

Arizona Community Colleges 2019 Strategic Vision Outcomes Report

Summary:

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 degree 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 Achieve 60 AZ goal that by 2030, 60% of the Arizona work-age population will hold a post-secondary 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. The majority of these metrics have been in place for years, making it possible to evaluate trends in student progress and outcomes.

NPC Update: Positives for Northland Pioneer College (NPC) begin with the increase in the success rate (88%) for college level course work. This rate has increase over the past seven years, and is higher than the state average (79%). Between 73% and 90% 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 NPC students successfully complete these first college level courses exceeds statewide and national averages. Between 2011 and 2018, the number of degrees and certificates awarded by NPC increased by 80% to 764. Of the 2018 total, 26% were degrees and 74% were certificates. This increase occurred despite lower enrollments, as NPC is making a concerted effort to increase the percentage of learning earning postsecondary credentials. Between 2014 and 2018, the number of students transferring from NPC to an in-state, public university increased by 19% to 92, despite declining enrollments. In addition, the percentage of transfers who earned an AGECE and/or degree prior to transferring has increased, indicating that the transfer process is becoming more efficient and cost effective.



Northland Pioneer College

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STRATEGIC VISION FOR 2030

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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. The majority of these metrics 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.

METRICS AND COHORTS

METRICS

The 2019 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 Northland Pioneer College (NPC) will need to focus its 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 2019 Strategic Vision Outcomes Report tracks several cohorts of students.

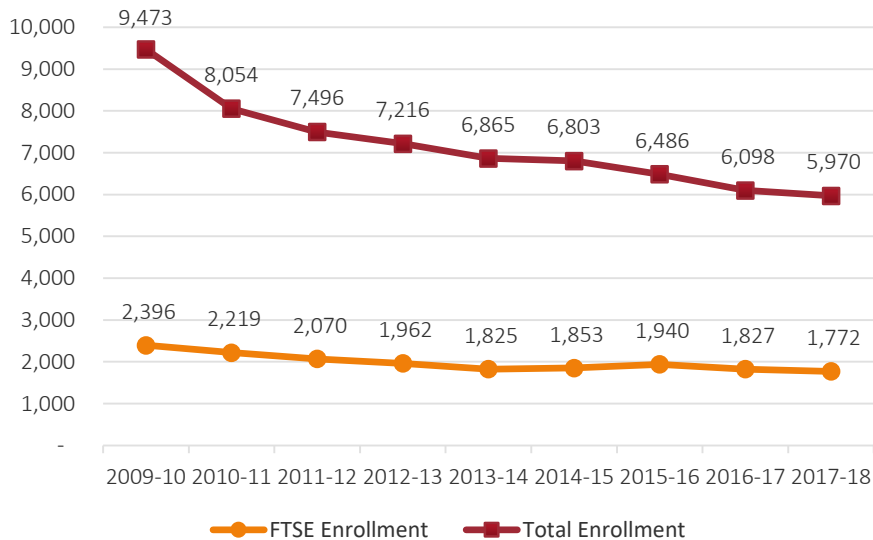
2016 and 2012 New Student Cohorts are used to examine student persistence and success after two and six years, respectively.

2016 and 2012 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.

2015-16 Occupational Cohort, comprised of students who exited NPC in 2015-16 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.

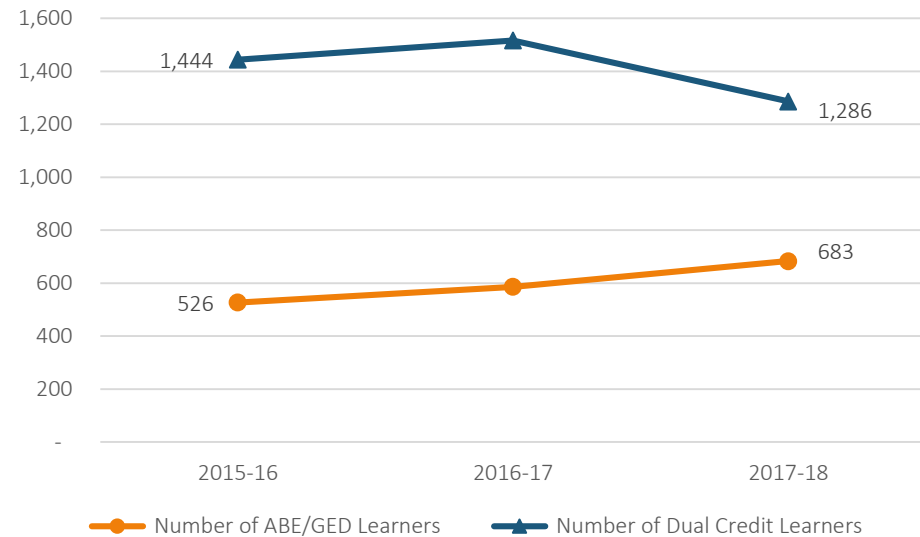
Expand Access: Short-Term Metrics

Metrics 1 and 2: FTSE and Total Enrollment



Total annual enrollment at NPC has declined from its recession-era high in 2009-10, although full-time student equivalent (FTSE) enrollment has stabilized. Despite this enrollment decline, which mirrors statewide and national trends, the annual number of degree and certificates awarded has remained somewhat more stable (see metric 19).

