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ARKANSAS DIVISION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

DR. MARIA MARKHAM
DIRECTOR

ALIGN ARKANSAS 2026

A targeted approach to 2030 goals

Attainment Goal

55% of adult Arkansans will possess a college credential by 2030*

*As determined by the 2030 census plus state estimates for certificates

Strategic Goals

1. Increase the total number of individuals with targeted credentials by 81,360 above typical production by 2026
2. Improve the affordability of higher education for Arkansans
3. Increase participation and attainment by underserved student groups by 5% annually
4. Increase regional credentials to align with targeted workforce demand

Executive Summary

Building on the successes and lessons of the Closing the Gap 2020 master plan, the Arkansas Division of Higher Education engaged think tanks from a cross-section of experts from within and beyond academia. The collaborative result is a highly targeted, tangible, and data informed plan to move our state to the next phase of post-secondary strategy.   By 2030, we aspire to increase the percentage of adult Arkansans with college credentials to 55%. We will take concrete steps to reach measurable outcomes in our new master plan: Align Arkansas 2026.

STRATEGIC GOAL #1

CREDENTIALS

INCREASE THE TOTAL NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WITH TARGETED CREDENTIALS BY 81,360 BY 2026

Increase the number of individuals with targeted credentials by 81,360 above typical production by 2026

1.1: 20,150 certificate holders in the fields of
- Nursing and nursing assistance 11,835
- Vehicle maintenance and repair 2,080
- Commercial truck driving 5,690*
- Health administration service 1,660
- Dental support services and allied professions 1,635
- HVACR 1,365
- Fire protection 930
- Allied health diagnostic, intervention, and treatment professions 360
- Precision metal working 165
- Graphic Communications 120

*There are known issues with the supply side of the supply/demand gap analysis for the Commercial Truck Driving occupational category. A significant portion of the supply is being met by private industry and those data are not available and are not included in the supply/demand gap analysis. An estimated supply target for Commercial Truck Driving for expansions by institutions is provided.

1.2: 6,565 associate degree holders in the fields of
- Teacher education and professional development 1,645
- Legal support service 1,050
- Dental support services and allied professions 605
- Allied health diagnostic, intervention, and treatment professions 580
- Allied health and medical assisting services 560
- Funeral service and mortuary science 425
- Clinical/medical laboratory science 410
- Computer programming, software and media applications 365
- Computer systems networking and telecommunications 355
- Physical science technologies 320
- Forestry 145
- Drafting/Design Engineering Technologies 105

1.3: 43,740 bachelor degree holders in the fields of
- Business commerce, administration, management, & operations 11,790
- Teacher education and professional development 5,630
- Human resources management and services 4,560
- Computer and information sciences 2,535
- Marketing 2,225
- Registered nursing, nursing admin, nursing research & clinical nursing 2,095

- · Finance and financial management services 1,935
- · Accounting and related services 1,915
- · Computer Science 1,575
- · Construction engineering technologies 1,285
- · Public health 1,220
- · Special education and teaching 1,100
- · Social work 1,000
- · Management sciences and quantitative methods 735
- · Design and applied arts 515
- · Public relations, advertising, and applied communication 510
- · Mental and social health services and allied professions 435
- · International business 375
- · Management information systems and services 365
- · Public administration 360
- · Construction management 320
- · Industrial engineering 290
- · Health and medical administrative services 285
- · Educational administration and supervision 265
- · Computer engineering 215
- · Clinical/medical laboratory science/research and allied professions 205

1.4: 2,375 master degree holders in the fields of

- · Social work 860
- · Registered nursing, nursing admin, nursing research and clinical nursing 610
- · Teacher education and professional development 355
- · Rehabilitation and therapeutic professions 325
- · Communication disorders sciences and services 225

1.5: 2,840 doctoral holders in the fields of

- · Public health 1,440
- · Law 325
- · Psychology 235
- · Pharmacy, pharmaceutical sciences, and administration 215
- · Teacher education and professional development 215
- · Rehabilitation and therapeutic professions 170
- · Linguistic, comparative, and related language studies and services 120
- · English language and literature 120

Strategy 1: Policy

A. Update the occupational supply/demand gaps presented here on an annual basis to ensure prompt responses to workforce demands.
   a. Collaborate with DIS/DWS to identify and update the lists of programs
   b. Develop a timeline for programs to remain on the list and potentially be removed. For example, if a program is on the list in 2020-2021, that program will remain on the list for 4 years.
   c. Communicate statewide and regional gaps to institutions of higher education for consideration to expand or create new offerings to meet workforce demands.

B. Identify degree/certificate programs to be developed in order to meet the identified supply/demand gaps.
   a. Expedite academic program approval process to allow institutions to quickly bring needed programs online.
   b. Support development through allocations of Regional Workforce Grant awards.

C. Collaborate with the Arkansas Division of Elementary and Secondary Education to graduate more students from high school ready for entry-level employment.
   a. Increase support for, and utilization of, quality career education through expansion of regional Secondary Career Centers.
      i. Conduct a state-wide comprehensive study of technical and vocational programs available at regional and secondary career centers and local high schools to evaluate efficiency in use of resources and reduce duplications.
      ii. Fast-track the completion of vocational and technical credentials at colleges and universities by creating streamlined pathways from high school-based vocational and technical programs directly into certificate credential programs at colleges and universities (i.e. new type of Apprenticeship)
      iii. Work with DESE to convene a K-12 and college vocational and technical leadership to review and ensure alignment of curriculums and programs.
   b. Expand Career Coach Program so every high school has a career coach affiliated with a public Arkansas college or university.

