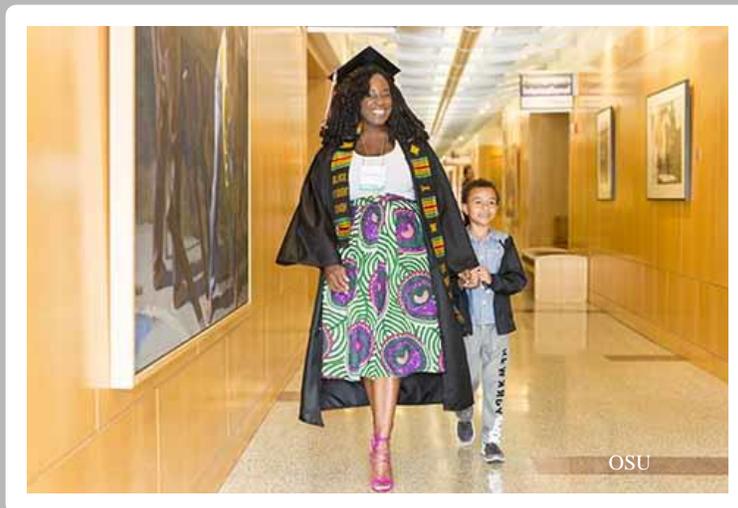


HOUSE BILL 2311: Establishing Oregon's Adult Attainment Goal



BACKGROUND: HOUSE BILL 2311 (2017)

In 2011, the State of Oregon adopted one of the highest-reaching state goals for education in the country: “40-40-20.” This goal established a clear target against which to gauge the state’s educational progress, stating the aspiration that by 2025, 40 percent of Oregonians will complete a bachelor’s or graduate degree, 40 percent will complete an associate’s degree, certificate, apprenticeship, or other postsecondary credential, and the remaining 20 percent will earn a high school diploma or the equivalent.

House Bill 2311, signed into law in 2017, aligns state statute with how the 40-40-20 goal has been most commonly understood since its inception: as reflecting the need to improve P-20 educational outcomes for today’s younger learners, ensuring that they enter adulthood ready and able to succeed in Oregon’s economy and civic life. At the same time, HB 2311 reinforces the state’s commitment to ambitious educational outcomes for working-age adult Oregonians. Specifically, it requires the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC), in coordination with the Workforce and Talent Development Board (WTDB), to develop a new, parallel goal for the adult population not currently enrolled in a kindergarten through grade 12 school, an institution of higher education or another post-secondary training program. This goal must be aligned with career trajectories, education interests, and job opportunities.

GOAL-SETTING

ADULT ATTAINMENT WORKGROUP

To execute HB 2311’s charge, the HECC and the WTDB recognized that their partners in postsecondary education, business, and industry would be vital both to the development of a meaningful and actionable goal, and to the achievement of that goal. As a result, they formed an Adult Attainment Workgroup of key stakeholders to develop and recommend to the HECC and WTDB a statewide adult attainment goal. The Adult Attainment Workgroup included representatives of:

- The HECC
- The WTDB
- The Governor’s Office
- Business & Industry
- Local workforce investment boards
- Work-based training
- Community colleges
- Public universities
- Private postsecondary

The Adult Attainment Workgroup met four times between December 2017 and September 2018, discussing research and data provided by HECC staff and partner organizations, as well as workgroup members’ experiences and perspectives.

PARAMETERS AND STRUCTURE

Before agreeing to a final goal, the Adult Attainment Workgroup needed to answer a number of questions related to the parameters and structure of the goal.

Defining “adult”

First, the Workgroup focused on defining “adult” for the purposes of Oregon’s educational attainment goal for adult Oregonians. The Workgroup discussed options ranging from age 25-34 to age 18 and up. Ultimately, members expressed a desire for a wide age range and one that was distinct from Oregon’s existing 40-40-20 goal. Thus, the Workgroup agreed that, for the purposes of this goal, “adult” means age 25-64.

Defining “attainment”

The Workgroup also needed to clarify what counts as “educational attainment” for the purposes of this goal. They decided that the goal should be set in terms of “credentials of value” earned by adult Oregonians, and defined “credential of value as one that (a) adds value for employees and employers, (b) has measurable metrics, (c) leads to a family-wage job, and (d) is transferable.

Credentials that certainly count under this definition include certificates and degrees awarded by accredited colleges and universities, registered apprenticeships, and on-the-job training approved by workforce boards. Additional credentials such as industry recognized credentials, badges or other micro-credentials, or non-registered apprenticeship programs will be evaluated according to the criteria above and may be added to the definition.

