

education   
**FORWARD**  
arizona



# Our Mission

To advocate for high-quality education and training that aligns with career and workforce opportunities to advance the quality of life for all Arizonans.

## We Work in Three Main Areas



**Voice**



**Policy**



**Programs**

# Achieve60AZ Attainment Goal “The North Star”



**Goal:** 60% working-age adults holding credentials by 2030.

Today, the state's rate is 50%.

# Education Progress Meter



### QUALITY EARLY LEARNING

Percent of Arizona 3- and 4-year old children that are in quality early learning settings.



### THIRD GRADE READING

Percent of Arizona 3rd grade students who scored Proficient or Highly Proficient on the Arizona Academic Standards Assessment (AASA) 3rd grade English language arts assessment.



### EIGHTH GRADE MATH

Percent of Arizona 8th grade students who are prepared to be successful in high school math.



### HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

Percent of Arizona high school students graduating in 4 years.



### OPPORTUNITY YOUTH

Percent of 16-24 year olds in Arizona that are NOT going to school or working.



### POST-HIGH SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

Percent of high school graduates enrolled in postsecondary education the year after graduating high school.



### ATTAINMENT

Percent of Arizona residents 25-64 years of age who have completed a 2- or 4-year degree or who have an active professional certificate or license.



# 2026 AZ Legislative Session – Advocacy Priorities



100 DAYS AND COUNTING.....



THIS LEGISLATIVE SESSION - MOST  
BILLS FILED IN ONE SESSION



# 2026 AZ Legislative Session – Advocacy Priorities

We track bills that impact students related to education at all levels P-20

Some bills we were watching (not all):

- SB1210 – Private post-secondary rules
- SB1423 – Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE)
- HB2255 – Teachers Academy CC expansion to 4 years
- HB2423 – Middle School Math Advanced Courses
- HB2764 – Computer Science Seal of Literacy
- HB2248 – Medical interventions prohibition (opposed)
- SB1798 – FAFSA
- HB2838 – Education and workforce innovation
- HB2239 – Childcare Infrastructure
- HB4032 – FTF vapor tax

Encourage RTS engagement (can help folks get signed up)

We sign in for and against bills

Send out advocacy alerts

Have a call to action asking advocates to contact their elected officials

Encourage local advocacy through sharing information with friends, families, neighbors

Always make the connection to education and workforce

What's on the horizon?

- Prop 123 – What's happening?
- AZ Budget
- Federal Pell Grant Shortfall
- Head Start, Gear Up, TRIO

# How do we advocate with our network?

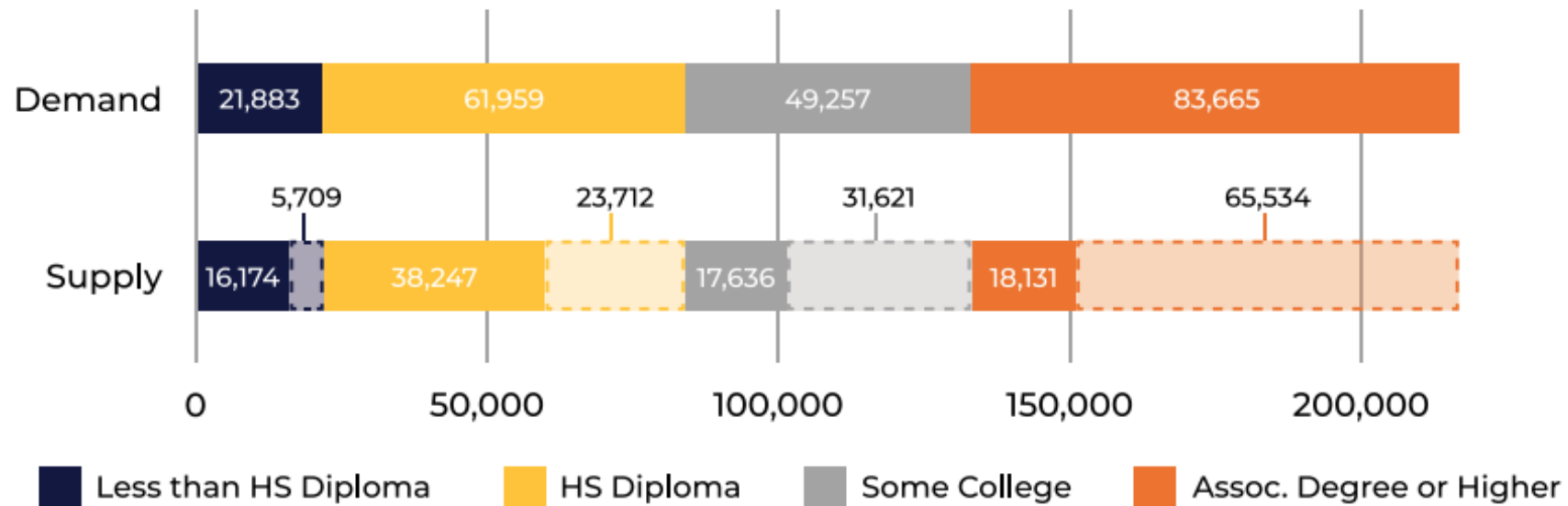
# Updated Strategic Plan: Our Aspirations