Strategy 2: Finance

A. Review financial aid processes and policies to allow for maximum participation.
   a. Ensure that Arkansas-sponsored scholarships for short-term programming allow for multiple application periods a year based on flexible term schedules rather than tying application periods to traditional semesters.
   b. Ensure all Arkansas-sponsored scholarships may be utilized for certificate of proficiency and technical certificate programs that fall under the ADHE supervision and program evaluation.
   c. Allow for a "quick app" process for short-term programs in which scholarships could be applied for just prior to the start of a term of a short credential program.
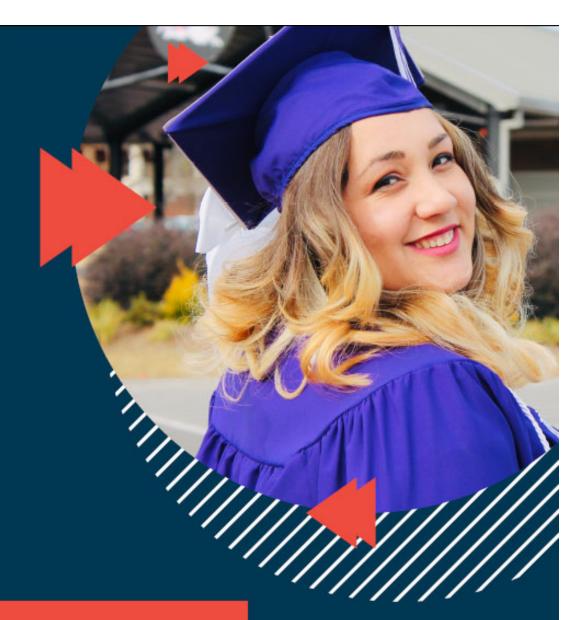   d. Work with the federal legislative delegation to make less than 1-year programs eligible for Pell grant funding.

B. Provide financial assistance for identified programs of study.
   a. Develop a supplemental funding strategy in addition to other state financial aid programs, to provide additional financial support for students in identified programs that would reduce the cost burden on these students and their families.

C. Provide financial assistance to assist with program start-up costs.
   a. Develop an annual continuing grant fund or a revolving 0% interest loan fund for institutions to seek financial support to cover start-up costs for programs.
   b. Develop policies for institutions to apply for funds, maximizing institutional coverage and participation.
   c. Support development through allocations of Regional Workforce Grant awards.

D. Provide dedicated funding for new capital projects, repair, and renovation at public 2- and 4-year institutions related to E&G facilities.
   a. Develop capital funding process through research of other states' efforts.
   b. Determine the need for and effectiveness of a state bond campaign to be voted on by the people to provide authorization to invest in capital construction to include repairs, rehabilitation, and critical maintenance.
   c. Through the biennial capital projects request process, develop a process to allocate funds on an annual basis to projects identified by institutions.

Strategy 3. Outreach

A. Develop a statewide marketing strategy for identified credential clusters that partners colleges and universities with industry.
   a. Identify industries that need workers in the clusters and convene statewide and regional meetings with the leadership and marketing departments to determine ways to share marketing costs and strategies.
   b. Partner with Arkansas Economic Development Commission (AEDC) and Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce to recruit industry to support state-wide advertising for these programs and jobs as well as assistance in determining what type of advertising/marking best targets workers who would be attracted to this field.

B. Develop a statewide program to re-attract Arkansas adults who attended college but do not have a postsecondary credential.
   a. Using data from National Student Clearinghouse, ADHE will determine the number of Arkansas students who began at an institution and stopped/dropped out and have not earned a credential elsewhere.
   b. Institutions will review the report of stop/drop outs to determine the extent of academic, financial, and/or policy reasons for not returning.
   c. Review academic policies at institutions to identify policy opportunities for grade forgiveness / academic fresh start and/or financial opportunities to forgive debt owed or provide financial incentives for returning.
   d. Review state's collection data of students who owe debts to colleges and universities and seek funding to provide scholarships to repay or forgive the debt so students can return to school.
   e. Develop direct and indirect marketing campaigns to re-attract adult learners.

C. Partner with high wage industries to attract students to identified supply/demand gap programs.
   a. Communicate ADHE Master Plan with industry partners.
   b. Invite industry representatives to hear about needs in AHECB meetings.
   c. Gather student quantitative data from recent graduates of gap programs regarding their wage expectations versus their actual wages upon graduation and share with state chamber and industry groups.
   d. Compare state wage data from gap programs in Arkansas to surrounding states and communicate with industry representatives and state chamber.
   e. Disaggregate state wage data to determine if the lack of competitive wages is at the entry level, and share with industry representatives and state chamber.
   f. Have a zoom meeting with the state chamber and ask recent graduates to share their perspectives with attendees.

ARKANSAS DIVISION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

STRATEGIC GOAL #2

AFFORDABILITY

IMPROVE THE AFFORDABILITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR ARKANSANS

Improve the affordability of higher education for Arkansans

Priority 1

Increased high school senior FAFSA completion to 80% by 2026

  Strategy 1: Training and Support-Provide on-the-ground training and support
  a. Partner with AASFAA and/or other non-profit groups used to help create a FAFSA help page on the ADHE website.   Can also include:
      i. Communication resources: automated phone/email messages for counselors, videos, lesson plans for counselors to utilize, family letters, promotional material (from step 6),
  b. Train state Library staff to help students apply for the FAFSA and host their own FAFSA nights, especially on weekends as some parents are not available during school nights when most FAFSA nights are held
  c. Peer-to-Peer programs:
      i. College level students assist high school students in completing the FAFSA; also have video of experience on FAFSA help page
      ii. Completer parents assist high school senior parents; also have video of experience on FAFSA help page
      iii. Peer lunch talks on school campus; have a peer representative for each school
      iv. Paid peer coaches or have interns from certain college classes
      v. Utilize EAST Initiative and have students create ideas for assistance

