



**House Committee on Commerce
& Economic Development**

February 16, 2026

Tom Cheney, Executive Director

About Advance Vermont

We believe that every Vermonter should be able to pursue and navigate a career and education path that meets their goals. It is essential to individual prosperity, and to the strengthen of our economy and community.

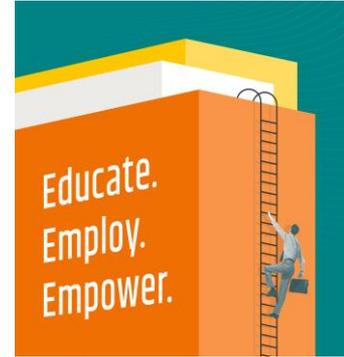
- Every high school student should **graduate with a plan** for their next steps.
- Working-age Vermonters should feel **empowered to advance in their career**.



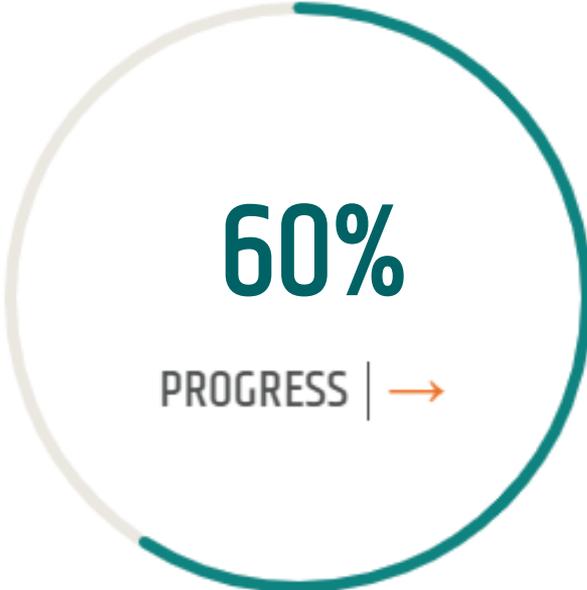
Our Focus

We are working to build a statewide career navigation system:

- Ensure that career and education seekers and those who support them have the **information and tools** to make informed choices.
- Elevate the importance of **all the education** options in building a strong workforce.
- Support schools/organizations to embed consistent, purposeful, and equitable **career guidance and planning**
- **Align work with** public, nonprofit, and private partners.



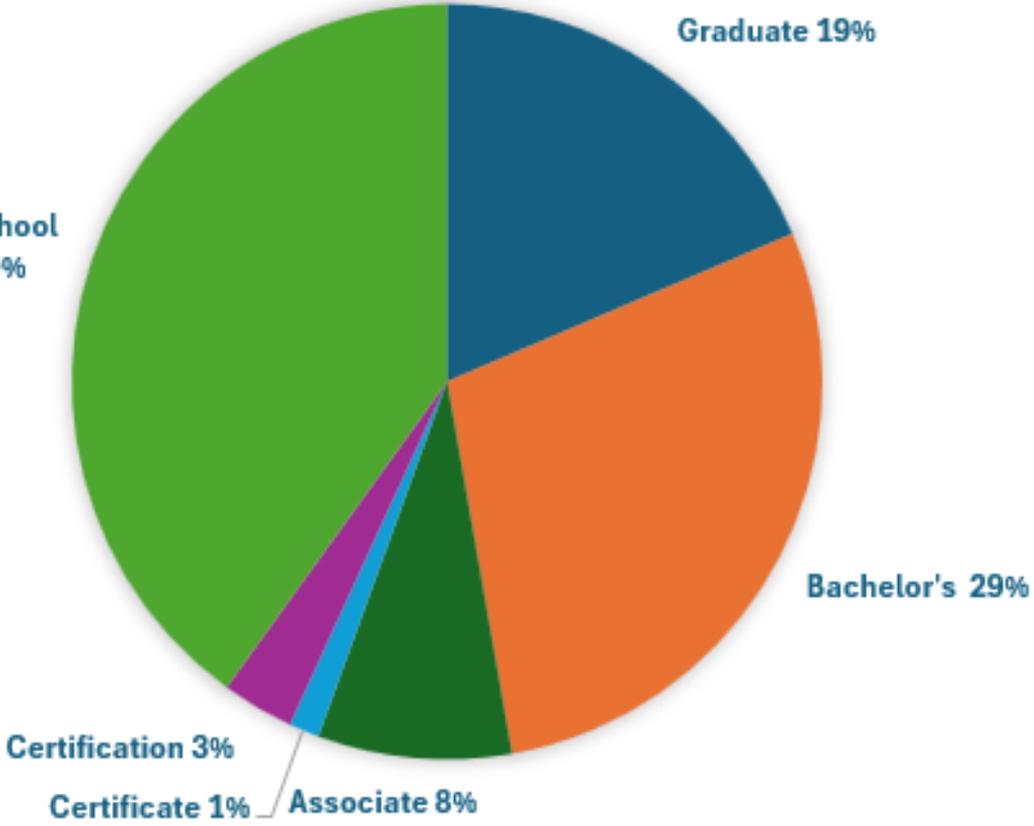
Vermonters (ages 25-64) Who Have a Credential