## ▶ **Over the next five years, Education Forward Arizona seeks to:**

- Serve as a trusted intermediary bridging education and the workforce.
- Act as a community voice for education and training that lead to workforce opportunities for more Arizona students and adult learners.
- Align and scale evidence-based programs into replicable statewide models.
- Utilize facts and data to create common knowledge and drive urgency and accountability that support effective policy.

# Education Needs for the Future Workforce

## Arizona Workforce Annual Supply from Local Communities vs Demand



Source: Occupation Demand: Arizona OEO 2023-2032 Occupation Projections (Exits and Growth Only) and BLS Occupational Statistics OEWS matching each occupation with educational attainment of those currently holding each position (2023 series).

# How are we doing that?



Strategic Partnerships with other organizations – For Example: AZ Institute for Education and the Economy @NAU (State 48 Profile of a Grad, Futures February, and HS Reimagined)



Expanding our reach and adding voice around the state in education/workforce conversations – For Example: Arizona @Work, Chambers of Commerce, Workforce Boards



Monthly virtual sessions called “Power Hours” where we invite guest speakers on education/workforce topics



Possible future convenings to bring attention to the need for a state level body to help make scalable replicable models for education/workforce pipelines (CC’s will be very involved)



Annual voter polling and every 3-4 years economic impact reporting

# Action Center -

education **FORWARD** arizona

About Education Progress Meter Everything To Gain **Champion** Innovate Engage

**Join the Education Forward Advocates Network**  
Sign up to receive regular Advocacy Alerts and Education Explainers. Join our statewide network of education champions working together to ensure all students succeed.

**Look Up My Policymakers**  
Plug in your address to find your policymakers using this tool from Citizens Clean Elections Commission.

**Comment on Bills**  
Sign up for an account for the Request to Speak system, so you can add your support, opposition and/or comments to bills being considered by lawmakers.

**Advocacy & Attainment Group Start-up Guide**  
Learn how to launch an Advocacy or Attainment Group, bringing people together to advance education, drive change, set attainment goals and create more opportunities for students to succeed.

# Request to Speak -



- Legislature's system to share your feedback on bills
- Don't have to speak
- Limited on when you can use the RTS system – if the bill is not active.
- Feedback becomes part of the official bill record
- RTS became highly important with onset of COVID limited in personal attendance



## Comment on Bills

Sign up for an account for the Request to Speak system, so you can add your support, opposition and/or comments to bills being considered by lawmakers.





# EVERYTHING <sup>TO</sup> GAIN

Arizona has *everything to gain*  
— in our economy, workforce,  
communities and as individuals —  
when students continue their education and  
training after high school.

# Thank You!

- [mgomez@educationforwardarizona.org](mailto:mgomez@educationforwardarizona.org)
- Sign up for our newsletter to learn more
- **June Power Hour:**
- **Hidden Workforce, June 24, 2026 from 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.**



Become a supporter of the campaign



Receive regular updates, information and data



Access special content and opportunities to support key education issues



Access Education Forward staff for presentations and discussions