  Strategy 2: Awareness and Incentives- Spread awareness about the importance of FAFSA completion. Create incentives for local and regional implementation of completion strategies
  a. Build a marketing campaign with slogans, logos, and talking points for schools to use in communications with students and families. Have all partners buy-in on campaign.
  b. Completion challenges between high schools and colleges – FAFSA Challenge. Challenge can be used as a whole population or divided into target population groups such as, low-income, first-generation, or high schools that have historically seen low completion rates
  c. Partner with housing authority to mail information to families in public housing and possibly provide on-site support

  Strategy 3: Progress monitoring-Monitor and track goals that include representation across roles, agencies involved, and geography.
  a. Use data to target supports and transparently report progress.
  b. Provide analytical tool to all schools, colleges, and needed partners with real-time data

Priority 2

Launching need-based aid program with a target of $36 million in annual funds by 2026

Strategy 1: Academic Challenge Plus- Due to the supply of lottery proceeds exceeding current demand, and to focus funds where they can do the most good, ADHE proposes adding a section to the existing Lottery Scholarship code that creates a sliding scale adjustments (Academic Challenge Plus) to the awards of students demonstrating need.

      a. Students would still be required to meet the current eligibility requirements to receive the base award amount

      b. Plus awards would then be determined based on the students' unmet need. (as determined by FAFSA)

      c. Plus awards would be granted in increments of $1,000 with a maximum of $5,000 per academic year

      d. Plus would be prioritized ahead of new programs as it will be an addition to the existing Challenge grant and not a new grant program

      e. Language will be included in the statute to limit awards as funds are available

      f. No fiscal impact to general revenue as all funds will come from lottery proceeds

*The bill to establish the Academic Challenge Plus failed during the regular session of the 93rd General Assembly of 2021. ADHE commits to revive efforts to develop a needs-based aid program in future legislative sessions.

ARKANSAS DIVISION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

STRATEGIC GOAL #3

EQUITY

INCREASE PARTICIPATION AND ATTAINMENT BY UNDERSERVED STUDENT GROUPS BY 5% ANNUALLY

Increase participation and credential attainment of the following groups based on historical baselines

3.1 Underserved Minorities

Starting from the baseline of **38,127 underserved minority students enrolled** in Fall 2019, it is projected that a **5%** annual increase in participation of underserved minority students would progressively grow the participation to **51,093** by 2026 and would result in an estimated increase of **11,980** credentials among this group by 2026.

3.2 Low Income

As defined as students receiving a Federal Pell Grant, starting from the baseline of **56,051** participants Academic Year 2020, it is projected that an annual increase in attainment of 5% would progressively grow the participation to **75,113** by 2026 and would result in an estimated increase of **17,601** credentials among this group by 2026.

3.3. Adults

Adult participation in higher education is expected to result in an annual increase of 5% in undergraduate credential attainment from the baseline of **24,301** participants in Fall 2019 and **12,472** credentials awarded in Academic Year 2020 to **32,566** participants and **16,714** credentials in Academic Year 2026. This would result in an overall increase of **14,244** credentials annually among Arkansans ages 25-45 by 2026.

3.4 Rural

Starting from the baseline of 1,116 students in Fall 2019, it is projected that an annual increase in participation of 5%, would progressively grow the four-year historical average of **1496** students by 2026**.** This would result in a total increase of **1028** credentials among this group by 2026.

3.5 First-Generation*

This populations college participation and workforce training is expected to increase annually at a rate of 5% from the four-year average of # in 2020.

3.6 Re-entry*

Starting from the baseline of **#%** in 2019, it is projected that an annual increase in participation of 5%, would progressively grow the four-year historical average of **#%.** This would result in an increase of **#** credentials among this group in high-demand fields by 2026.

3.7 Former foster youth*

As defined by the Arkansas Department of Human Services (DHS), -Arkansas Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program. The baseline for former foster youth that participated in college in 2019 was **#%** . It is projected that an annual increase in attainment of 5% would progressively grow the four-year historical average of **#%** and would result in an increase of **#** credentials among this group by 2026.

*Must first establish baseline

Strategy 1: Culture and Awareness- Create an active culture of diversity, equity and inclusion that promotes representation, diverse networks, and understanding of marginalized student experiences.

    a. Establish opportunities of awareness in the K-12 pipeline that connect students of color to resources and increase the matriculation rate to career paths and systems of support in preparation for college.

    b. Identify, attract, and retain a diverse teacher and staff population that is reflective of the marginalized student population.
- Create and promote grow-your-own opportunities that advance staff into teacher and administrator positions with the goal of matching the demographics of the student population and/or availability in the applicable availability pool.

    c. Embed intentional representation of underrepresented student populations in the college admissions process by unitizing student ambassadors.
- Diversify networks that have access to underrepresented students by developing and enhancing community based and alumni recruitment partnerships.

    d. Incorporate student recruitment strategies and processes to eliminate conscious and implicit bias and practices to recruit diverse students from historically underrepresented communities.
- Provide diversity, equity, and inclusion training to admissions staff and college student ambassadors that create awareness and emotional intelligence towards underrepresented student experiences.
- Establish a process by which minoritized students are connected to the appropriate student support services during the recruitment process.

    e. Create an equitable curriculum that exposes every student to the diversity represented in the state of Arkansas.
- Incorporate and welcome opportunities for dialogue of lived experiences of all underrepresented students.
- Implement pedagogical tactics that enhance engagement and allow underrepresented students to see the possibilities for their success.
- Develop opportunities to promote the Arkansas Teacher Cadet programs that motivate underrepresented students to consider education as a career during recruitment and matriculation.

