

# ARIZONA COMMUNITY COLLEGES 2018 STRATEGIC VISION OUTCOMES REPORT



# STRATEGIC VISION FOR 2030

In 2017 Arizona's community colleges embraced a Strategic Vision for 2030, which focuses college efforts around three major goals: expanding access to postsecondary credentials; increasing transfer and completion of associate degrees and certificates; and improving alignment between college programs and workforce needs.

The Strategic Vision for 2030 builds upon the colleges' previous long-term plan, published in 2011, and outlines how Arizona's ten community college districts will continue to improve student outcomes, as well as how the districts contribute to Arizona's broader economic and educational goals. **In particular, the Strategic Vision for 2030 creates a framework for reaching the Achieve60AZ goal that by 2030, 60% of the Arizona working-age population will hold a postsecondary credential.**

**A major function of the Strategic Vision for 2030 is the collection, analysis, and publication of data pertaining to 33 short-term, mid-range, long-term, and follow-up metrics.** Although this report contains several metrics that were new in 2017 or 2018, most have been in place for years, making it possible to evaluate trends in student progress and outcomes.

Statewide and district-level data will continue to be used to guide improvement efforts at community colleges across the state. Statewide data will also be shared with the Arizona Board of Regents, the Arizona Department of Education, and Arizona's workforce development and business communities in order to assist in the improvement of educational and economic pathways.

**The Strategic Vision for 2030, as well as a Technical Guide that provides detailed definitions of each metric, can be found online at: [www.arizonacommunitycolleges.org](http://www.arizonacommunitycolleges.org).**

# METRICS AND COHORTS

## METRICS

The 2018 Strategic Vision Outcomes Report presents data related to 33 short-term, mid-range, long-term, and follow-up metrics. These data identify areas of strength, as well as places where Arizona's community colleges will need to focus their efforts in order to expand access, increase transfer and completion, and improve alignment with workforce needs.

**Short-term metrics** correspond to enrollment rates, cost measures, and training for high-demand occupations.

**Mid-range metrics** examine student persistence and success in the first two years of college.

**Long-term metrics** pertain to transfer and completion rates.

**Follow-up metrics** examine student success after departing the community college and may be affected by economic forces, as well as the actions of Arizona universities.

## COHORTS

The 2018 Strategic Vision Outcomes Report tracks several cohorts of students.

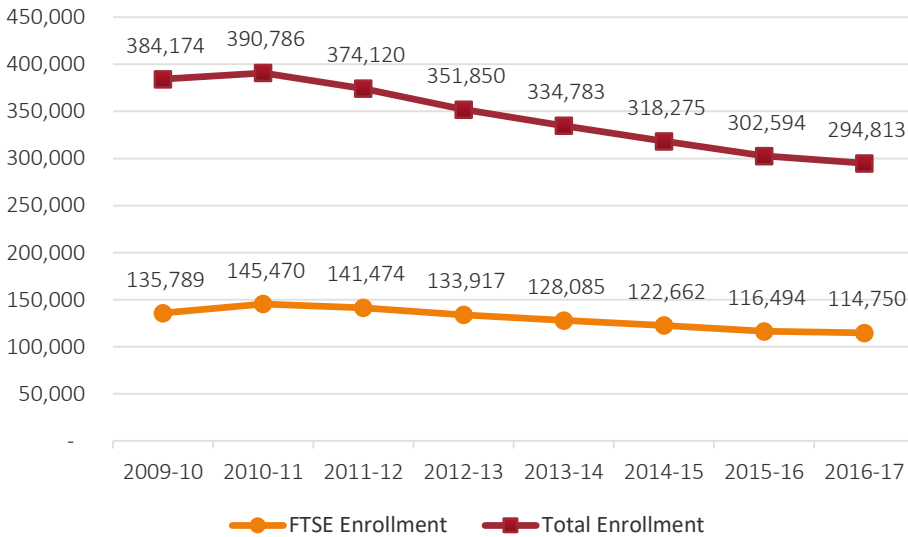
**2015 and 2011 New Student Cohorts** are used to examine student persistence and success after two and six years, respectively.

**2015 and 2011 Credential-Seeking Sub-Cohorts**, defined as cohort members who earned at least 12 credits by the end of their second year, are used for some retention, transfer, and completion measures. Credential-seeking sub-cohorts provide a more accurate gauge of student success, as they take into account learners' diverse education and training goals.

**2014-15 Occupational Cohort**, comprised of students who exited a community college in 2014-15 after completing a specified number of credits in an occupational pathway, is used in follow-up metrics related to wage growth and earning industry-recognized credentials.

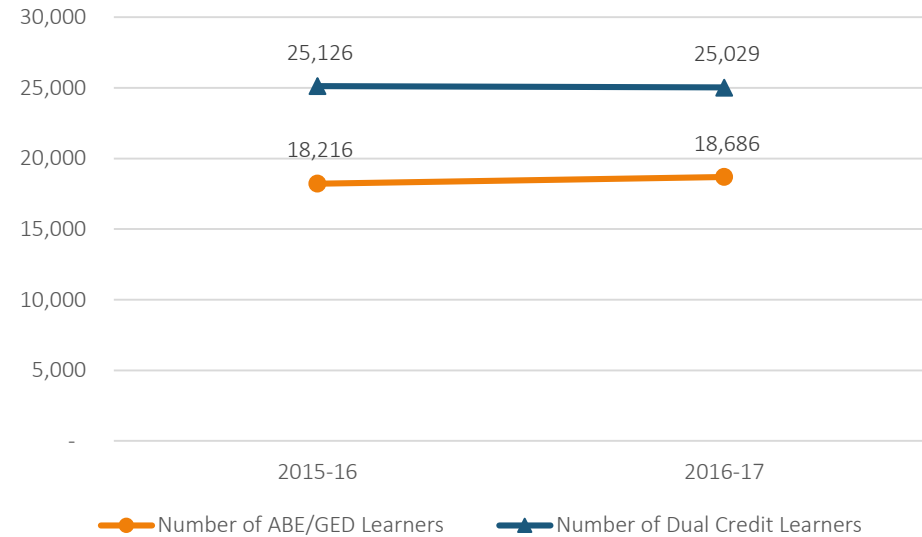
# Expand Access: Short-Term Metrics

## Metrics 1 and 2: FTSE and Total Enrollment



Statewide, total annual enrollment at Arizona's community colleges has declined from its high in 2010-11, and full-time student equivalent (FTSE) enrollment has diminished commensurately. This enrollment decline mirrors a national trend and reflects a greater number of students enrolling in universities and/or remaining in the workforce.