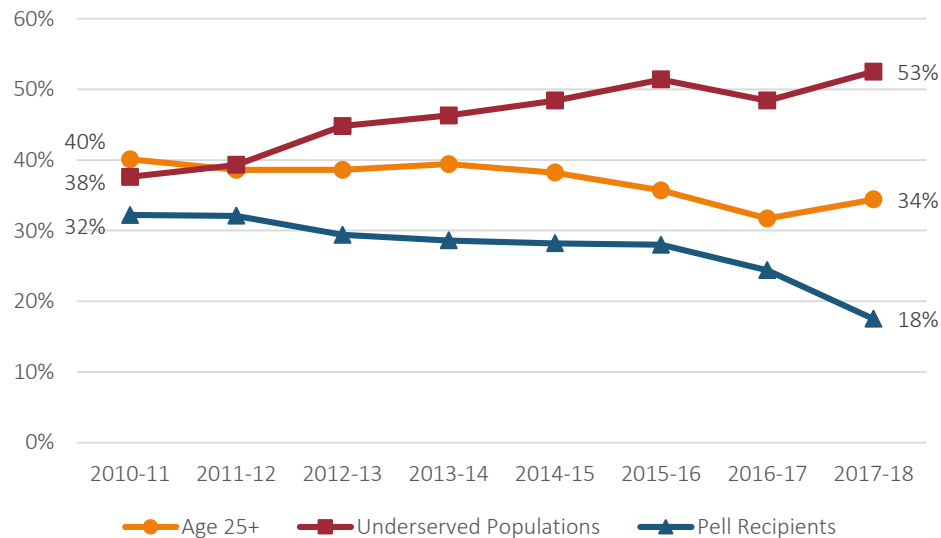
Metrics 3 and 4: Enrollment of ABE/GED and Dual Credit Learners



At NPC, annual enrollment in Adult Basic Education (ABE) and/or General Educational Development (GED) courses rose to 683 in 2017-18. ABE/GED programs are essential in expanding access to Arizona's community colleges. Total annual enrollment of high school learners in dual credit courses dropped to 1,286 as TALON (CSICO) students were excluded in 2017-18.

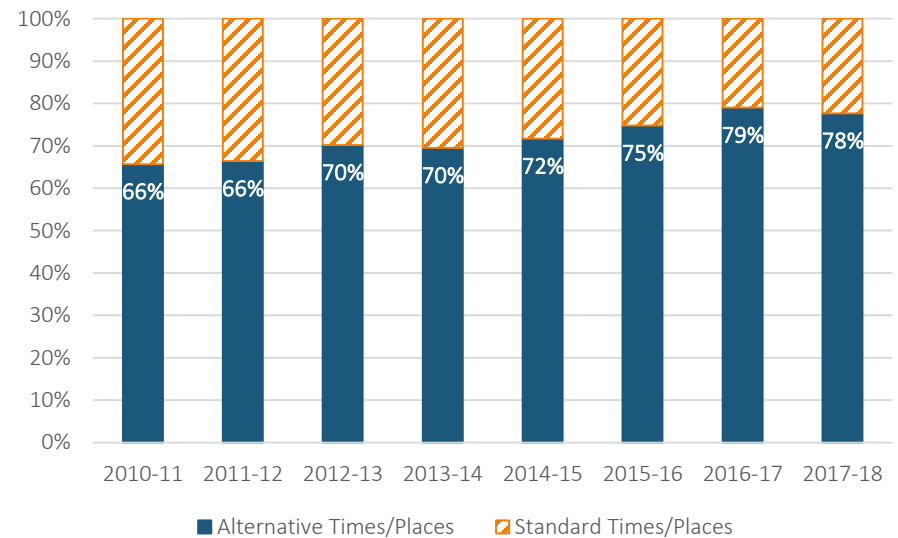
Expand Access: Short-Term Metrics

Metric 5: Enrollment of Underserved Populations



Since 2010-11, the percentage of NPC students who are members of an underserved racial/ethnic group has increased but is still lower than the percentage of Apache and Navajo Counties belonging to an underserved population (83% and 60%, respectively).¹ NPC enrolls fewer adult learners and Pell recipients than statewide averages (35% and 28%, respectively).

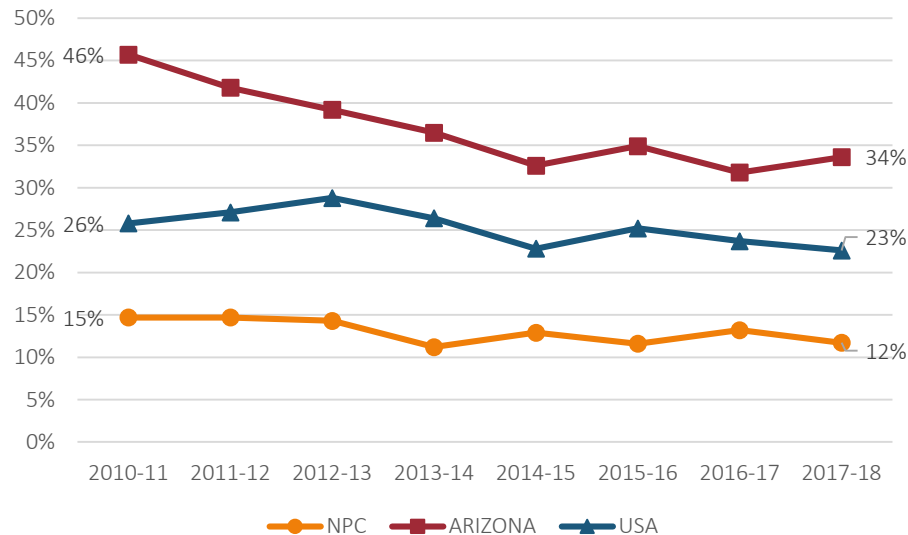
Metric 6: Percent of Credit Hours Earned Via Alternative Times or Places



At NPC, only 22% of instruction in 2017-18 occurred in traditional semester-length courses held on campus Monday through Friday, 8am to 5pm. Extending access to many diverse populations, 78% of all student credit hours were earned online, at night or on the weekends, or at skills centers, American Indian reservations, or other locales.