Strategy 2: Recruit and Retain- Create and sustain a diverse, inclusive, and equitable campus environment that will lead to the retention of diverse faculty and staff, increase the graduation rates for underrepresented students, and identify and eliminate biases that impact the retention of these populations. Create a more diverse undergraduate and graduate student body, faculty, and staff with the goal of creating a campus that is accessible and equitable for underrepresented populations.

    a. Communicate a clear and convincing message that incorporates diverse student recruitment and retention strategies that can be linked to the academic mission.
- Develop, strengthen, and expand diversity councils and the leadership roles they play in the recruitment and retention goals of the institution.
- Promote targeted outreach programs for underrepresented populations.
- Build on existing events that expand on efforts that support and provide resources to address the lived experiences of underrepresented students.

b. Strengthen the university infrastructure to promote an environment of inclusion and accessibility.
- Develop, reinforce, and expand diversity councils and the leadership roles they play in the recruitment and retention goals of the institution.
- Create intentional connections that bring people together with the purpose of creating an environment where people feel they belong.

c. Identify barriers (financial, cultural, climatic, academic, social, etc.) that hinder the academic process and success of underrepresented students.

d. Student Focus:
- Develop a student exit survey to ensure alignment with university mission to identify issues and opportunities for improvement.
- Increase student awareness of and participation in available services and resources
- Review, identify, and amend policies and procedures that create barriers to equitable distribution of financial aid and grants.
- Enhance strategies to recruit and connect students with faculty and alumni mentors to graduate school programs and initiatives.
- Create opportunities for underrepresented students to connect with internship and employment opportunities via networking and professional conferences.
- Promote inclusive excellence through campus and community partnerships that provide students to the access of professionals aligned with their educational and professional goals.
- Review, identity, and amend policies and procedures that create barriers to success or potential inequities for underrepresented groups.
- Establish opportunities to engage in purposeful storytelling. This will allow others to hear and dissolve bias and understand aspects of barriers experienced by underrepresented populations that otherwise may not be known.

e. Faculty and Staff Focus:
- Establish resource and mentorship groups that focus on the interests of the underrepresented.
- Promote hiring practices that support training on implicit bias for faculty and staff participating in search committees. Conduct exit interviews with all departing faculty and staff as well as "stay" interviews to increase understanding of the factors that influence employment decisions. This will assist in efforts to recruit and retain faculty and staff members.
- Review, identity, and amend policies and procedures that create barriers to success or potential inequities for underrepresented groups.
- Explore ways to use events that attract diverse scholars to campus as opportunities to recruit prospective faculty and staff to campus.

STRATEGIC GOAL #4

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

INCREASE REGIONAL CREDENTIALS TO MATCH TARGETED WORKFORCE DEMAND

Align higher education credentials to regional workforce demand as follows*:

4.1 Central Region Gap: 7,320 additional graduates above typical production

Below Associate
47.06	Vehicle maintenance and repair technologies	865
51.39	Licensed practical/vocational nurse training	570
47.02	HVACR	535
51.07	Medical office assistant/specialist	325
51.06	Dental assisting/assistant	135

Associate
51.38	Registered nursing	410**
13.12	Early childhood education and teaching	315

Bachelor
52.01	Business/commerce, general	910
52.02	Business administration and management, general	615
13.12	Teacher education and professional development, specific levels	505
13.13	Teacher education and professional development, specific subjects	490
52.10	Human resources management and services	425
51.38	Registered nursing	410**
11.07	Computer science	360
52.07	Entrepreneurship/entrepreneurial studies	205
52.14	Marketing/marketing management, general	150
52.03	Accounting	115
51.15	Substance abuse/addiction counseling	105
13.10	Special education and teaching, general	85
52.08	Finance, general	35
44.04	Public Administration	20
51.10	Clinical laboratory science/medical technology/technologist	20
52.11	International business/trade/commerce	5

Master
13.05	Educational/instructional technology	120

4.2 Little Rock Region Gap: 10,580 additional graduates above typical production

Associate
51.38	Registered Nursing	885**
11.02	Computer programming/programmer, general	275
51.06	Dental Hygiene	80
51.09	Medical radiologic technology/science - radiation therapist	60

Bachelor

52.02	Business administration and management, general	2,980
52.08	Finance, General	1,045
51.38	Registered Nursing	885**
52.03	Accounting and related services	885
52.14	Marketing/marketing management, general	775
11.01	Computer and information sciences, general	670
11.07	Computer science	545
13.12	Teacher education and professional development, specific levels	515
51.22	Public health	395
52.13	Management science	300
44.07	Social work	185
15.10	Construction engineering technology/technician	175
51.07	Health information/medical records administration/administrator	130
13.13	Teacher education and professional development, specific subjects	125
13.10	Special education and teaching	75
52.11	International business/trade/commerce	70
44.04	Public Administration	10
13.04	Educational leadership and administration, general	5

Master

13.05	Educational/instructional technology	130
13.04	Educational leadership and administration, general	115
51.02	Audiology/audiologist and speech-language pathology/pathologist	80

Doctoral

51.23	Physical therapy/therapist	55
13.13	Teacher education and professional development, specific subjects	15

4.3 Northwest Region Gap: 14,700 additional graduates above typical production

Below Associate

51.39	Nursing assistant/aide and patient care assistant/aide	1,140
51.39	Licensed practical/vocational nurse training	870
51.07	Health and medical administrative services	570
47.06	Automobile/automotive mechanics technology/technician	470
51.06	Dental support services and allied professions	410
47.02	HVACR	405
51.09	Surgical technology/technologist	85
43.02	Fire services administration	50

Associate

13.12	Early childhood education and teaching	480
22.03	Legal assistant/paralegal	285
51.09	Medical radiologic technology/science - radiation therapist	105
51.08	Physical therapy technician/assistant	85
51.10	Clinical/medical laboratory technician	40
12.03	Funeral service and mortuary science, general	15
15.13	Drafting and design technology/technician, general	10