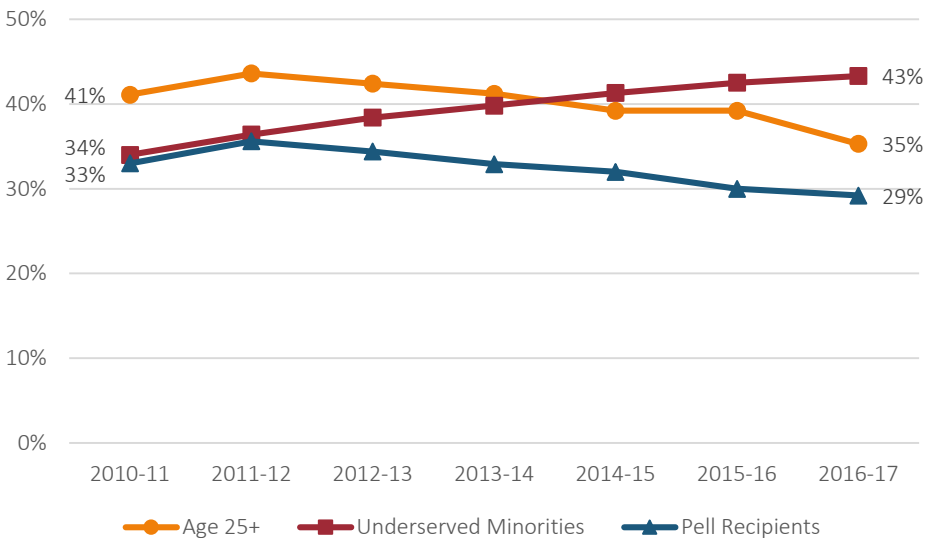
## Metrics 3 and 4: Enrollment of ABE/GED and Dual Credit Learners



Across Arizona, total annual enrollment in Adult Basic Education (ABE) and/or General Educational Development (GED) courses reached 18,686 in 2016-17. Total annual enrollment of high school learners in dual credit courses remained steady at just over 25,000. These programs are essential in expanding access to Arizona's community colleges.

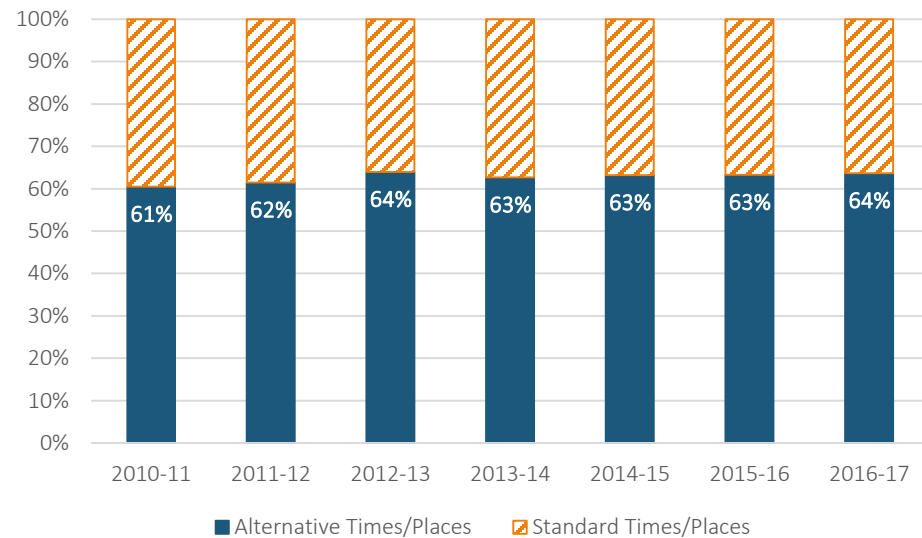
# Expand Access: Short-Term Metrics

### Metric 5: Enrollment of Underserved Populations



The percentage of Arizona community college students who are members of an underserved racial/ethnic group has increased substantially and equals the percentage of the state population belonging to an underserved minority group (43%).<sup>1</sup> Arizona’s colleges enroll a similar percentage of adult learners as the national average (35%), but fewer Pell recipients (38%).<sup>2</sup>

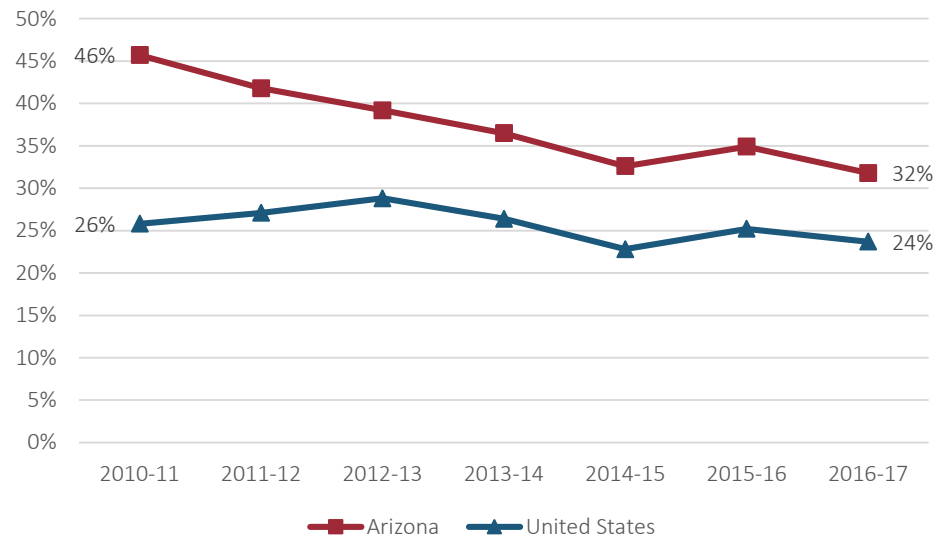
### Metric 6: Percent of Credit Hours Earned Via Alternative Times or Places



At Arizona’s community colleges, only 36% of instruction in 2016-17 occurred in traditional semester-length courses held on campus Monday through Friday, 8am to 5pm. Extending access to many diverse populations, 64% of all student credit hours were earned online, at night or on the weekends, or at skills centers, American Indian reservations, or other locales.

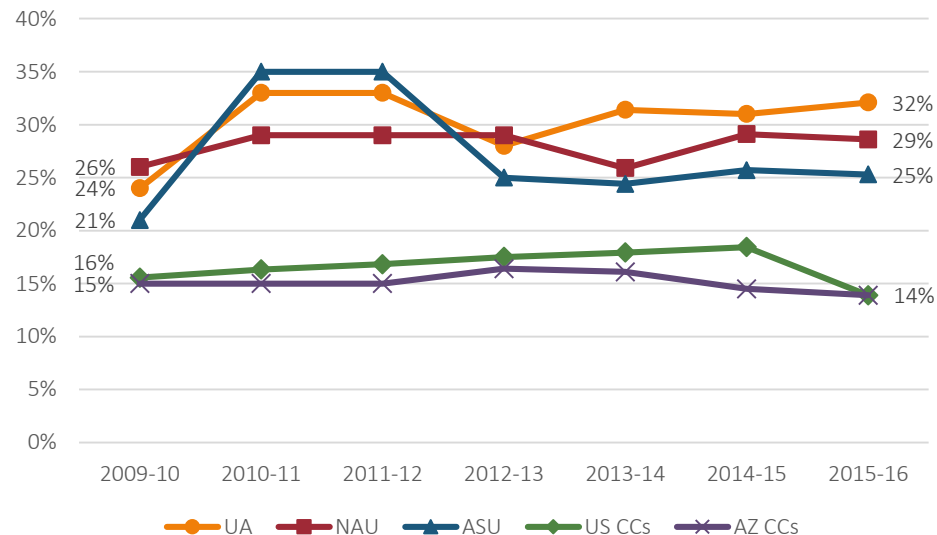
# Expand Access: Short-Term Metrics

## Metric 7: Community College-Going Rate



While the rate has declined, Arizona's community colleges enroll a much higher percentage (32%) of recent high school graduates than the national average (24%).<sup>2</sup> The vast majority of these students enroll in their local community college district. Arizona's community colleges will continue to work with the Arizona Board of regents to improve college-going across the state.

