize advocacy efforts targeted to policymakers and stakeholders, we tested what messages were the most convincing.

Again. Support was overwhelming.

The following messages resonated with **80** percent or more of voters:

- Arizona Economy
- Technical Education
- Skills Gap
- Career Connection
- Lifetime Income
- Future Beyond High School
- Intel/TSM Jobs

Arizona has billions to gain by promoting higher education—increasing the number of people who continue their education beyond high school by 20 percent would add five billion dollars to the state’s economy every year. A well-educated workforce will help Arizona retain and attract good companies who need trained and skilled employees, and creating more pathways to higher education can help to encourage more innovation and investments that lead to new economic opportunities and good-paying jobs.

Technical Education

Messages That Resonate With Arizona Voters

Like apprenticeships in the past, certification and technical education programs provide the educated and trained workforce companies need and want to hire. Arizona's long-term economic success and competitiveness are directly tied to our ability to educate our workforce to attract and retain good companies and jobs.



Skills Gap

Messages That Resonate With Arizona Voters

There are currently thousands of unfilled jobs in Arizona—with massive shortages in teaching, nursing, the sciences and healthcare—because our state’s workforce does not have the right skills to fill those jobs. We need to produce more highly-skilled workers in these fields to reduce the unemployment rate, save the state money, and keep our economy moving. We must expand opportunities for higher education and support low- and middle-income students as they train for the jobs our state’s economy needs.



Career Connection

Messages That Resonate With Arizona Voters

It's important for Arizona to invest in career focused learning programs that give students and young adults the opportunity to gain real-world skills and explore careers through apprenticeships, internships, mentorship, certificates and training. Career-connected learning gives students the opportunity to earn money as well as high school and college credit, launching them towards college and a career.

Lifetime Income

Messages That Resonate With Arizona Voters

The economic benefits of education after high school are undeniable. On average, lifetime earnings for individuals with bachelor's degrees are nearly three times greater than individuals whose education stops after high school. Lifetime earnings for people who attend a two-year community or technical college or a workforce certification program are also significantly higher.

**Future
Beyond
High
School**

Messages That Resonate With Arizona Voters

For generations, workers could find steady employment with a high school education. But today, most good paying jobs require completion of some education beyond high school. Increasing access to job training and career education programs beyond high school will help to make sure Arizona students have the skills and education to get good paying jobs.



Intel/TSM Jobs

Messages That Resonate With Arizona Voters

Arizona has had a great deal of economic success with massive investments by companies like Intel, Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company, and others. Instead of bringing in employees from other places, we need to ensure that Arizona can provide the well-trained workforce needed by these high-wage employers, and that the people of Arizona benefit the most.



Join the Everything to Gain Campaign Today

educationforwardarizona.org/public-perceptions-poll/