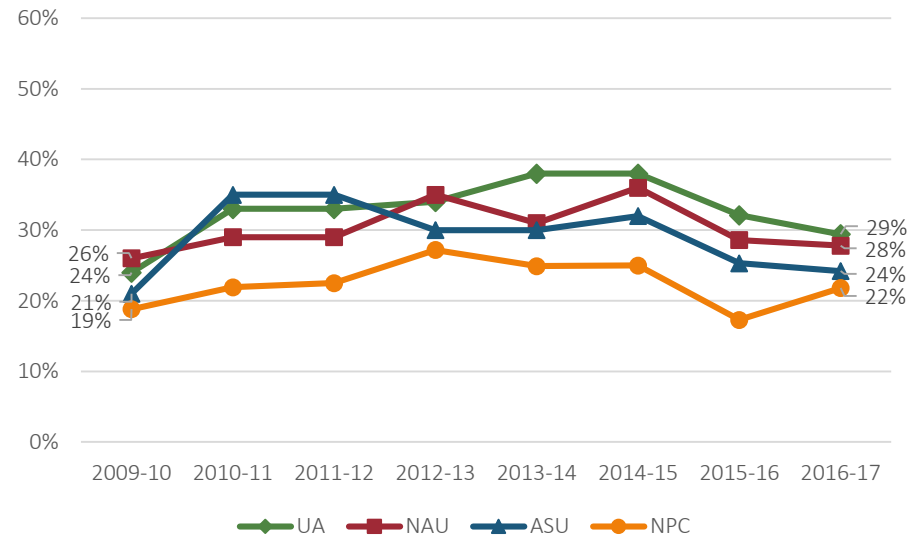
Expand Access: Short-Term Metrics

Metric 7: Community College-Going Rate



NPC enrolls 12% of recent high school graduates in its service area. This number is lower than both the statewide (34%) and national averages (23%).² NPC will continue to work with other community colleges and the Arizona Board of Regents to improve college-going across the state.

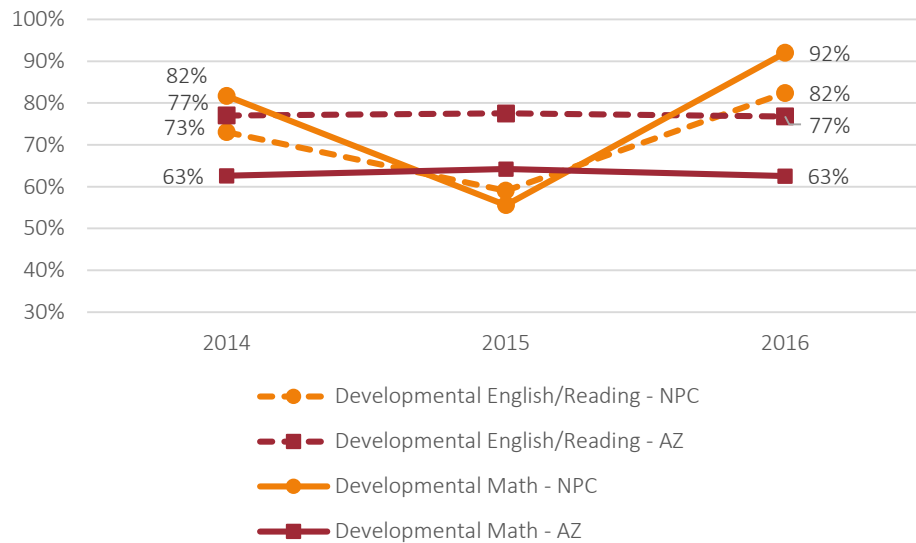
Metric 8: Cost of Attendance as a Percentage of Median Household Income



At just over \$8,000 per year, the net price of attending NPC is just 22% of the Apache and Navajo County median household income. This rate is lower than Arizona's public universities (24-29%),³ making NPC an excellent and affordable option for postsecondary education and training.

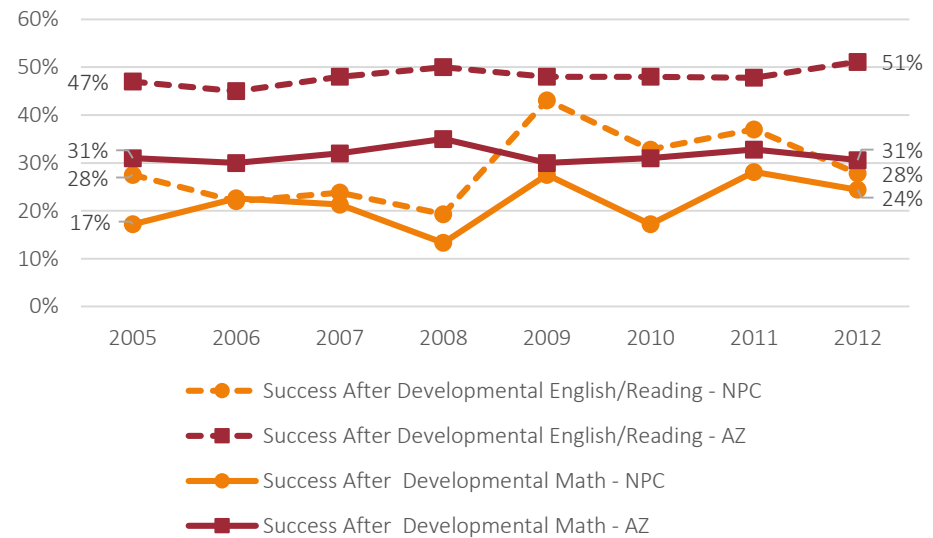
Expand Access: Mid-Range Metrics

Metrics 9 and 10: Developmental Course Success Rates



Over two years, 82% of student credit hours attempted in developmental English or reading by NPC's 2016 New Student Cohort were successfully completed (with a grade of A, B, C, or Pass). In that same time period, 92% of student credit hours attempted in developmental math by the same cohort were successfully completed (with a grade of A, B, C, or Pass).