Bachelor

52.02	Business administration, management and operations	2,565
11.07	Computer science	1,085
11.01	Computer and information sciences, general	860
13.12	Elementary education and teaching	840
52.01	Business/commerce, general	735
13.13	Teacher education and professional development, specific subjects	645
52.13	Management science	305
52.12	Management information systems, general	290
14.09	Computer engineering	270
52.10	Human resources development	270
52.14	Marketing	245
50.04	Design and applied arts	230
52.20	Construction management	220
23.01	English language and literature, general	205
13.10	Special education and teaching	200
52.11	International business/trade/commerce	170
52.03	Accounting and related services	120
44.07	Social work	70

Master

13.11	Counselor education/school counseling and guidance services	155
13.04	Educational administration and supervision	80
51.02	Audiology/audiologist and speech-language pathology/pathologist	60

Doctoral

51.22	Public health education and promotion	50
42.01	Psychology, general	10

4.4 North Central Region Gap: 1,840 additional graduates above typical production

Below Associate

51.39	Nursing assistant/aide and patient care assistant/aide	140
47.06	Automobile/automotive mechanics technology/technician	100

Associate

51.38	Registered Nursing	265**
13.12	Early childhood education and teaching	45
11.02	Computer programming/programmer, general	10
51.10	Clinical/medical laboratory technician	5

Bachelor

52.02	Business Administration	420
51.38	Registered Nursing	265**
13.12	Teacher education and professional development, specific levels	235
51.07	Health/health care administration/management	145
13.13	Teacher education and professional development, specific subjects	140
52.11	International business/trade/commerce	130
13.10	Special education and teaching, general	85
52.08	Finance, general	35
44.04	Public administration	25

Master

13.03	Curriculum & Instruction	60

4.5 NorthEast Region Gap: 3.675 additional graduates above typical production

Below Associate

51.39	Nursing assistant/aide and patient care assistant/aide	835
51.39	Licensed practical/vocational nurse training	385
51.07	Health and medical administrative services	235
47.06	Automobile/automotive mechanics technology/technician	205
47.02	HVACR	190
51.06	Dental assisting/assistant	120

Associate

13.12	Early childhood education	240

Bachelor

52.02	Business administration and management, general	715
13.12	Teacher education and professional development, specific levels	465
51.38	Nursing administration	155
13.13	Teacher education and professional development, specific subjects	75
52.03	Accounting	35
52.11	International business/trade/commerce	10

Master

51.23	Vocational rehabilitation counseling/counselor	10

4.6 East Region Gap: 180 additional graduates above typical production

Below Associate
    51.39 Nursing assistant/aide and patient care assistant/aide 140
    51.39 Licensed practical/vocational nurse training 35

Associate
    13.12 Early childhood education and teaching 5

4.7 Southeast Region Gap: 1,960 additional graduates beyond typical productions

Below Associate
    51.39 Licensed practical/vocational nurse training 355
    51.39 Nursing assistant/aide and patient care assistant/aide 305
    47.06 Automobile/automotive mechanics technology/technician 120
    47.02 HVACR 55
    51.07 Health and medical administrative services 50

Associate
    51.38 Registered nursing 200**
    03.05 Forest technology/technician 35

Bachelor
    52.02 Business administration and management, general 555
    51.38 Registered nursing 200**
    13.13 Teacher education and professional development, specific subjects 130
    44.07 Social work 50
    52.03 Accounting 30
    13.12 Teacher education and professional development, specific levels 15

Master
    13.04 Educational leadership and administration, general 60

4.8 West Central Region Gap: 1,955 additional graduates beyond typical production

Below Associate
    51.39 Nursing assistant/aide and patient care assistant/aide 690
    51.10 Phlebotomy technician/phlebotomist 30
    51.07 Health and medical administrative services 25
    47.06 Airframe mechanics and aircraft maintenance technology/technician 5

Associate
    13.12 Early childhood education and teaching 175
    51.10 Clinical/medical laboratory technician 25

Bachelor

52.02	Business administration and management, general	290
52.08	Finance, general	170
52.01	Business/commerce, general	125
13.10	Special education and teaching	125
51.07	Health information/medical records administration/administrator	65
13.13	Teacher education and professional development, specific subjects	60
44.04	Public administration	50
44.07	Social work	35
51.10	Clinical laboratory/medical technology/technologist	25
11.01	Computer and information sciences, general	20
52.14	Marketing	20
52.12	Management information systems, general	20

4.9 Southwest Region Gap: 2,200 additional graduates above typical production

Below Associate

51.39	Nursing assistant/aide and patient care assistant/aide	535
47.06	Automobile/automotive mechanics technology/technician	75
51.07	Medical insurance coding specialist/coder	15
43.02	Fire services administration	5

Associate

51.38	Registered Nursing	150**
13.12	Early childhood education and teaching	55
12.03	Funeral service and mortuary science, general	15

Bachelor

52.01	Business/commerce, general	610
13.13	Teacher education and professional development, specific subjects	295
51.38	Registered Nursing	150**
13.12	Junior high/intermediate/middle school education and teaching	115
52.03	Accounting	105
13.10	Special education and teaching, general	85
51.22	Public health	80
44.07	Social work	55

Doctoral

13.04	Educational leadership and administration, general	5

4.10 West Gap Region: 3,180 additional graduates above typical production

Below Associate

51.39	Nursing assistant/aide and patient care assistant/aide	1,085

51.39	Licensed practical/vocational nurse training	465
47.06	Automobile/automotive mechanics technology/technician	150
48.05	Tool and die technology/technician	10

Associate
51.38	Registered Nursing	275**
13.12	Early childhood education and teaching	60
22.03	Legal assistant/paralegal	35

Bachelor
52.02	Business administration and management, general	465
13.12	Teacher education and professional development, specific levels	325
51.38	Registered Nursing	275**
13.13	Teacher education and professional development, specific subjects	180
44.07	Social work	120
50.04	Graphic design	10