Equity component

The Workgroup was committed to including an equity component in the goal, with the intention of ensuring that efforts to achieve the goal would prioritize underrepresented populations. The Workgroup determined that, to keep consistent with other HECC initiatives, it would use the language from the HECC Equity Lens¹ and focus on underrepresented racial/ethnic minority, low-income, and rural Oregonians. Increasing educational attainment among adult Oregonians without addressing inequity is out of alignment with the agency’s mission.

Goal structure

Finally, the Workgroup discussed in what terms the goal should be expressed. Should the goal reflect 40-40-20 and be expressed in terms of percentages? Should it cite a specific number of degrees earned by adults above current projects? And what is the timeline for the goal? The Workgroup agreed to the following goal structure:

“By year X, Y adult Oregonians, Z of whom are from underrepresented populations, will earn a new postsecondary credential of value.”

To fill in the X, Y, and Z variables of the goal structure, the Workgroup looked to the HECC and its partners for data analysis.

¹ Source: <https://www.oregon.gov/highered/about/Documents/State-Goals/HECC-Equity-Lens-2017-reformat.pdf>

DATA ANALYSIS

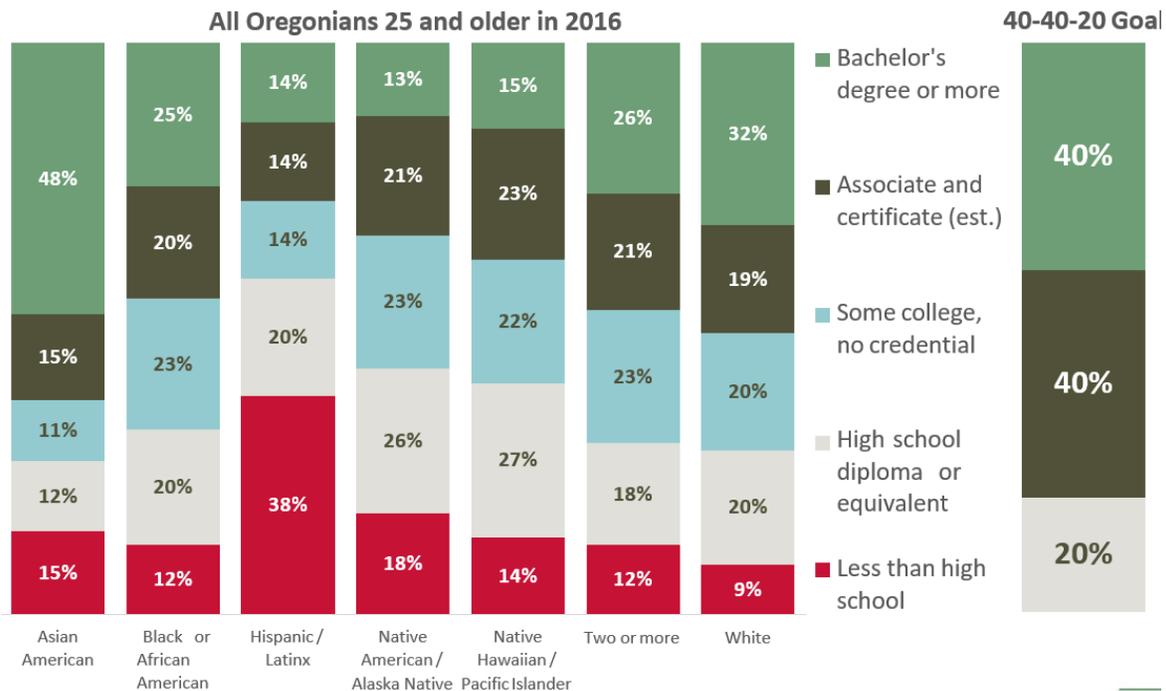
The HECC’s Office of Research and Data collected, analyzed, and presented to the Adult Attainment Workgroup data on degree and certificate completion rates, workforce need, and attainment gaps among underrepresented racial/ethnic minority, low-income, and rural Oregonians.

Key data analyses are included in the charts below.