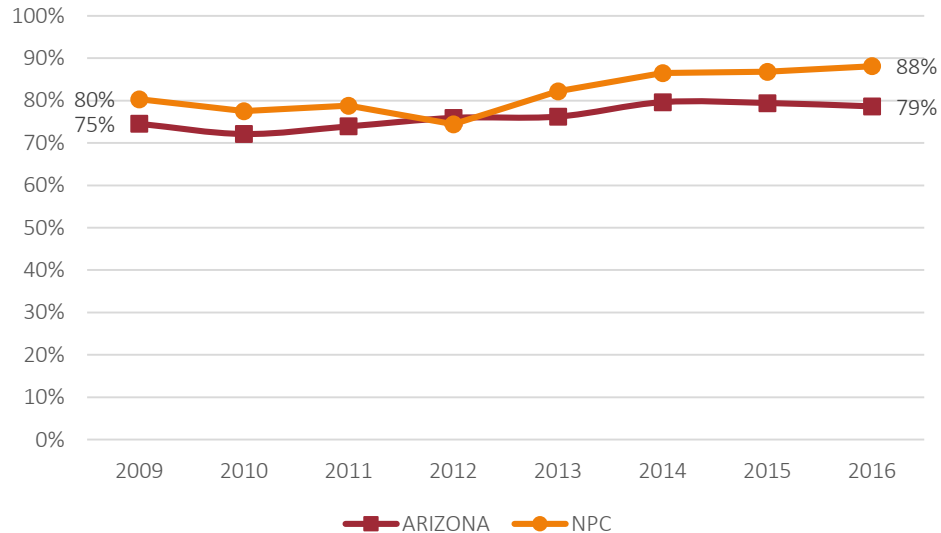
Metrics 11 and 12: Success After Developmental Education



After six years, 28% of developmental English or reading learners in NPC's 2012 New Student Cohort successfully completed a college-level course in English, and 24% of developmental math learners in the same cohort completed a college-level math course. These success after developmental education rates are slightly lower than statewide and national averages.⁴

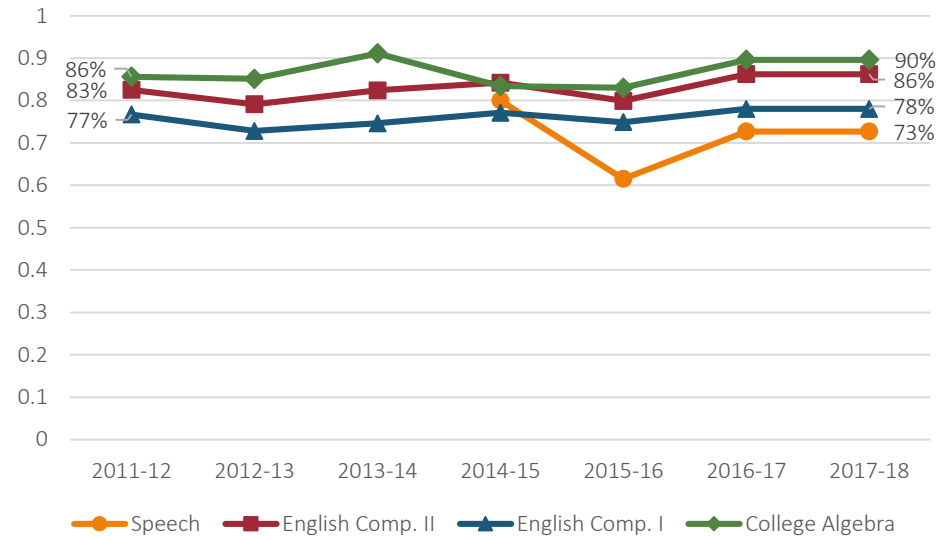
Increase Transfer and Completion: Mid-Range Metrics

Metric 13: College-Level Course Success Rate



Over two years, 88% of student credit hours attempted in college-level courses by NPC's 2016 New Student Cohort were successfully completed (with a grade of A, B, C, or Pass). This rate has increased over the past seven years.

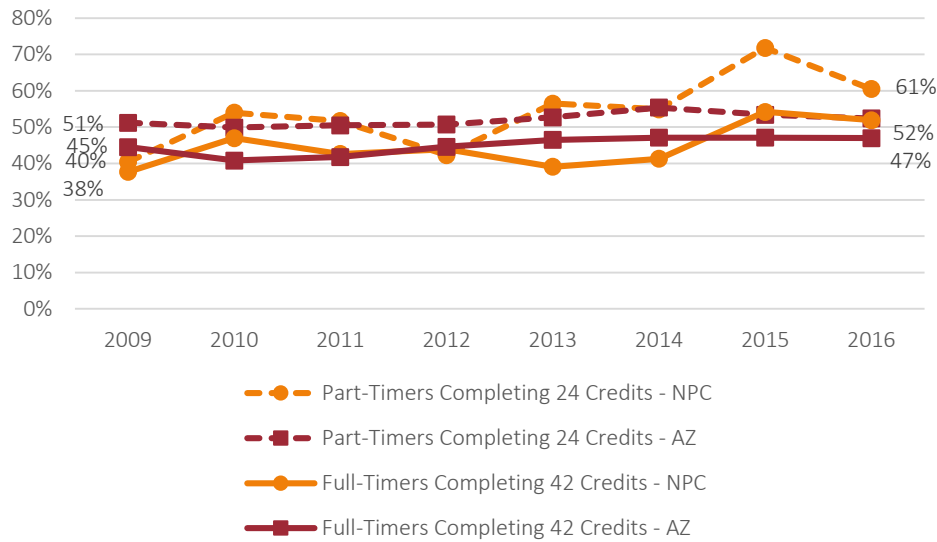
Metric 14: Percent of First College-Level Math and English Credit Hours Completed



In 2017-18, between 73% and 90% 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 NPC students successfully complete these first college-level courses exceeds statewide and national averages.⁵