4.11 Regionally Unallocated Gap: 33,770 additional graduates above typical production

Below Associate
51.39	Nursing assistant/aide and patient care assistant/aide	4,870
51.39	Licensed practical nursing/vocational nurse training	2,680
51.06	Dental assisting/assistant	970
43.02	Fire Protection	875
51.07	Health and medical administrative services	440
51.09	Allied health, diagnostic, intervention, and treatment professions	275
47.02	HVACR	180
48.05	Precision metal working	155
10.03	Graphic communications	120
47.06	Vehicle maintenance and repair technologies	90

Associate
22.03	Legal support services	730
51.06	Dental support services and allied professions	525
51.08	Allied health and medical assisting services	475
51.09	Allied health diagnostic, intervention, and treatment professions	475
12.03	Funeral service and mortuary science	395
11.09	Computer systems networking and telecommunications	355
51.10	Clinical/medical laboratory science/research and allied professions	340
41.03	Physical science technologies/technicians	320
13.12	Teacher education and professional development, specific levels	270
11.08	Computer software and media applications	215
03.05	Forestry	110
15.13	Drafting/design engineering technologies/technicians	95

Bachelor

52.10	Human resources management and services	3,865
15.10	Construction engineering technologies	1,110
52.14	Marketing	1,035
11.01	Computer and information sciences, general	985
51.22	Public health	745
52.02	Business administration, management and operations	660
52.08	Finance and financial management services	650
52.03	Accounting and related services	625
09.09	Public relations, advertising, and applied communication	510
44.07	Social work	485
13.10	Special education and teaching	445
13.13	Teacher education and professional development, specific subjects	425
51.15	Mental and social health services and allied professions	330
14.35	Industrial engineering	290
51.07	Health and medical administrative services	285
50.04	Design and applied arts	275
13.04	Educational administration and supervision	260
44.04	Public administration	255
51.10	Clinical/medical laboratory science/research and allied professions	160
52.01	Business/commerce, general	145
52.13	Management sciences and quantitative methods	130
52.20	Construction management	100
52.12	Management Information Systems and Services	55
13.12	Teacher education and professional development, specific levels	50

Master

44.07	Social work	860
51.38	Reg. nursing, nursing admin, nursing research and clinical nursing	610
13.13	Teacher education and professional development, specific subjects	355
51.23	Rehabilitation and therapeutic professions	315
51.02	Communication disorders sciences and services	85

Doctoral

51.22	Public health	1,390
22.01	Law	325
42.01	Psychology, general	225
51.20	Pharmacy, pharmaceutical sciences, and administration	215
13.13	Teacher education and professional development, specific subjects	200
16.01	Linguistic, comparative, and related studies and services	120
23.01	English language and literature, general	120
51.23	Rehabilitation and therapeutic professions	115

*There are known issues with the supply side of the supply/demand gap analysis for the Commercial Truck Driving occupational category. A significant portion of the supply is being met by private industry and those data are not available and are not included in the supply/demand gap analysis by region. However, demand is high for this occupational category and institutions are expected to continue expansion in this area.

** Registered nursing targets can be satisfied at either the associate or bachelor level for licensure.

Strategy 1: Orient leaders toward a shared strategic vision

    a. **Future of Work Taskforce**: The State convenes stakeholders from state agencies, education, economic development, and business & industry dedicated to ongoing conversations regarding the future of work and the impact on Arkansas.

    b. **Collaboration among the various workforce stakeholders**: Higher education, K-12, state and regional workforce agencies, chambers of commerce, and employer associations should work together towards a shared vision of workforce development that maximizes all available resources to achieve common goals.

Strategy 2: Create an integrated state data infrastructure

    a. **Longitudinal state data system.** Arkansas needs a thorough, integrated data system that connects state and border state education, employment, and social services data. Such a framework would inform comprehensive state-level planning to connect policy and funding priorities with economic development strategies, education and training priorities, and talent pipeline outreach and support.

    b. **Inventory of non-degree training programs.** A searchable inventory of non-degree training opportunities would benefit Arkansans seeking additional skills and employers seeking training for incumbent workers. Additionally, a comprehensive inventory would inform state leaders whether existing opportunities align with state priorities. ADHE, through partnership with ACC, will develop, fund, and publicize inventory.

    c. **Evaluate employment and wage outcomes for non-degree and degree training completers.** Industry and college credentials should be evaluated based on employment and wage outcomes. A minimum threshold should be established for length and quality of credentials included in this measurement to ensure that employment and wage changes are a result of the credentials. This data would aid students in evaluating the return on their educational investment, and it would aid the state in prioritizing policies and funding around education and training investments. A policy should be developed by the state should use the definition of High Quality Credential.

    a. **Stackable micro-credentials**. Arkansas should convene community colleges to create a system of stackable micro-credentials that aligns with business and industry needs. Seek grants to fund work that will provide support for staff time, meetings, and consultants.

    b. **Develop a repository for individual credential attainment –** A pilot project is underway by IBM to develop a secure, student-owned Interoperable Learning Record (ILR) to translate a worker's full education, skills-based training and work experience to a record of transferable skills that will open doors to opportunity. ADHE, in partnership with IHEs, lead work to create an ILR.

MORE INFORMATION

DEFINITIONS & TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Definitions

Credential - Credentials include all credit-bearing credentials as recognized by the Arkansas Division of Higher Education. This includes Basic Certificates, Technical Certificates, Vocational Diplomas, Associate Degrees, Advanced Certificates, Baccalaureate Degrees, Post-Baccalaureate Degrees, Master's Degrees, Post-Master/Specialist Degrees, and Doctoral Degrees. Not included are non-credit credentials even if that non-credit credential results in eligibility for a state or nationally recognized license or certification.

Participation - For the purpose of this plan, participation means enrollment resulting in course registration. For a student to be counted as a participant in higher education they must be included in census day reporting of student data to the Arkansas Division of Higher Education.