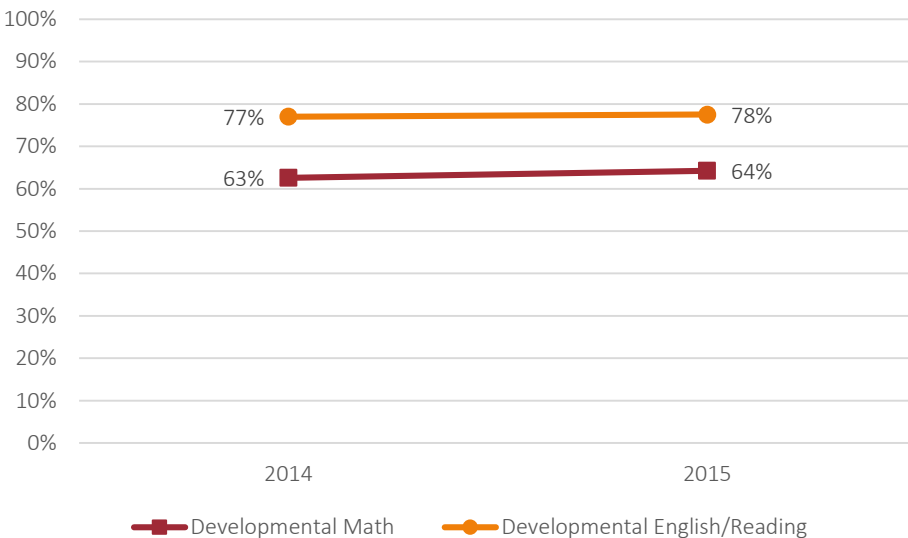
## Metric 8: Cost of Attendance as a Percentage of Median Household Income



At roughly \$7,100 per year, the median net price of attending Arizona's community colleges is just 14% of the state's median household income. This rate mirrors the national comparison (14%) and is substantially lower than Arizona's public universities (25-32%),<sup>3</sup> making the community colleges excellent and affordable options for postsecondary education and training.

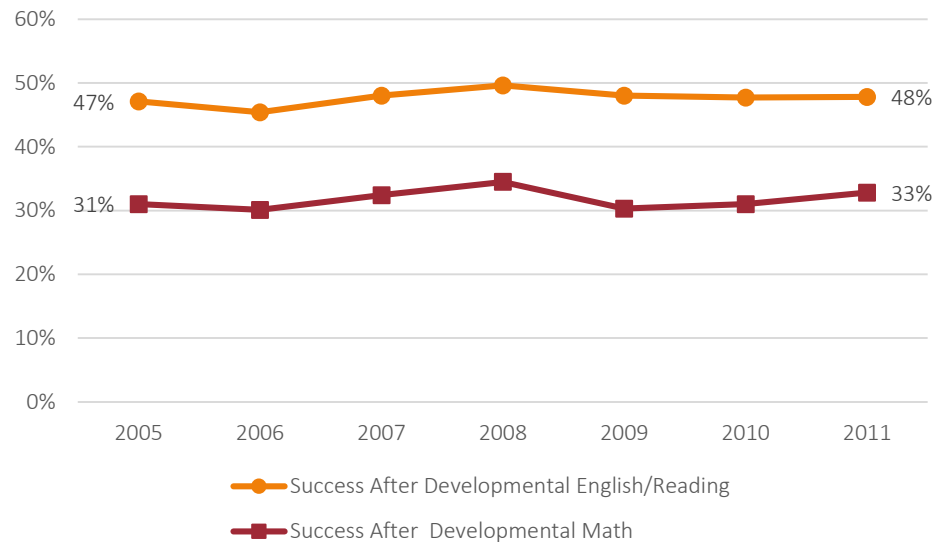
# Expand Access: Mid-Range Metrics

### Metrics 9 and 10: Developmental Course Success Rates



Over two years, 78% of student credit hours attempted in developmental English or reading by the 2015 New Student Cohort were successfully completed (with a grade of A, B, C, or Pass). In that same time period, 64% of student credit hours attempted in developmental math by the same cohort were successfully completed (with a grade of A, B, C, or Pass).

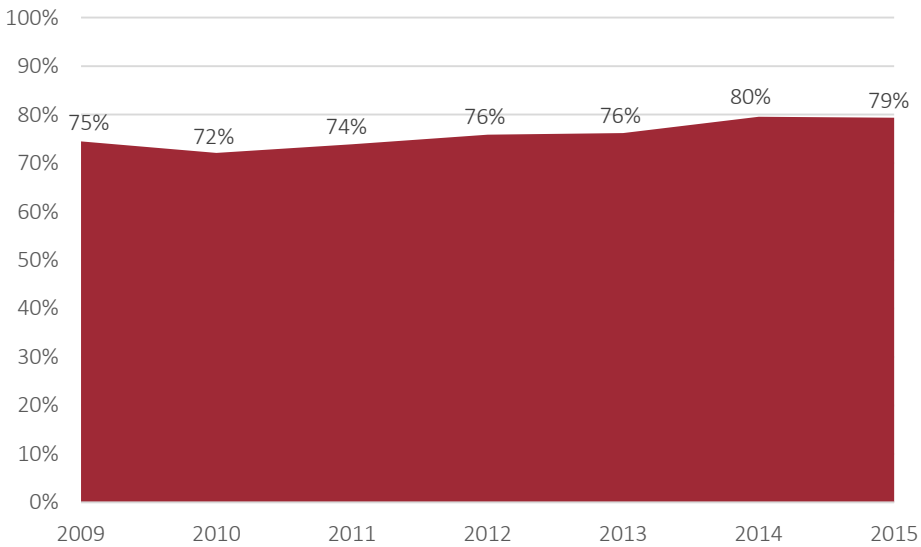
### Metrics 11 and 12: Success After Developmental Education



After six years, nearly half of developmental English or reading learners in the 2011 New Student Cohort successfully completed a college-level course in English, and 33% of developmental math learners in the same cohort completed a college-level math course. These success after developmental education rates are similar to national averages.<sup>4</sup>