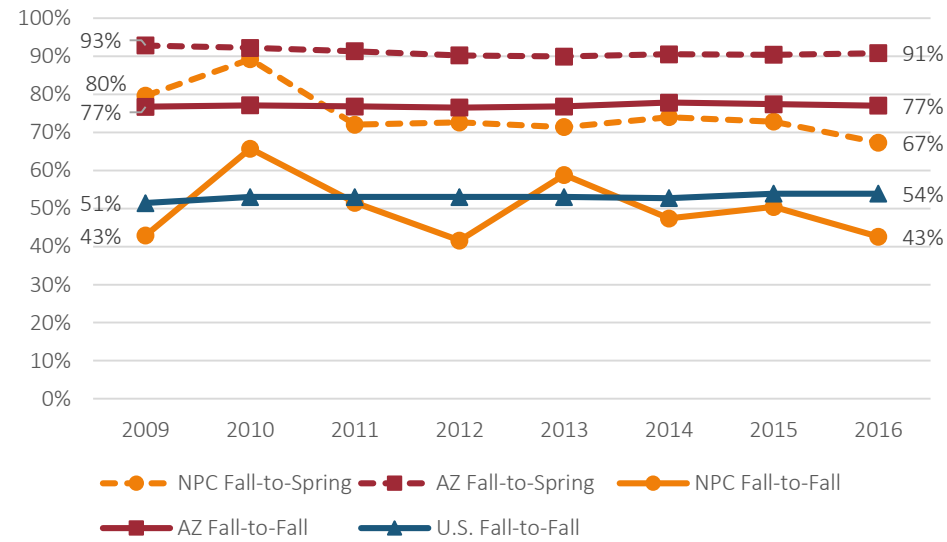
Increase Transfer and Completion: Mid-Range Metrics

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



By the end of their second year, 61% of part-time learners in NPC’s 2016 Credential-Seeking Cohort had completed 24 credits, and 52% of full-time learners in the same cohort had completed 42 credits. These rates are notable, as research has linked attainment of credit thresholds to higher persistence and completion rates.⁶

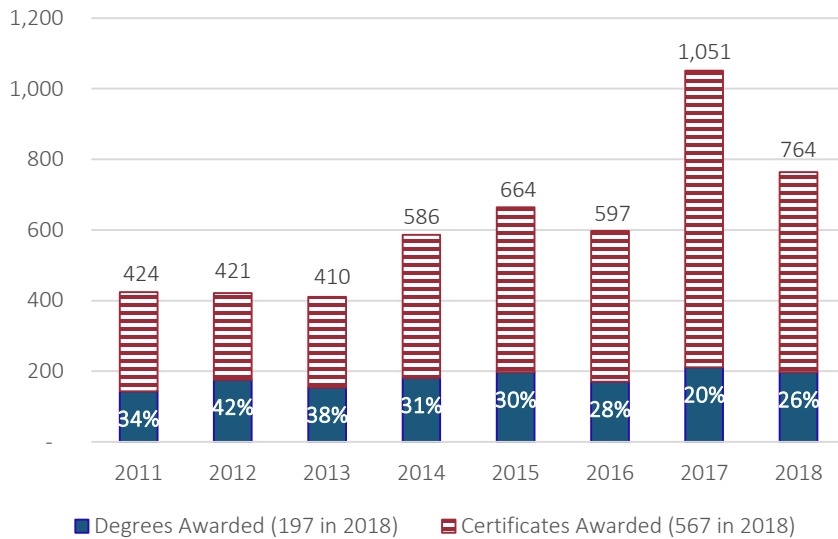
Metrics 17 and 18: Retention Rates



Sixty-seven percent of NPC’s 2016 Credential-Seeking Cohort (excluding those who transferred and/or earned a degree or certificate) persisted to spring 2017, and 43% of them returned the following fall. NPC’s fall-to-fall retention rate is somewhat lower than the 54%⁷ reported as a national comparison.

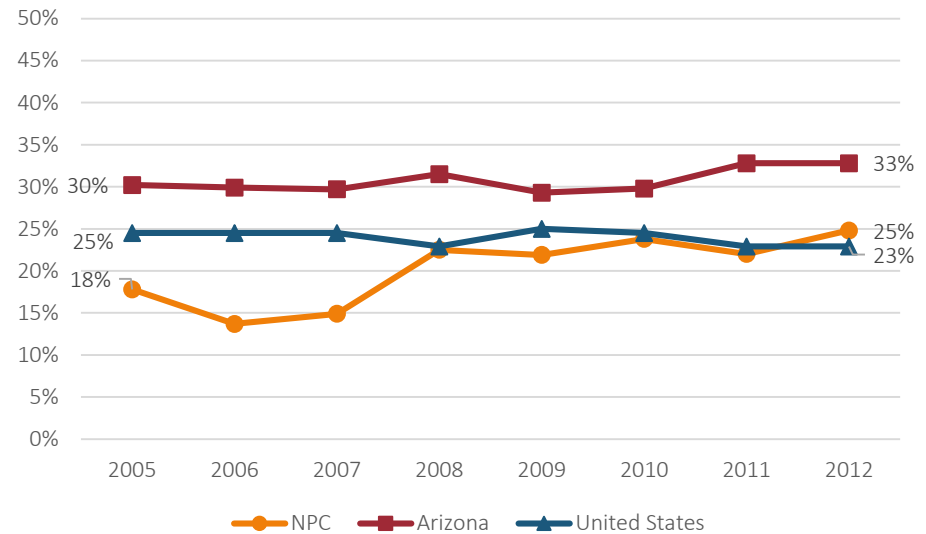
Increase Transfer and Completion: Long-Term Metrics

**Metric 19:
Degrees and Certificates Awarded**



Between 2011 and 2018, the number of degrees and certificates awarded by NPC increased by 80% to 764. Of the 2018 total, 26% were degrees and 74% were certificates. This increase occurred despite lower enrollments, as NPC is making a concerted effort to increase the percentage of learners earning postsecondary credentials.