Targeted Credential - Credentials with ADHE approved CIP Codes and degree levels designated as high demand for the state of Arkansas and/or regionally within this plan. See the Credential Goal Details for the specific CIP Codes included.

Underserved Minority - A student who identifies as either Black/African American or Hispanic. If a student identifies as two or more races, the student will be considered an underserved minority if any race identified is Black/African American or Hispanic.

Low Income - A student who receives more than $0 in Pell grant.

Adults - A student between the ages of 25 and 54 at the beginning of the Fall term being measured.

First Generation - An individual both of whose parents did not complete a baccalaureate degree; or in the case of any who regularly resided with and received support from only one parent, an individual whose only such parent did not complete a baccalaureate degree.

Rural - Students will be identified as rural in two ways. Traditional students, up to age age 24, will be determined as Rural based upon their graduated high school. Non-traditional students, age 25 and above, will be determined as Rural based upon their County of Origin. High Schools will be determined to be Rural for traditional students if the high school has a Locale of "Rural: Remote" in the National Center for Educational Statistics Common Core of Data (https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/). Arkansas Counties will be determined as Rural for non-traditional students if the county is identified as "Completely Rural" by the US Census (https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/geography/guidance/geo-areas/urban-rural.html) County Classification.

Re-entry - A student who at any time has been previously incarcerated in a state or federal prison. This does not include students who have been held in a city or county jail. There is not time limit on when the student was incarcerated.

Former Foster Youth - An individual who was in foster care for one day after their 13th birthday and can provide documentation of their foster care status, as defined by the Free Application For Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

Central Region - Institutions included in the Central Region: Central Baptist College, Hendrix College, Shorter College, University of Arkansas Pulaski Technical College, University of Central Arkansas

Little Rock Region - Institutions included in the Little Rock Region: Arkansas Baptist College, Baptist Health College Little Rock, Philander Smith College, University of Arkansas Little Rock, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences

Northwest Region - Institutions included in the Northwest Region: Arkansas State University Mountain Home, Ecclesia College, John Brown University, North Arkansas College, Northwest Arkansas Community College, Northwest Technical Institute, University of Arkansas Fayetteville

North Central Region - Institutions included in the North Central Region: Arkansas State University Beebe, Arkansas State University Newport, Harding University, Lyon College, Ozarka College, University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville

Northeast Region - Institutions included in the Northeast Region: Arkansas Northeastern College, Arkansas State University Jonesboro, Black River Technical College, Crowley's Ridge College, Williams Baptist University

East Region - Institutions included in the East Region: Arkansas State University Mid-South, East Arkansas Community College, Phillips County Community College of the University of Arkansas

Southeast Region - Institutions included in the Southeast Region: Jefferson Regional Medical Center, Southeast Arkansas College, University of Arkansas Monticello, University of Arkansas Pine Bluff

West Central Region - Institutions included in the West Central Region: Arkansas State University Three Rivers, Arkansas Tech University, Champion Christian College, Henderson State University, National Park College, Ouachita Baptist University, University of Arkansas Community College Morrilton, University of the Ozarks

Southwest Region - Institutions included in the Southwest Region: Cossatot Community College of the University of Arkansas, South Arkansas Community College, Southern Arkansas University Magnolia, Southern Arkansas University Tech, University of Arkansas Hope-Texarkana

West Region - Institutions included in the West Region: Arkansas Colleges of Health Education, University of Arkansas Community College Rich Mountain, University of Arkansas Fort Smith

External Funding for Research and Development - Funding used for research and development by an institution that is obtained through grants, gifts, partnerships, and other sources not including state general revenue.

Entry-Level Employment Ready - As defined by ACT, (https://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/Work-Readiness-Standards-and-Benchmarks.pdf) "A 'work ready' individual possesses the foundational skills needed to be minimally qualified for a specific occupation as determined through a job analysis or occupational profile." An entry-level employment ready student has graduated from high school with basic cognitive and soft-skills needed to be successful in an entry-level position in the workforce.

Career Training - Post-high school career training includes credit and non-credit training providing students with required skills to enter into a targeted career field. For the purpose of this plan the training must be associated with either credit hours or non-credit CEUs reported to ADHE.

Data Baselines

Baseline data is based on Academic Year 2020 (July 1st, 2019 - June 30th, 2020).

Total Credentials Awarded: 48,142

Credentials by Targeted CIP:

CIP	Description	Below Associate	Associate	Bachelor	Master	Doctoral
	AY2020 Credentials Awarded in Targeted CIPs					
	Blank cells indicate CIP not targeted at that credential level					
03.05	Forestry		14			
09.09	Public relations, advertising, and applied communication			103		
10.03	Graphic Communications	3				
11.01	Computer and information sciences			276		
11.02, 11.08	Computer programming, software & media applications		49			
11.07	Computer Science			130		
11.09	Computer systems networking and telecommunications		27			
12.03	Funeral service and mortuary science		23			
13.04	Educational administration and supervision			1		
13.10	Special education and teaching			59		
13.12	Teacher education and professional development		316			
13.12, 13.13	Teacher education and professional development			1,097		
13.13	Teacher education and professional development				282	1
14.09	Computer engineering			32		
14.35	Industrial engineering			68		
15.10	Construction engineering technologies			25		
15.13	Drafting/Design Engineering Technologies		28			
16.01	Linguistic, comparative, related lang studies & services					5
22.01	Law					218
22.03	Legal support service		21			
23.01	English language and literature					8
41.03	Physical science technologies		8			
42.01	Psychology					11
43.02	Fire protection	85				
44.04	Public administration			16		
44.07	Social work			253	167	
47.02	HVACR	201				
47.06	Vehicle maintenance and repair	831				
48.05	Precision metal working	1,393				
50.04	Design and applied arts			185		
51.02	Communication disorders sciences and services				137	
51.06	Dental support services and allied professions	52	0			
51.07	Health and medical administrative services	622		25		
51.08	Allied health and medical assisting services		178			
51.09	Allied health diagnostic, intervention, & treatment prof	579	279			
51.10	Clinical/medical lab science/research and allied prof		32	56		
51.15	Mental and social health services and allied professions			65		
51.20	Pharmacy, pharmaceutical sciences, and administration					165
51.22	Public health			135		10
51.23	Rehabilitation and therapeutic professions				32	172
51.38	Reg nursing, nursing admin, research & clinical nursing			1,336	287	
51.39	Nursing and nursing assistance	1,828				