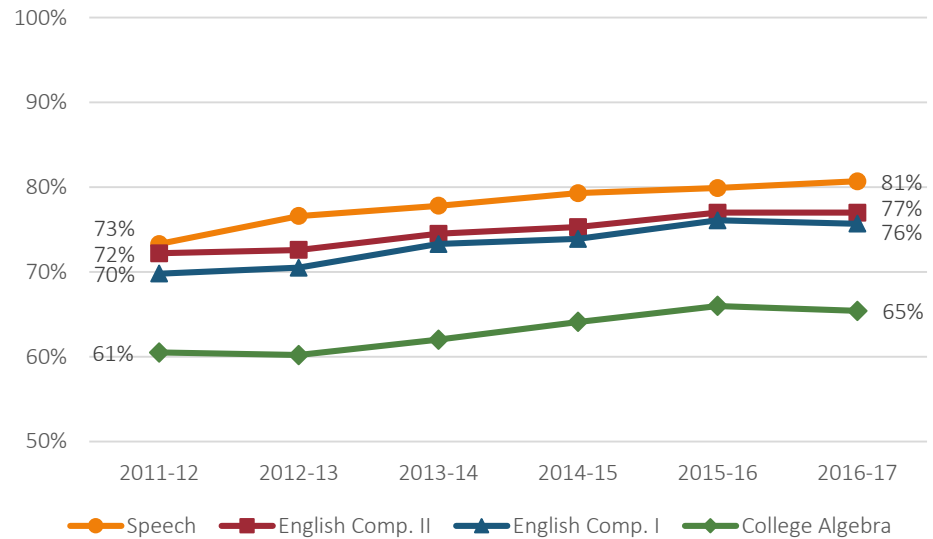
# Increase Transfer and Completion: Mid-Range Metrics

**Metric 13:  
College-Level Course Success Rate**



Over two years, 79% of student credit hours attempted in college-level courses by the 2015 New Student Cohort were successfully completed (with a grade of A, B, C, or Pass). This rate has increased by 10% over the past five years.

**Metric 14: Percent of First College-Level Math and English Credit Hours Completed**

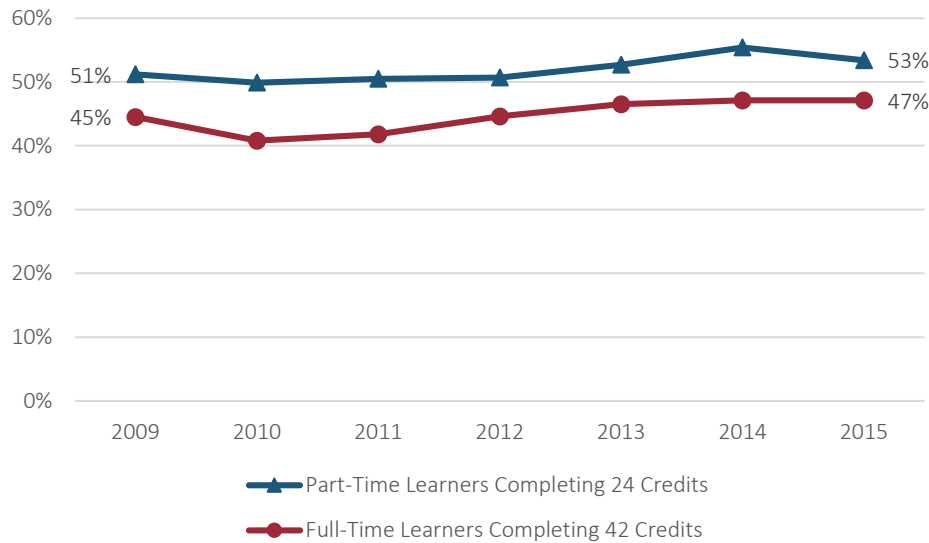


In 2016-17, between 65% and 81% of student credit hours attempted in College Algebra, English Composition I and II, and Speech were successfully completed (with a grade of A, B, C, or Pass). The rates at which Arizona's community college students successfully complete these first college-level courses mirror or exceed corresponding national averages.<sup>5</sup>



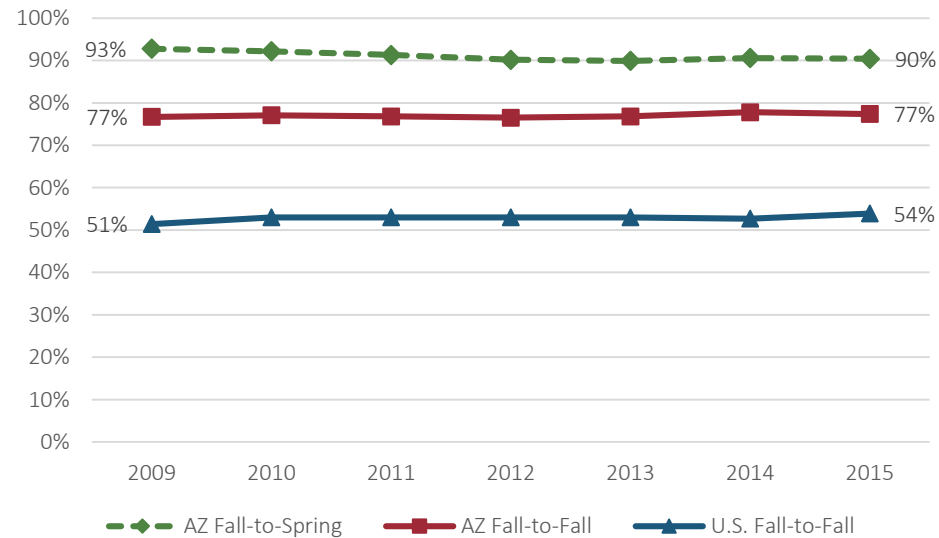
# Increase Transfer and Completion: Mid-Range Metrics

### Metrics 15 and 16: Percent of Learners Attaining Two-Year Credit Thresholds



By the end of their second year, 53% of part-time learners in the 2015 Credential-Seeking Cohort had completed 24 credits, and 47% of full-time learners in the same cohort had completed 42 credits. Although there is room for improvement, these rates are notable, as research has linked attainment of credit thresholds to higher persistence and completion rates.<sup>6</sup>