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

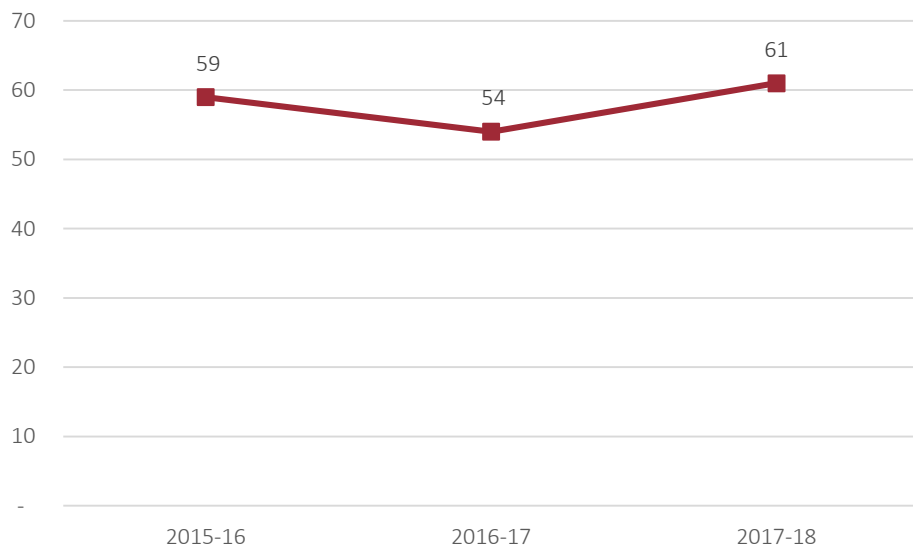


After six years, 25% of NPC's 2012 Credential-Seeking Cohort had completed a degree or certificate. NPC's graduation rate is higher than the most recent national comparison (23%),² in part because the national number is not limited to credential-seekers.

Increase Transfer and Completion: Long-Term Metrics

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Metric 21: AGECs Awarded



In 2017-18, NPC awarded 61 Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC) certificates, a slight increase from previous years. 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.

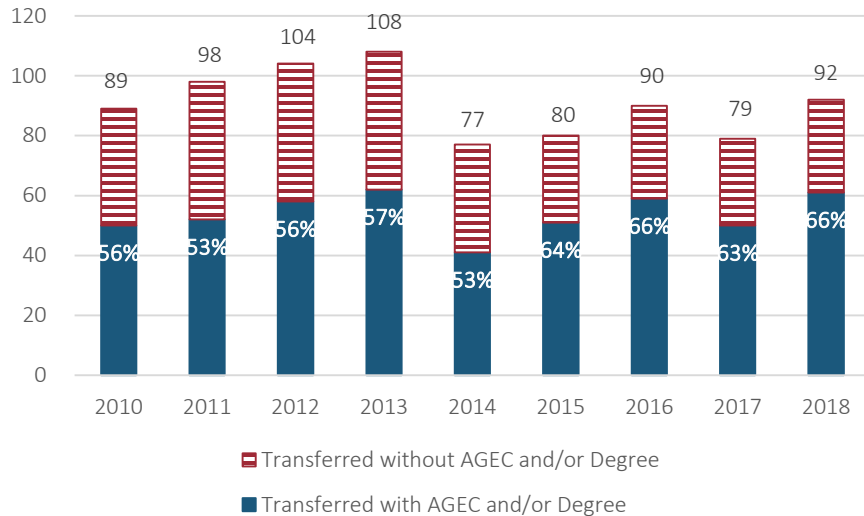
Metric 22: AGEC Completion Rate



At NPC, 6% of the 2012 Credential-Seeking Cohort completed an AGEC within 6 years, a 50% 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.⁸

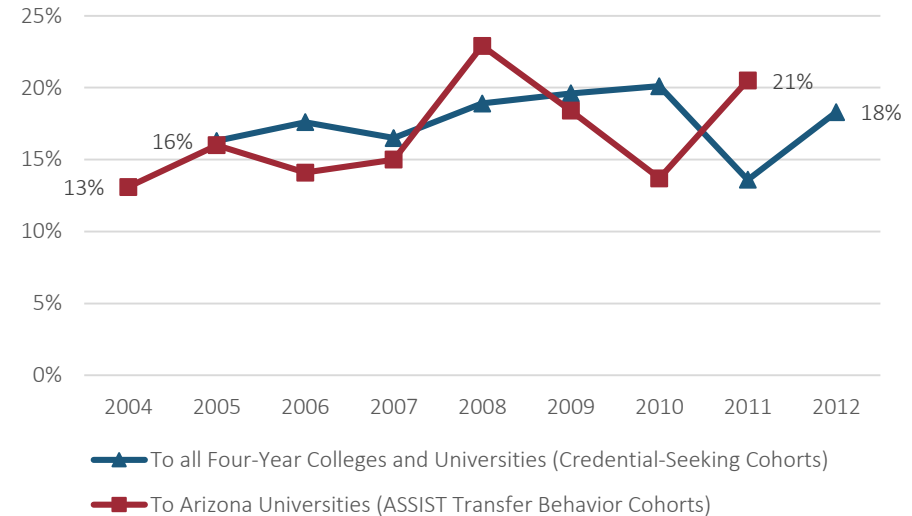
Increase Transfer and Completion: Long-Term Metrics

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



Between 2014 and 2018, the number of students transferring from NPC to an in-state, public university increased by 19% to 92, 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.

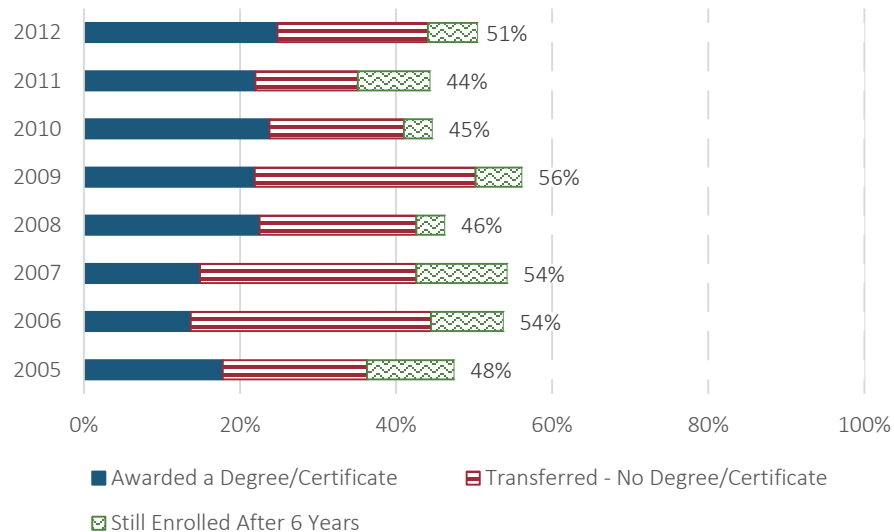
Metrics 25 and 26: Transfer Rates



At NPC, transfer rates to Arizona universities among ASSIST Transfer Behavior Cohorts have increased since 2004. The overall transfer rate (the percent of learners in credential-seeking cohorts who transfer to any four-year college or university within 6 years) has increased slightly to 18%. Both rates are slightly lower than the most recent national average (25%).⁹