Source: Lumina Foundation 2026 Stronger Nation Report; 2024 data

Highest Level of Education For Vermonters Age 25-64

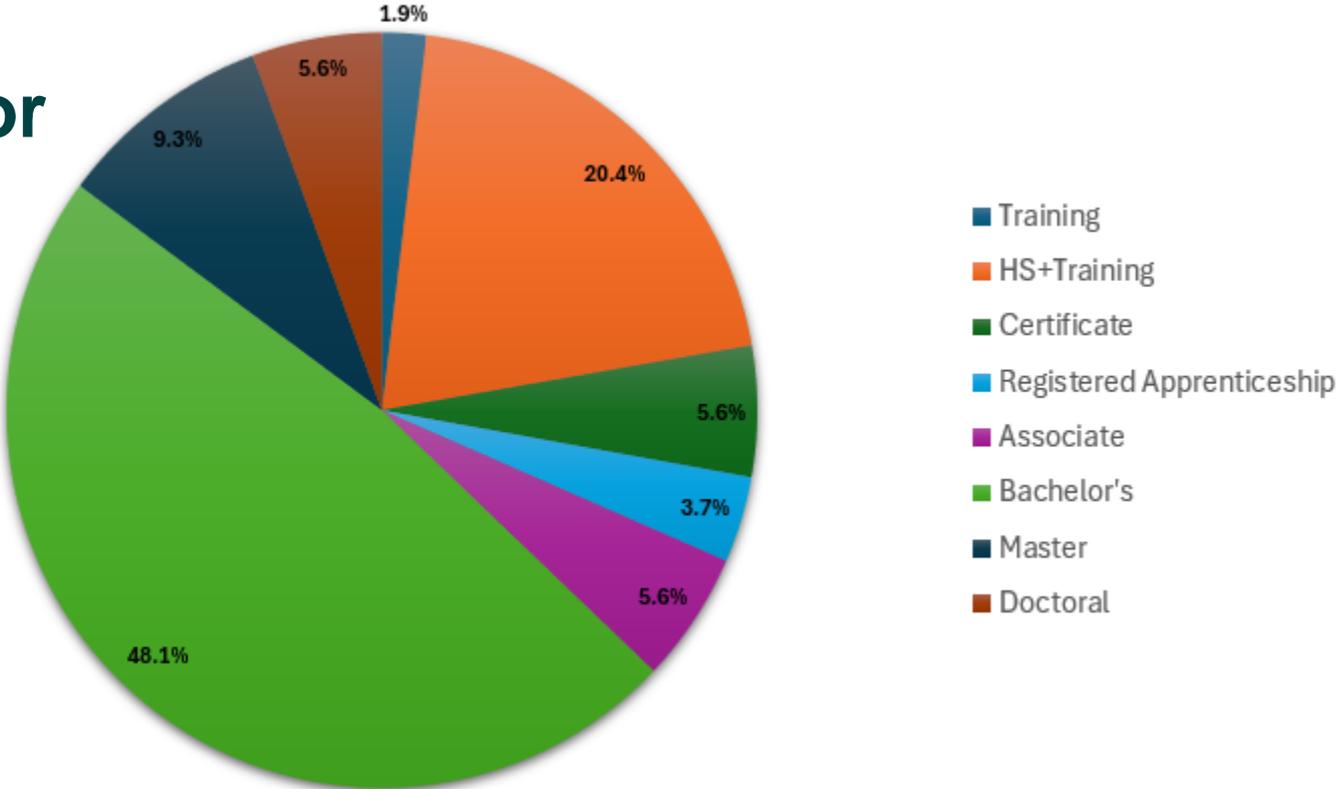
Major growth opportunity for non-degree options