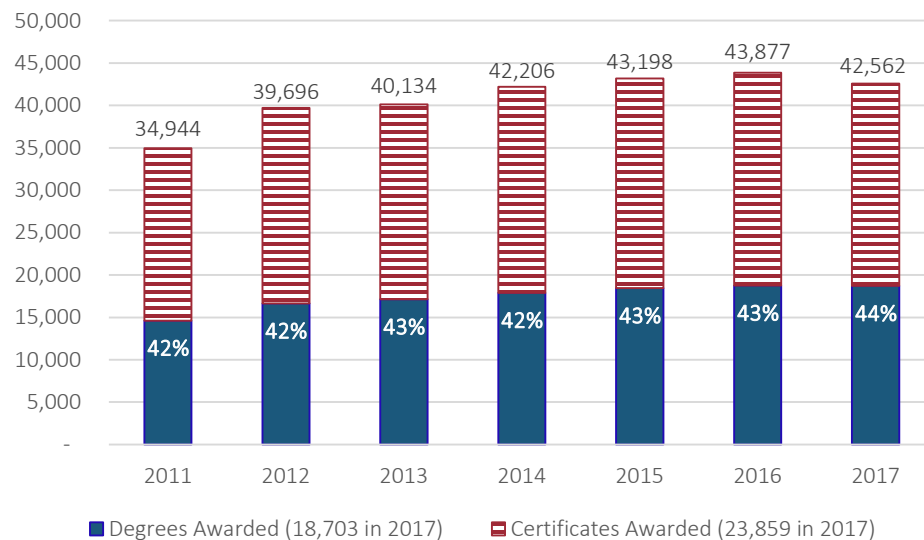
### Metrics 17 and 18: Retention Rates



Ninety percent of the 2015 Credential-Seeking Cohort (excluding those who transferred and/or earned a degree or certificate) persisted to spring 2016, and 77% of them returned the following fall. Arizona's retention rates are substantially higher than the 54%<sup>7</sup> reported as a national comparison, in part because the national figure is not limited to credential-seekers.

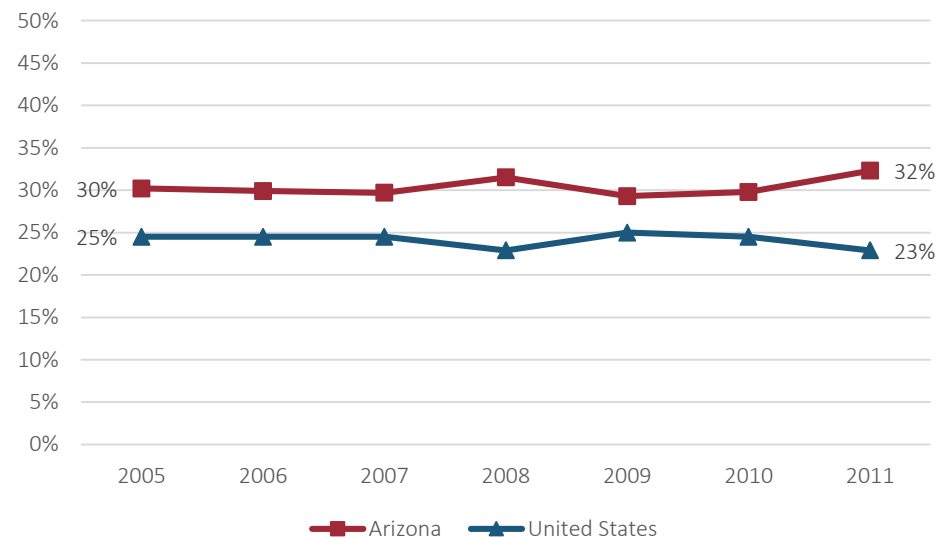
# Increase Transfer and Completion: Long-Term Metrics

**Metric 19:  
Degrees and Certificates Awarded**



Between 2011 and 2017, the number of degrees and certificates awarded by Arizona's community colleges increased by 22% to 42,562, despite declining enrollments. Of the 2017 total, 44% were degrees and 56% were certificates. These data reflect a concerted effort by Arizona's community colleges to increase the number of learners earning postsecondary credentials.

**Metric 20: Graduation  
(Degree/Certificate Completion) Rate**

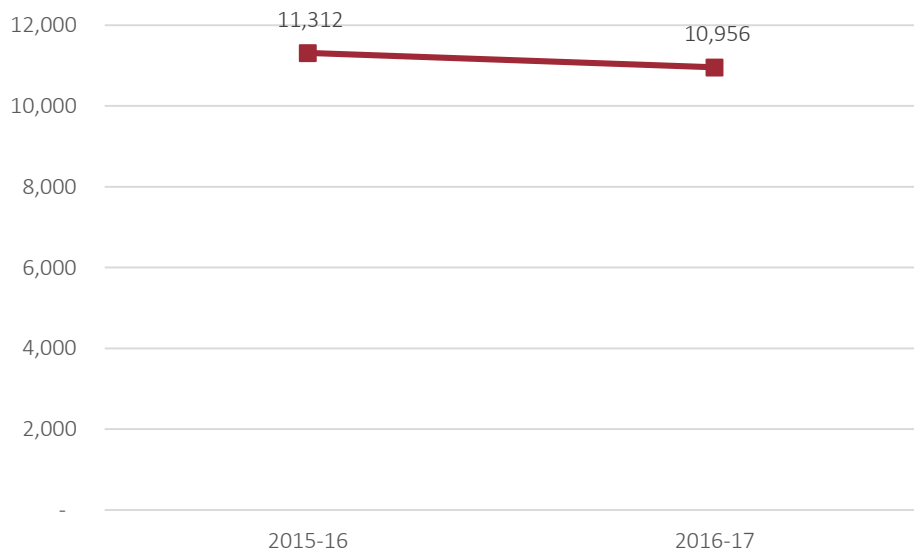


After six years, 32% of the 2011 Credential-Seeking Cohort had completed a degree or certificate. Arizona's graduation rate is somewhat higher than the most recent national comparison (23%),<sup>2</sup> in part because the national number is not limited to credential-seekers.

# Increase Transfer and Completion: Long-Term Metrics

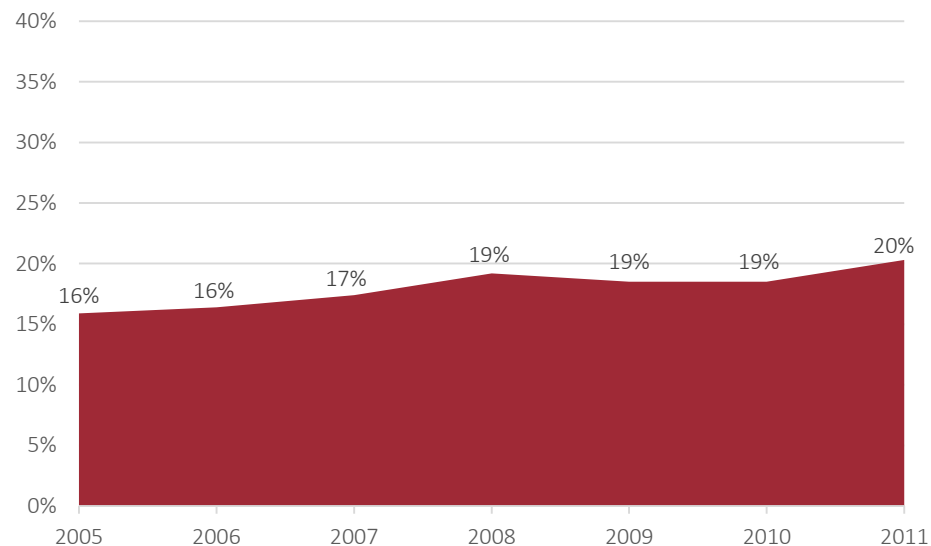
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**Metric 21:  
AGECs Awarded**



In 2016-17, Arizona's community colleges awarded 10,956 Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC) certificates, a slight decrease from 2015-16. The AGEC is comprised of 35-37 credit hours of coursework that, upon completion, transfer to all public colleges and universities in the state and fulfill lower division, general education requirements.