Increase Transfer and Completion: Long-Term Metrics

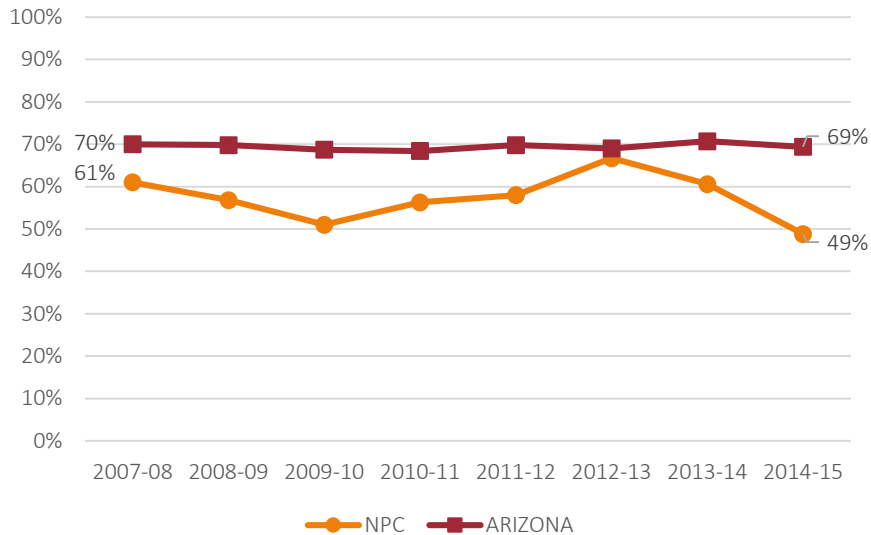
Metric 27 : Percent of Learners Achieving a Successful Outcome



Fifty-one percent of learners in NPC’s 2012 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.¹⁰

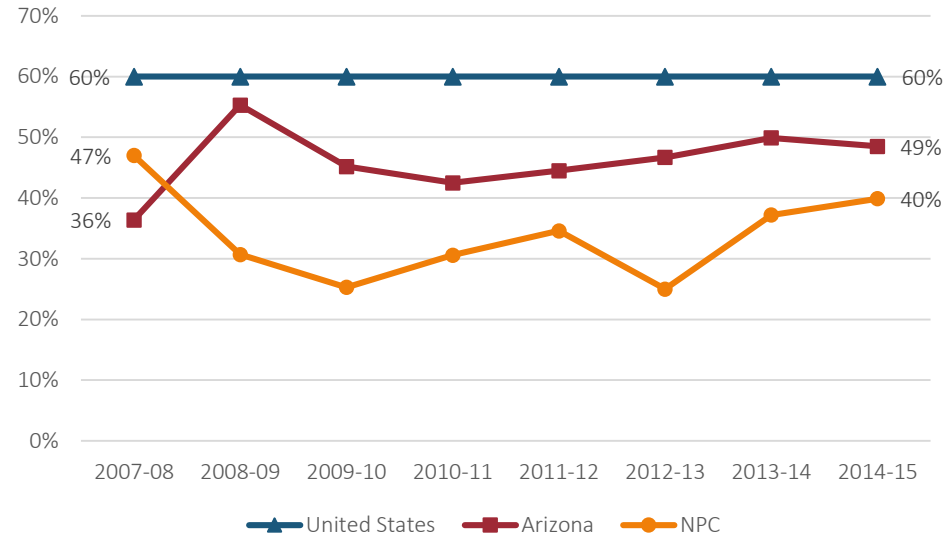
Increase Transfer and Completion: Follow-Up Metrics

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



Forty-nine percent of all 2014-15 full-time transfers from NPC to in-state, public universities earned a bachelor's degree within four years. This rate has slightly declined in recent years, although most full-time transfers are graduating from the state's public universities in a timely manner.

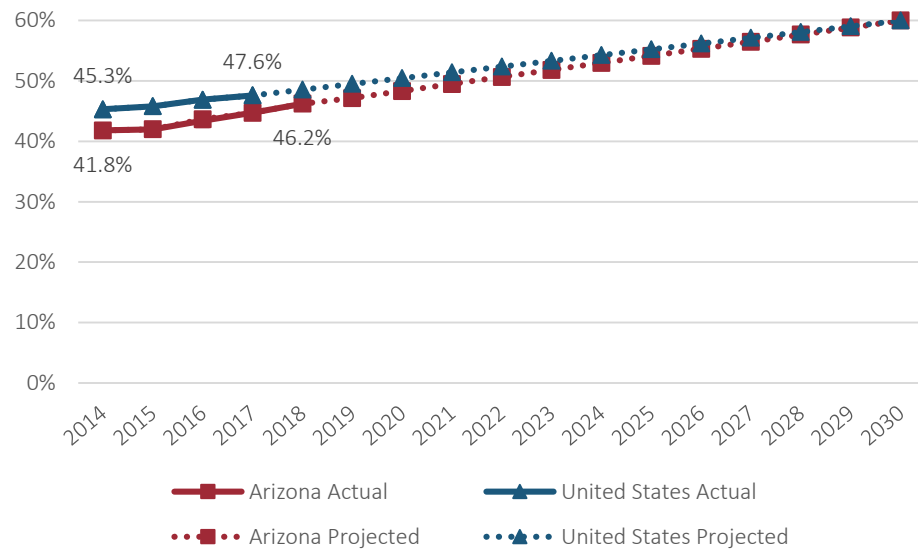
Metric 29: Percent of All Transfers Earning Bachelor's Degrees