Source: Lumina Foundation 2026 Stronger Nation Report; 2024 data



Education Requirement for “Most Promising Jobs”



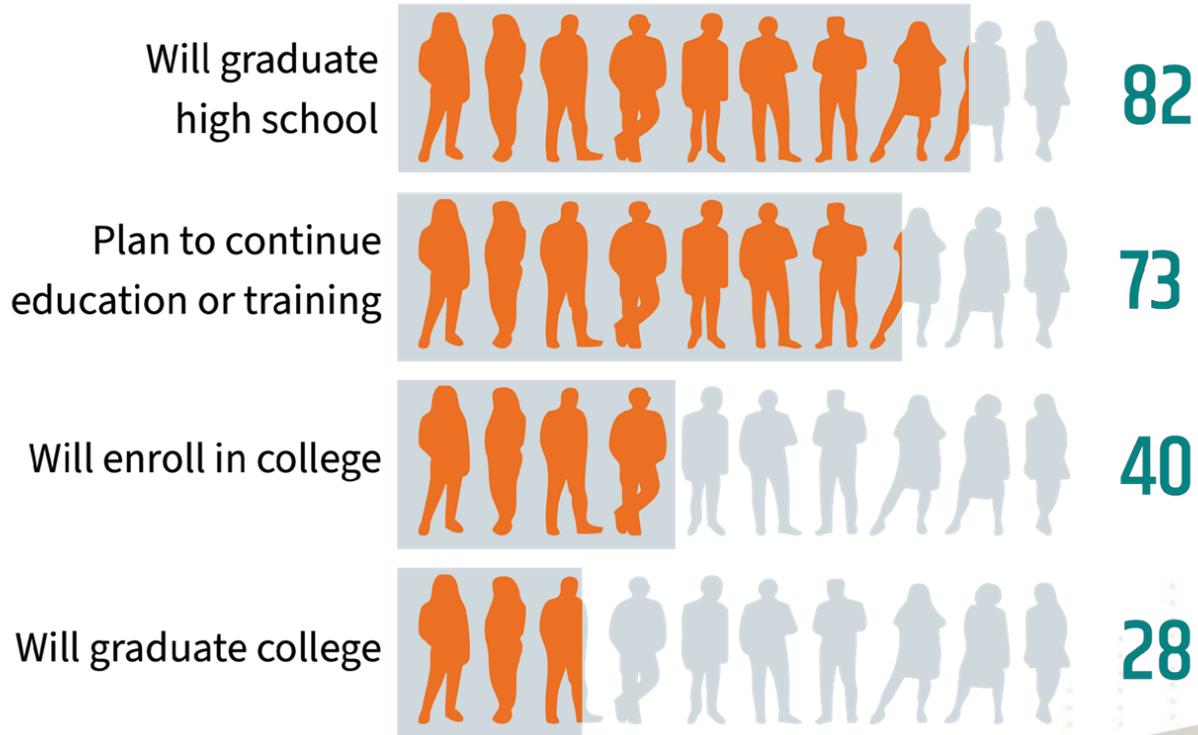
Source: McClure Foundation & VDOL, 2024

A core promise of Vermont's PK–12 system is simple:

When students walk across the graduation stage, they should have a clear plan for what comes next.

