

# Clear Pathways to Post-Secondary Success

## Issue Definition

Key goals of the public education system are to help students plan for their next steps in life and to prepare them for college and careers. It is important for school systems to offer students clear pathways for post-secondary success. Over time, the needs of the workforce change, and the education system must stay abreast of these changes to provide students with their best chance for success. To ensure that Georgia continues to have a prepared workforce and economic opportunities for all, the state must have policies in place that support career education and college preparation, and innovative programs that promote and ensure post-secondary achievement.

## Elements of an Effective System

Top-performing systems and best practice research point to key elements to ensure that every student completes a post-secondary option. These elements include clear pathways, innovative policies to increase completion rates, and financial resources for all students.

High-performing systems create clear gateways for students throughout the educational system.

- Top-performing countries focus on qualifications that show what high school courses the holder has taken and the grades earned in those courses, instead of high school diplomas.
- Countries with well-developed qualification systems arrange their systems into pathways such that an individual can always go back later and pick up a qualification that he or she missed earlier.
- Within these pathways are robust career and technical education training pathways.
- These systems have no dead ends; all paths can be linked to others so that individuals can always go further in their education without having to start at the beginning.

## Georgia Data

### COLLEGE AND CAREER READY

**79%** of high school graduates in 2016 completed a CTAE (career, technical, and agricultural education) pathway, advanced academic pathway, international baccalaureate (IB) career-related programme, or fine arts or world language pathway

**51%** of 2016 high school graduates completed a CTAE pathway and earned a national industry-recognized credential

### POST-SECONDARY PROGRESS – HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATING CLASS OF 2014

**68%** enrolled in a **post-secondary** institution

**11%** required remediation in English

**20%** required remediation in math

**63%** were still enrolled or earned a **post-secondary** credential in 2016 (two years)

### LEVELS OF EDUCATION FOR GEORGIA RESIDENTS, AGES 25-64



**Note:** The accompanying pie chart does not account for residents who have earned high-value post-secondary certificates. The percentage above - admittedly, an **estimate** - aims to fill that gap. To calculate this percentage, labor market experts at the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce used Survey of Income Program Participation 2008 Wave 12 data (2012) and data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) 2014.

## Opportunities

Best practice research indicates that clear pathways through the educational system are linked to employability and economic growth. These best practices also focus on removing barriers to post-secondary education completion, especially by providing needed resources and a clear understanding of expectations. Georgia has multiple opportunities to excel in these areas.

**ALERT!**  
POLICY  
MISSING OR  
NEEDS  
IMMEDIATE  
ACTION

### Georgia must develop a statewide needs-based aid program.

- A statewide needs-based funding program must be made available to ensure successful post-secondary education completion for all students.

**YIELD!**  
PROCEED  
WITH  
CAUTION,  
MORE WORK  
TO BE DONE

### Focus on nontraditional students.

- Expand the Technical College System of Georgia's (TCSG) adult education programs.
- Implement and expand programs and policies that support part-time and adult learners, i.e., flexible scheduling and virtual learning options.
- Expand the "Go Back. Move Ahead." program to reengage and support former students in higher education completion.

**GO!**  
KEEP MOVING  
FORWARD:  
STRONG  
POLICIES IN  
PLACE

### Support Georgia's Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) programs.

- Increase business and industry involvement with the CTAE pathways throughout Georgia.
- Increase the visibility of CTAE pathway options and opportunities among parents and students.

### Support Dual Enrollment.

- Increase the number of high school students earning post-secondary credentials.
- Expand professional development for both high school and post-secondary teachers.
- Expand the pathways toward earning a high school diploma, including dual enrollment programs and several high demand career industry certificates.