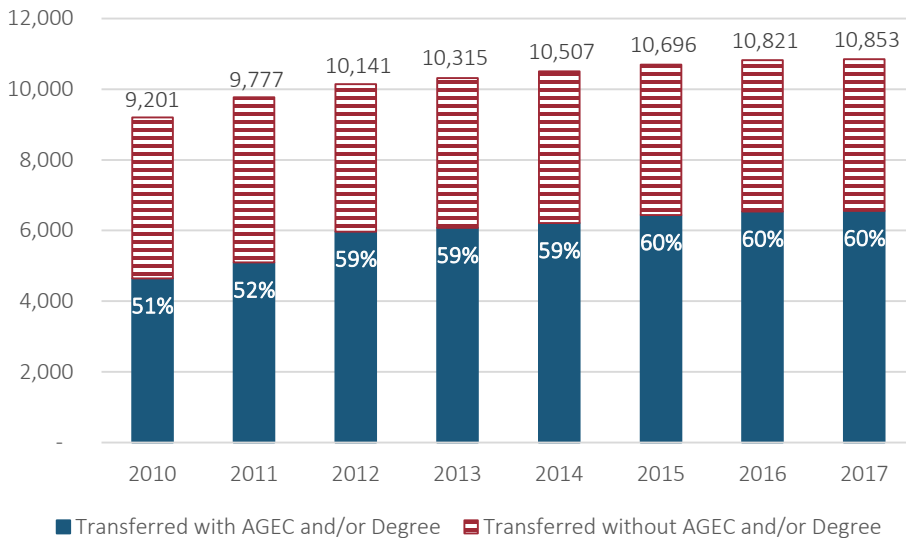
**Metric 22:  
AGEC Completion Rate**



Statewide, 20% of the 2011 Credential-Seeking Cohort completed an AGEC within 6 years, a 25% increase from the 2005 Cohort. Increasing the AGEC completion rate—a key priority for the state's community colleges—will not only ease transfer to Arizona's public universities but also help students earn bachelor's degrees in less time and with fewer excess credits.<sup>8</sup>

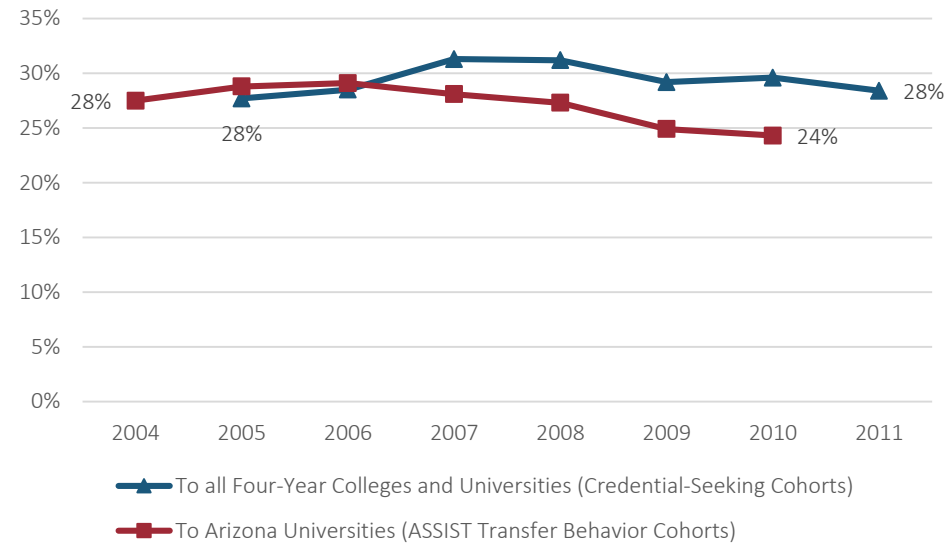
# Increase Transfer and Completion: Long-Term Metrics

## Metrics 23 and 24: In-State Transfers and Percent with AGEC and/or Degree



Between 2010 and 2017, the number of students transferring from Arizona's community colleges to an in-state, public university increased by 18% to 10,853, despite declining enrollments. In addition, the percentage of transfers who earned an AGEC and/or degree prior to transferring has increased, indicating that the transfer process is becoming more efficient and cost effective.

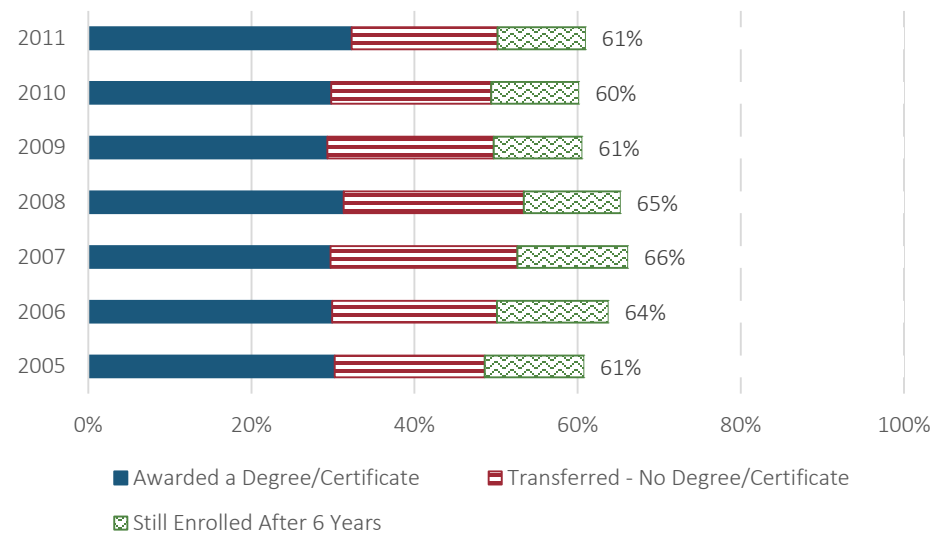
## Metrics 25 and 26: Transfer Rates



In recent years the statewide transfer rate to public universities among ASSIST Transfer Behavior Cohorts, as well as the overall transfer rate (the percent of learners in credential-seeking cohorts who transfer to any four-year college or university within 6 years) have declined slightly. Nonetheless, both rates are similar to or higher than the most recent national average (25%).<sup>9</sup>