Chart 1: Credential Production and Workforce Demand²

Projected new jobs requiring postsecondary education and training	Additional credential completions by adults above current rate needed to meet workforce demand	Current degree & career certificate completions for adult Oregonians age 25+	Total completions by adults (projected + new)
122,500 from 2017-2027	12,000 per year or 120,000 over 10 years	Approximately 20,000 per year or 200,000 over 10 years	Approximately 320,000 over 10 years

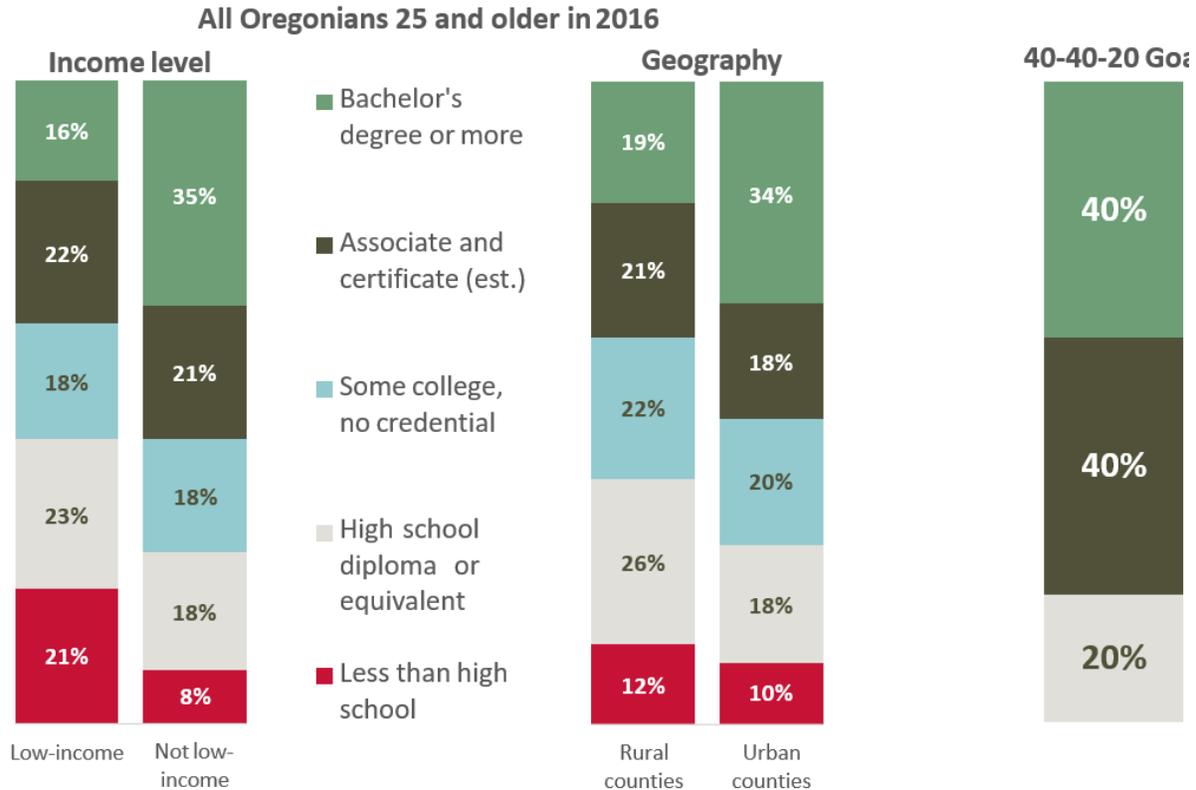
Chart 2: Gaps in Oregon educational attainment by race/ethnicity, age 25 and older³



² Source: HECC analysis of student records. Includes an estimate for twelve private institutions that are exempt from state oversight.

³ Source: American Community Survey data, 5-year and 1-year estimates.

Chart 3: Credential Production and Workforce Demand⁴



FINAL GOAL

The final proposed goal, developed by the Adult Attainment Workgroup and refined by the HECC is below. :

Oregon anticipates more than 120,000 additional jobs requiring post-secondary training or education between now and 2030. In order to meet this need, 300,000 additional adult Oregonians should earn a new degree, certificate or credential valued in the workforce during that time. Because Oregon has substantial attainment gaps among minority, low income and rural Oregonians, the state will also commit to reducing those attainment gaps by half during the decade.

While this goal is based on workforce projections developed by the Oregon Employment Department, we recognize that the broader purpose of this goal is to drive improvements in our educational and workforce systems. In order to improve the state and the lives of the people here, we need strategies that help adult Oregonians increase their skills, especially those who have been on the sidelines of the economic recovery. We also recognize that we need a broad and inclusive approach to both how people gain skills, in addition to who gains skills. The future prosperity of Oregon depends on innovative and inclusive approaches to skill and talent development for adults from all backgrounds, skill levels, and regions of the state.

⁴ Source: American Community Survey data, 5-year and 1-year estimates.

