



# Advance Vermont

## POLICY PRIORITIES

By 2020, two-thirds of the jobs available in Vermont will require education and training beyond a high school diploma (certificate, apprenticeship, college degree, etc.) according to the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce. Yet only 50 percent of Vermonters currently hold a postsecondary credential.

Advance Vermont envisions an educated Vermont citizenry that powers a prosperous and resilient economy and vibrant, civically engaged communities. To achieve this vision, Vermont must grow the number of Vermonters with degrees and credentials to 70 percent by 2025, increase equity in educational attainment, and strengthen connections between education, training and employment.

Advance Vermont has adopted the following policy priorities:

- 1. Grow **AWARENESS** of postsecondary pathways and the importance of continued education after high school.**
  - 2. Expand postsecondary **ACCESS** so that students of all ages and backgrounds can pursue postsecondary education and training.**
  - 3. Increase postsecondary **SUCCESS** by ensuring that Vermonters have the supports they need to complete a degree or credential program.**
  - 4. Maximize **PARTNERSHIPS** across and within sectors to achieve state workforce development goals.**
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### **1. Grow **AWARENESS** of postsecondary pathways and the importance of continued education after high school.**

- ▶ Reinforce postsecondary education as a public good, particularly its importance to meeting state education, workforce development, and economic development goals, by codifying the goal that 70 percent of Vermonters possess a degree or credential.
- ▶ Grow awareness of the value of non-degree credentials and the opportunities to pursue those credentials in state.
- ▶ Bring public visibility to career and education pathways to showcase the number of education and training options, the variety of in-demand professions, and erase stigmas associated degree and non-degree pathways.

### **2. Expand postsecondary **ACCESS** so that students of all ages and backgrounds can pursue postsecondary education and training**

- ▶ Take action to make postsecondary education and training more affordable. This may include funding for education and training institutions and financial aid programs, and creation or expansion of loan forgiveness and repayment programs,
- ▶ Expand targeted services for students requiring support, such as students of color, low income, first generation, disabled, military members or veterans, those who are incarcerated, recovering from addiction, and single parents.

- ▶ Expand and incentivize programs leading to credentials of value, including registered apprenticeships, educational certificates, occupational licenses and industry recognized credentials.
- ▶ Develop and expand program and advising models that match the needs of adult students.
- ▶ Support state education and workforce development policies that increase postsecondary readiness, including equitable implementation of personalized learning plans, dual enrollment, early college, and proficiency-based outcomes.
- ▶ Improve access to career and technical education for students of all ages and increase participation.
- ▶ Remove barriers to postsecondary education by increasing FAFSA completion rates, increasing equity in access to postsecondary admissions exams, and providing financial literacy education.
- ▶ Support professional development for Pk-12 educators to expand effective postsecondary and career counseling.

### **3. Increase postsecondary **SUCCESS** by ensuring that Vermonters have the supports they need to complete a degree or credential program.**

- ▶ Promote the development and implementation of programs that accelerate the time to complete a degree or credential program, such as assessments of prior learning or credit for non-degree training.
- ▶ Support innovative financing strategies that support completion, including micro grants and flexible emergency aid.
- ▶ Remove institutional barriers to completion, such as inflexible course progressions and transfer restrictions.
- ▶ Increase student support services tailored to populations with significant barriers to postsecondary attainment, including first generation students, low income individuals, minorities, rural residents, veterans, working-age adults, and those who are disabled or learn differently.

### **4. Maximize **PARTNERSHIPS** across and within sectors to achieve state workforce development and education goals.**

- ▶ Deepen collaboration between education and training providers, human services agencies, employers, and state government to ensure coordination of services.
- ▶ Foster multi-sector partnerships to develop education and training programs for in-demand, high-growth jobs.
- ▶ Ensure access to high-quality work-based learning and out of school day educational experiences (such as afterschool programs) at the secondary and postsecondary level.
- ▶ Incentivize and promote employer-sponsored education and training for employees.
- ▶ Support efforts to create a formal system to endorse and track credentials of value offered within the state.

#### ***About Us:***

*Advance Vermont is a statewide partnership of leaders from business, education, government, non-profits and philanthropy with a unified goal to increase educational attainment in Vermont for the benefit of our citizens, communities and economy. Learn more about Advance Vermont by visiting [advancevermont.org](http://advancevermont.org).*

#### **For more information contact:**

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