AY2020 Credentials Awarded in Targeted CIPs						
Blank cells indicate CIP not targeted at that credential level						
CIP	Description	Below Associate	Associate	Bachelor	Master	Doctoral
52.02, 52.01	Business commerce, admin, management, & operations			1,437		
52.03	Accounting and related services			477		
52.08	Finance and financial management services			524		
52.10	Human resources management and services			26		
52.11	International business			85		
52.12	Management information systems and services			46		
52.13	Management sciences and quantitative methods			130		
52.14	Marketing			498		
52.20	Construction management			18		

FAFSA Completion:

As of April 2nd, 2021, for the Class of 2021		
Completion Rate: 40.43%	Applications Submitted: 14,157	Applications Completed: 13,312

Underserved Minority Participants:

Students Identifying as an Underserved Minority	
Academic Year 2020, Term 1	
Hispanic	11,506
Black or African American	26,324
Both Hispanic & Black or African American	297

Low Income Participants:

Students Receiving Greater than $0 in Pell Grant by Institution Type	
Academic Year 2020	
Public, 4-Year Universities	30,696
Public, 2-Year Colleges	23,711
Private, Nursing, and Vocational Colleges	1,644

Adult Participants:

Undergraduate Students Ages 25-54	
Academic Year 2020, Term 1	
Undergraduate Class	24,301

First Generation Participants - Baseline data to be pulled at the completion of AY2023 Fall Term Reporting

Rural Participants:

Rural Participants	
Academic Year 2020, Term 1	
Traditional Students (up to Age 24)	1,088
Non-Traditional Students (Age25+)	28

Re-entry Participants: Baseline data to be pulled at the completion of AY2022 through a datamatch with Arkansas Ready For Life

Former Foster Youth Participants: Baseline data to be pulled at the completion of AY2022 through a datamatch with Arkansas Ready for Life

Calculation Methodologies

Credentials Supply/Demand Gap: Credentials will be counted by CIP Code and degree level for all public and private colleges reporting to ADHE. The baseline was established using AY2018-AY2020 data from the AHEIS Graduated Student Table. This data was aggregated by 4-digit CIP and compared to workforce demand using the Arkansas State Longitudinal Data System. The gap was identified as the workforce need (anticipated job openings) over five years minus the anticipated credential output based upon the AY2018-AY2020 data. The Credential Demand Gap is calculated statewide including credentials data from all institutions reporting to ADHE, both public and private.

Workforce Supply/Demand Gap: Using the same datamatch described in the Credentials Supply/Demand Gap, Workforce Demand is then broken down into regions of the state to identify credential areas of need for each region. Because some high demand fields are in high demand for the entire state but not for a specific region, a non-region specific statewide high demand category has been added to the list of regions. This statewide category captures the credentials that have a demand gap for the state as a whole, but do not show enough demand when broken down at the regional level.

FAFSA Completion: Baseline and current progress for FAFSA completion will be based on reports from https://national.fafsatracker.com. Comparison date for year to year increases will be based on completion by April 1st of each year.

Equity: Baselines and goals for the categories of Underserved minorities, low income, adults, and rural students will be established using the Arkansas Higher Education Information System. First Generation College Student status will be added to the AHEIS system in AY2022 so that measurement and tracking of this data may begin in AY2023. Baselines and goals for the categories of Re-entry and former foster youth will be obtained once a determination is made on the best method for measurement.

Underserved Minority Participants: Using the AHEIS Student Table, find the unduplicated headcount of all students with Hispanic=Yes OR Black/African American=Yes for the Fall On-Schedule Term of the academic year being measured. This should include students of all levels: high school, undergraduate, and graduate levels. It will also include students from both public and private institutions.

Low Income Participants: Using the AHEIS Student Financial Aid Table, find the unduplicated headcount by institution type of all students reported as receiving Pell Grant (fund code = USPELL) greater than $0 in the academic year being measured. This should include all public and private institutions reporting. It should be noted that private institutions only report Pell Grant for students who also receive state aid. Therefore, the headcount of low income participants at private institutions is assumed to be lower than actual.

Adult Participants: Using the AHEIS Student Table, find the unduplicated headcount of all undergraduate students who were ages 25-54 at the beginning of the Fall On-Schedule Term of the academic year being measured. This should include all public and private institutions. It should not include high school or graduate level students.

First-Generation Participants: Using the AHEIS Student Table, find the unduplicated headcount of all undergraduate students who were reported as a First Generation College Student for the Fall On-Schedule Term of the academic year being measured. This should include all public institutions. It

should not include high school or graduate level students. It should be noted that First Generation status is not currently reported to ADHE. This status will be added as an optional reporting component for the AY2022 year and will become mandatory for AY2023. Therefore a baseline will not be established until the completion of AY2023, Fall Term reporting.

Rural Participant: Using the AHEIS Student Table, find the unduplicated headcount of all first-time entering undergraduate students for the Fall On-Schedule Term of the academic year being measured. This should include all public and private institutions. Based upon the age of the student (see definition of Rural Participant above), the graduated High School Code or the County of Origin for all Arkansas residents will be used to determine if the student is Rural: Remote (HS Code) or Completely Rural (County of Origin). This measure will not include students attending while in high school or graduate level students.