# Increase Transfer and Completion: Long-Term Metrics

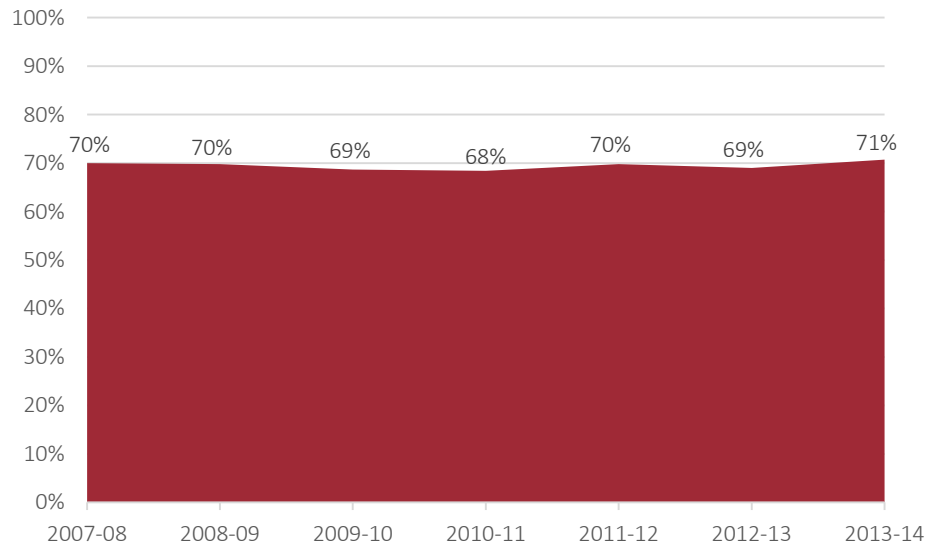
Metric 27 : Percent of Learners  
Achieving a Successful Outcome



Statewide, 61% of learners in the 2011 Credential-Seeking Cohort achieved a successful outcome within 6 years. Because community college learners enter college with diverse education and training goals, and because they often attend part-time and/or earn credits from more than one institution, several national accountability initiatives—including the Student Achievement Measure—have broadened the definition of a successful outcome to include earning a degree or certificate, transferring to another two- or four-year college or university, or continued enrollment. Nationally, 57% of all community college students (62% of full-timers and 55% of part-timers) achieve one of these successful outcomes within 6 years.<sup>10</sup>

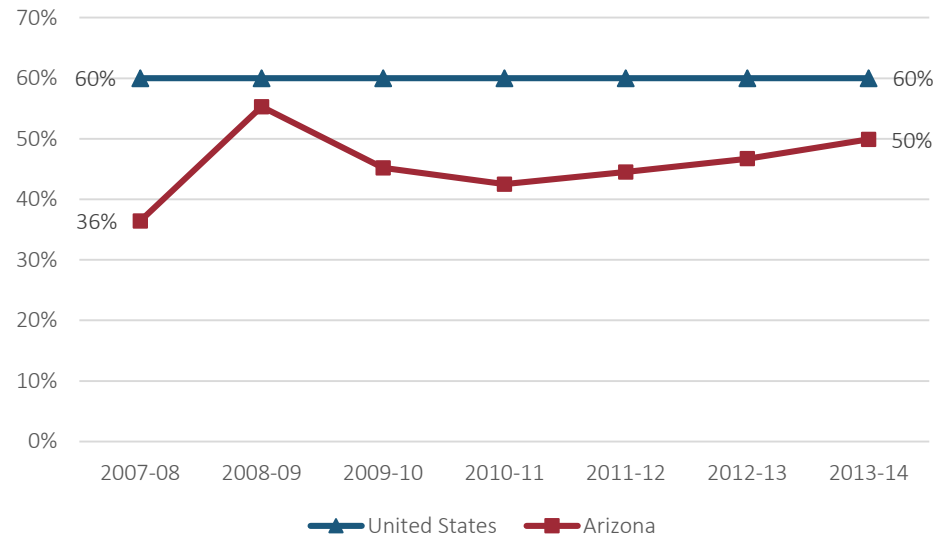
# Increase Transfer and Completion: Follow-Up Metrics

**Metric 28: Percent of Full-Time Transfers to AZ Universities Earning Bachelor's Degrees**



Seventy-one percent of all 2013-14 full-time transfers from Arizona community colleges to in-state, public universities earned a bachelor's degree within four years. This rate has remained relatively steady in recent years and indicates that most full-time transfers are graduating from the state's public universities in a timely manner.

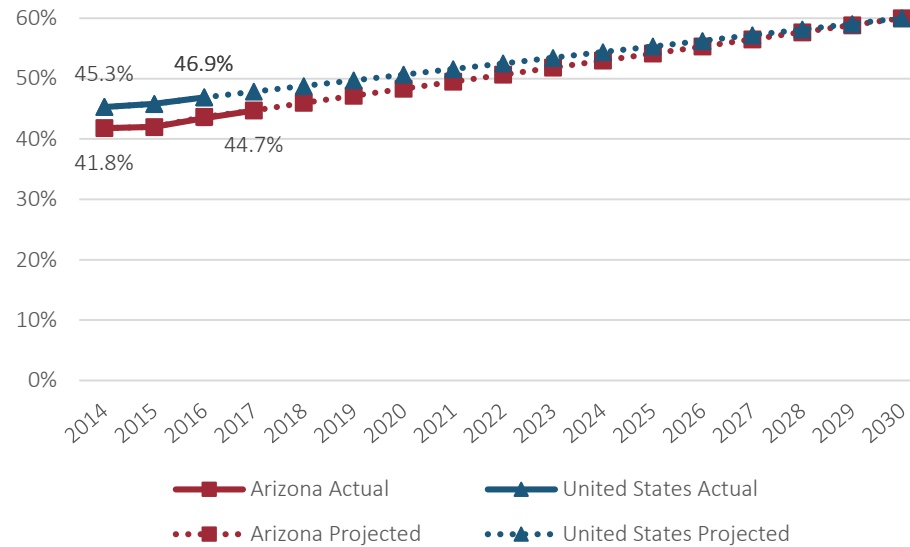
**Metric 29: Percent of All Transfers Earning Bachelor's Degrees**



Statewide, 50% of 2013-14 transfers from Arizona community colleges to all four-year institutions—public and private, in-state and out—earned a bachelor's degree within four years. Somewhat lower than the national average (60%),<sup>11</sup> this percentage may reflect a high incidence of part-time attendance after transfer.