Only about half of Vermont's students do.

Of Every 100 Vermont High School Students



Source: Common Data Project, New England Secondary Schools Consortium; VSAC

Why the Cliff?

- **Youth career and education planning falls short:** 75% of youth, educators, and parents rate it as only somewhat effective or less.
- **Future planning is insufficiently integrated:** Career and education planning remains siloed & inconsistent rather than embedded across schools and the broader school community.
- **Student serving adults need support:** They report wanting increased knowledge and skills to better advise students.



Career Navigation

Components of career navigation

Component	Action	Definition
Acquiring knowledge	Self-assessment	Identifying and aligning one's skills, interests, values, and career goals.
	Career exploration	Gathering information about available and aligned careers and pathways.
Making informed career plans	Pathway mapping	Charting a course of education and work actions from one's current state to one's career goal.
Integrating and negotiating education, training, and work actions	Skill and credential acquisition	Attaining the skills, certifications, and experiences necessary to achieve one's goal.
	Job placement and advancement	Connecting to and acquiring jobs that lead to career advancement.

Career Navigation

Drivers of career navigation success



Information access and accuracy

Accurate knowledge of education and career opportunities, including pathways and economic outcomes data



Skills and credentials

Navigation skills and qualities (i.e., adaptability, self-efficacy), foundational skills, and job-specific skills and credentials



Social capital

Social relationships, networks, and engagement, which impact an individual's values, exposure, connections, and support



Wraparound resources and supports

The wraparound resources at one's disposal, including coaching, finances, technology, transportation and child care



Social structures and ecosystems

Social systems, including public and private policies, economic conditions, and discrimination and racism

PK-12 Career Navigation



Legislative Priorities

- Lay the foundation to formalize pk-12 career navigation through pk-12 transformation & CTE reforms.
- Secure \$600k in continued state funding to support the development of a career navigation system by:
 - Sustaining and expanding impact MyFutureVT
 - Fully implementing Graduate with a Plan statewide
 - Supporting statutory charge that the State publish lists of credential-bearing programs and support services.



Your Path. Your Future.

Welcome to your free online resource to help you take the next step in your education and career journey.



I want to know more about...



Careers



Education



What I Want



Helping Others



How To Get Started

MyFutureVT: Essential Career Nav Tool

- Vermonters say **web-based tools are vital** sources of information.
- **Only Vermont tool for exploration and planning**, supporting career and education seeker and those who help guide them
- 9 out of 10 users report **MyFutureVT meets their needs**
- **90% took a step forward** after using the tool.