Forty percent of 2014-15 transfers from NPC to all four-year institutions—public and private, in-state and out—earned a bachelor's degree within four years. Somewhat lower than statewide and national averages (49% and 60%, respectively),¹¹ 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

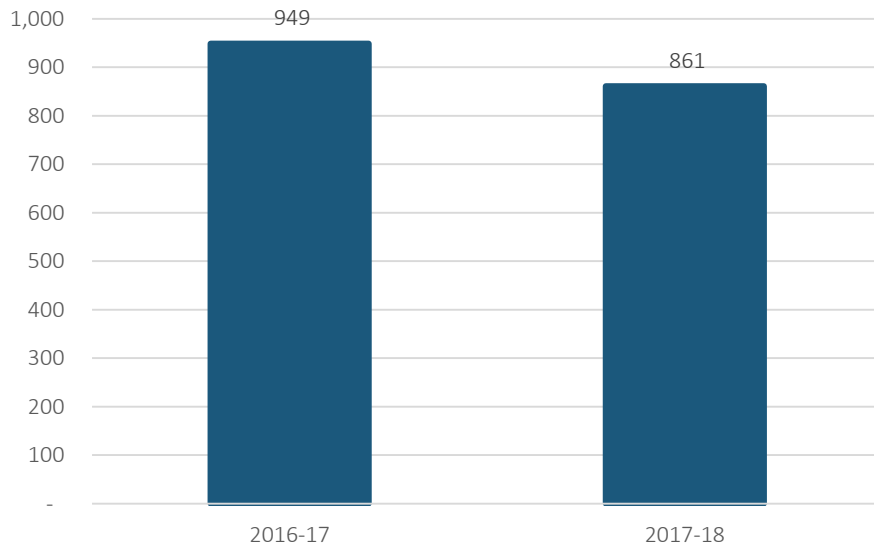


In 2018, an estimated 46.2% of the Arizona working-age population (residents aged 25-64) held a workforce certificate, associate degree, or bachelor's or higher degree (up from 41.8% in 2014). Arizona's community colleges are working closely with the Arizona Board of Regents and other postsecondary institutions 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

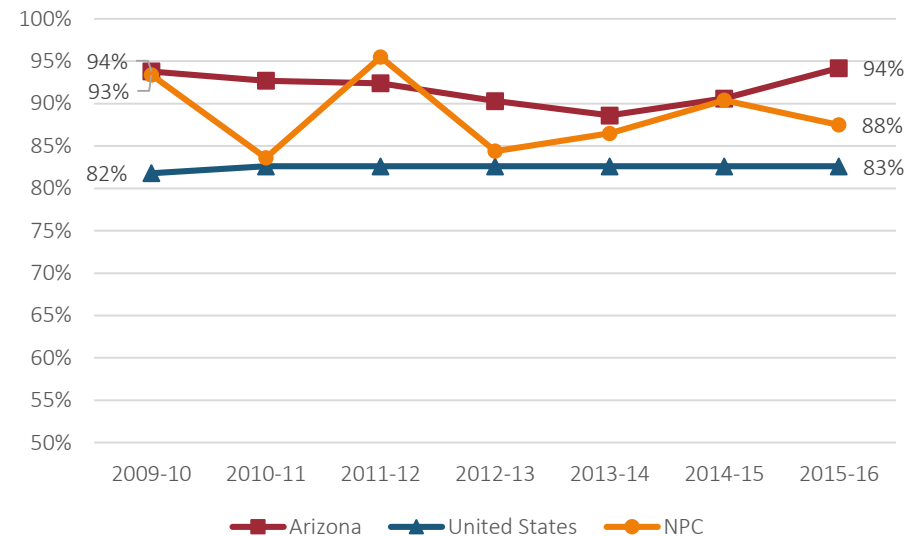
Metric 31:

FTSE Enrollment in Occupational Courses



FTSE enrollment in NPC's occupational courses was 861 in 2017-18. 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



Of all learners in NPC's 2015-16 Occupational Cohort who took a technical skill or end-of-program assessment up to one year after college exit, 88% 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 Northeastern Arizona requiring more than a High School Diploma but less than a Bachelor's Degree for which NPC offers Degree and/or Certificate Programs

- √ Medical Assistants
- √ Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
- √ Dental Assistants
- √ Nursing Assistants
- √ Dental Hygienists
- √ Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics
- √ Health Technologists and Technicians, All Other
- √ Respiratory Therapists
- √ Medical Records and Health Information Technicians
- √ Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technicians
- √ Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks
- √ Electrical and Electronics Engineering Technicians
- √ Chemical Technicians
- √ Radiologic Technologists
- √ Computer Network Support Specialists
- √ Computer User Support Specialists
- √ Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education
- √ Human Resources Assistants, Except Payroll and Timekeeping
- √ Library Technicians
- √ First-Line Supervisors of Fire Fighting and Prevention Workers
- √ Engineering Technicians, Except Drafters, All Other
- √ Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics
- √ Forest and Conservation Technicians
- √ Teacher Assistants
- √ Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers, Except Line Installers

Northland Pioneer College offers degree and/or certificate programs training workers for 44% (11 of 25) of the highest-demand occupations in the Northeastern region of the state.

¹U.S. Bureau of the Census. (2018). *American Community Survey, 2013-17 5-year estimates*. Washington, DC: Author.

²U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2018). *Digest of education statistics*. Washington, DC: Author.

³U.S. Bureau of the Census. (2018). *American Community Survey, 2013-17 5-year estimates*. Washington, DC: Author; U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2019). *College navigator*. Washington, DC: Author.

⁴Bailey, 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.

⁵National Community College Benchmark Project. (2018). *Report of national aggregate data*. Overland Park, KS: Author.

⁶Moore, 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.

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

⁸Kisker, 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.

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

¹⁰National 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.

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