# Increase Transfer and Completion: Follow-Up Metrics

### Metric 30: Estimated Percent of the Arizona Working-Age Population with a Postsecondary Credential

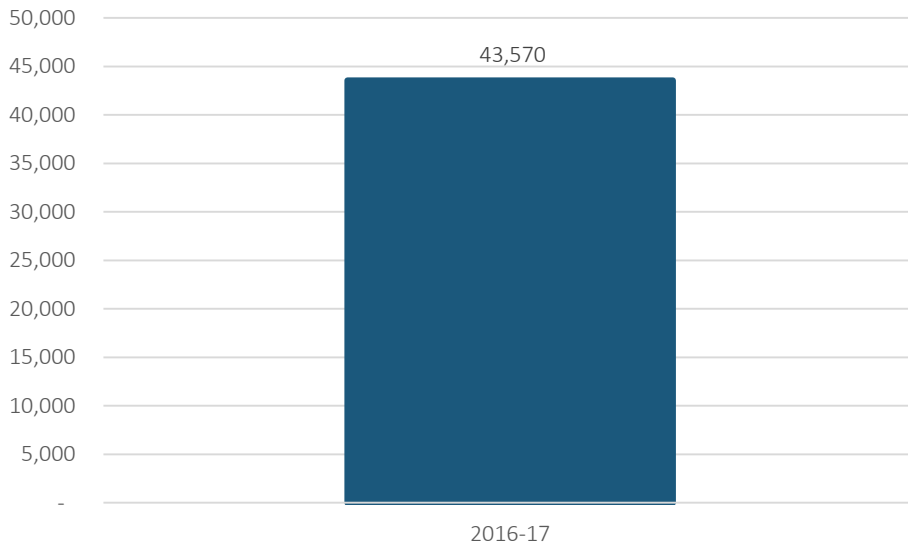


In 2017, an estimated 44.7% of the Arizona working-age population (residents aged 25-64) held a workforce certificate, associate degree, or bachelor's or higher degree (up from 41.8% in 2014). Arizona's community colleges are working closely with the Arizona Board of Regents and other postsecondary institutions across the state to reach the Achieve60AZ goal that by 2030, 60% of the Arizona working-age population will hold a postsecondary credential.

# Improve Alignment: Short-Term and Follow-Up Metrics

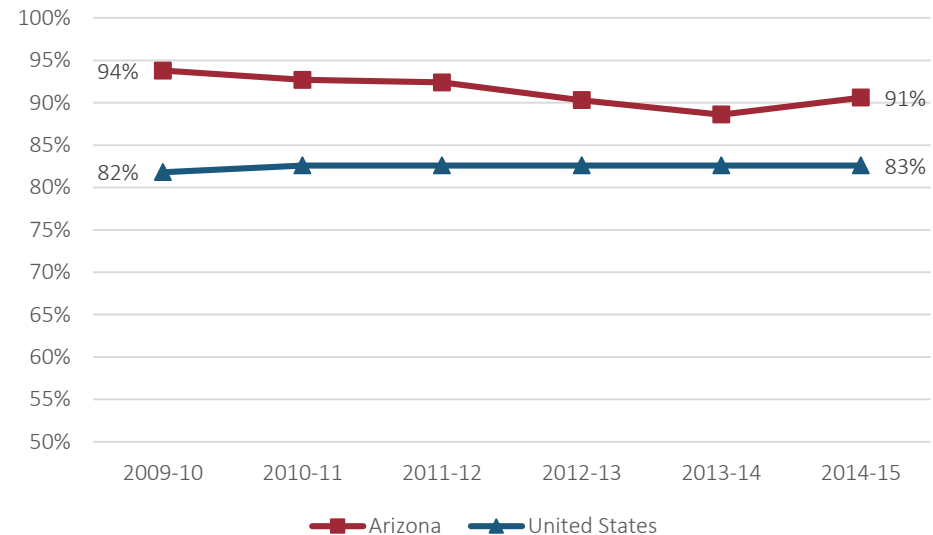
## Metric 31:

### FTSE Enrollment in Occupational Courses



Across Arizona, FTSE enrollment in occupational courses reached 43,570 in 2016-17. Many of these enrollments were in degree or certificate programs associated with the highest-demand occupations in the state, including (among others) nurses, preschool teachers, computer support specialists, web developers, and medical or dental assistants.

## Metric 32: Percent of Occupational Learners Earning Industry-Recognized Credentials



Out of all learners in the 2014-15 Occupational Cohort who took a technical skill or end-of-program assessment up to one year after college exit, 91% passed the assessment and/or earned an industry-recognized credential. Examples of occupational programs leading to industry-recognized credentials include nursing, EMT, construction, solar technologies, and fire science.



# Improve Alignment: Short-Term and Follow-Up Metrics

## Metric 33: Percent of the 25 Highest-Demand Occupations in Arizona requiring more than a High School Diploma but less than a Bachelor's Degree for which Community Colleges offer Degree and/or Certificate Programs

- ✓ Registered Nurses
- ✓ Nursing Assistants
- ✓ Teacher Assistants
- ✓ Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
- ✓ Computer User Support Specialists
- ✓ Medical Assistants
- ✓ Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers
- ✓ Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education
- ✓ Medical Records and Health Information Technicians
- ✓ Computer Network Support Specialists
- ✓ Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses
- ✓ Massage Therapists
- ✓ Web Developers
- ✓ Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics
- ✓ Paralegals and Legal Assistants
- ✓ First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers
- ✓ Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists
- ✓ Dental Assistants
- ✓ Respiratory Therapists
- ✓ Veterinary Technologists and Technicians
- ✓ Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technicians
- ✓ Radiologic Technologists
- ✓ Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers, Except Line Installers
- ✓ Phlebotomists
- ✓ Surgical Technologists

Arizona's community colleges offer degree and/or certificate programs that train workers for every single one of the 25 highest-demand occupations in the state. For many of the fastest-growing sectors of the workforce, (e.g., nurses, computer support specialists, EMTs and paramedics, medical assistants, and preschool teachers), nearly every community college district in the state offers a program.

<sup>1</sup>U.S. Bureau of the Census. (2017). *American Community Survey, 2012-16 5-year estimates*. Washington, DC: Author.

<sup>2</sup>U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2017). *Digest of education statistics*. Washington, DC: Author.

<sup>3</sup>U.S. Bureau of the Census. (2017). *American Community Survey, 2012-16 5-year estimates*. Washington, DC: Author; U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2018). *College navigator*. Washington, DC: Author.

<sup>4</sup>Bailey, T., Jeong, D. W., & Cho, S. W. (2010). Referral, enrollment, and completion in developmental education sequences in community colleges. *Economics of Education Review, 29*, 155-270.

<sup>5</sup>National Community College Benchmark Project. (2017). *Report of national aggregate data*. Overland Park, KS: Author.

<sup>6</sup>Moore, C., Shulock, N., & Offenstein, J. (2009). *Steps to success: Analyzing milestone achievement to improve community college student outcomes*. Sacramento: California State University, Institute for Higher Education Leadership and Policy.

<sup>7</sup>NCHEMS. (2015). *Retention rates - First-time college freshmen returning their second year (two-year public institutions)*. Boulder, CO: Author.

<sup>8</sup>Kisker, C. B., & Wagoner, R. L. (2013). *Implementing transfer associate degrees. Perspectives from the states*. New directions for community colleges, no. 160. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

<sup>9</sup>Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University. (2015). *What we know about transfer. Research overview*. New York: Author.

<sup>10</sup>National Student Clearinghouse. (2017). *Snapshot report: Yearly success and progress rates (two-year publics, first-time, full-time and first-time, part-time)*. Herndon, VA: Author.

<sup>11</sup>National Student Clearinghouse. (2012). *Snapshot report: Transfer outcomes (four years after transfer)*. Herndon, VA: Author.