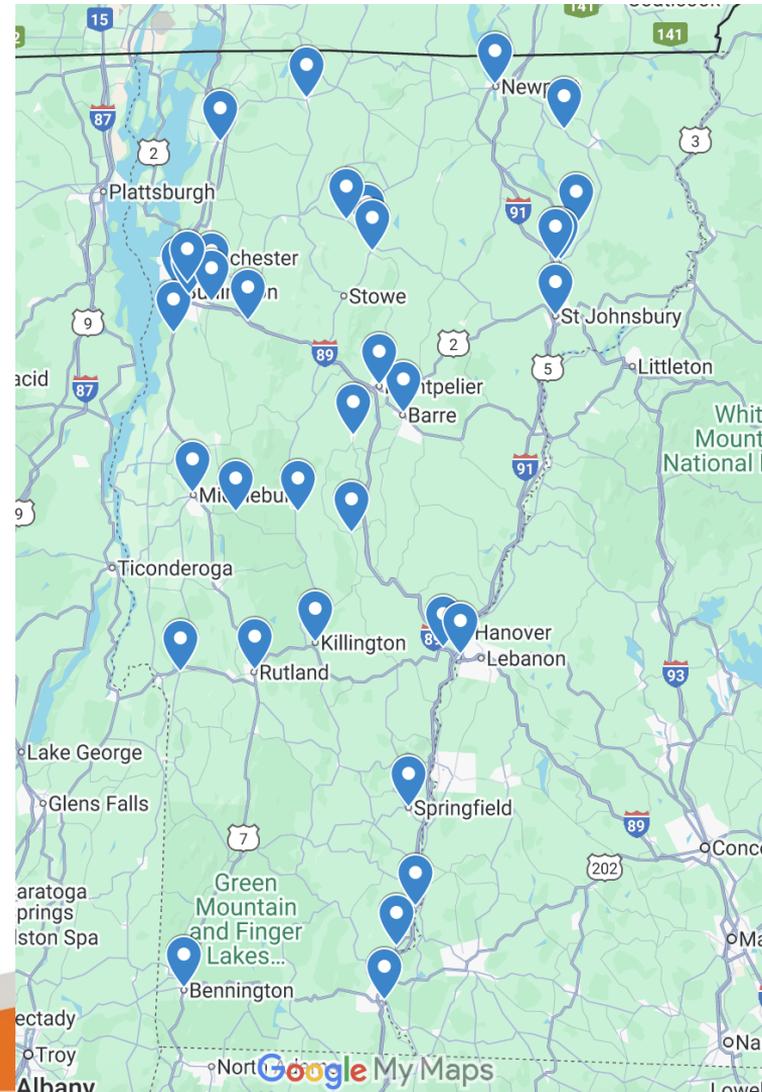


MyFutureVT.org

The state's free tool to connect users to careers, in-state education, and support services.

In the last year:

- Expanded post-high school education options from 650 to 950.
- Doubled the database of support services from 69 to 138 (see map for locations).
- Growth in schools, libraries, and other organizations sending their clients to MyFutureVT





MyFutureVT.org



LABOR ON LOCATION

Let us come to you! Job support will be in a community near you:



South Burlington
South Burlington Public Library



2ND FRIDAY
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
(Monthly)

Drop-in services include: job search support, resume and interview preparation, training/education opportunity referral, employer resources, and much more.

Learn more at:

labor.vermont.gov/jobs



A proud partner of the American Job Center network. Equal Opportunity Program.

Stop by on Friday to meet with the Vermont Department of Labor! Whether you're searching for a job, looking to upskill, or simply want to learn more about the job market, the VDOL team is here to help. They will be on site on the 2nd Friday of each month from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM – no appointment necessary!

Find out more about [Vermont Job Link](#) or [My Future VT](#) by stopping by and chatting with staff members from the Vermont Department of Labor.



FRANKLIN COUNTY
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION



Your Path. Your Future.

Check out MyFutureVT, the free online resource to help you take the next step in your education and career journey.

Whether you are looking to explore careers, find education and training, or get support as you navigate your job future MyFutureVT is ready to assist.

With continued funding for MyFutureVT...

- Boost users with dedicated outreach staff
- Expand content and functionality, including highlighting industry needs and non-degree pathways
- Support Act 65 implementation of repositories of ed/training program & support services information
- Align with VDOL's JobLink replacement
- Continue access to this vital resource

Graduate with a Plan

Problem: Too many students graduate without clear next steps

Goal: Every student should graduate with a plan for what comes next – whether that means college, training, volunteer service, or entering the workforce.

Solutions:

- Students benefit from trusted adults
- Adults need training and tools to be effective navigators
- Schools/orgs need resources/tools to help schools operationalize and scale planning
- Collaboration among stakeholders maximizes impact and sustainability

Graduate with a Plan



Navigator Training

Professional learning for influential adults — teachers, counselors, employers, mentors — focused on effective, equitable student guidance.



Career & Education Planning Framework

A comprehensive, practical guide for building capacity, aligning efforts, and helping all students develop informed, actionable post-high school plans.



Collaboration & Continuous Improvement

Guided by a skilled advisory committee and informed by data and feedback, GAP is built to evolve with the needs of Vermont's students and educators.

With funding for GAP...

- Implement career & education planning framework statewide in concert with PK-12 & CTE transformation
- Provide navigator training to at least 300 adults, which will support over 1,500 students annually with high-quality career guidance
- Launch a statewide “navigator network” to connect and upskill student-serving adults

Career Navigation Policy Elements



Craft a statewide vision for career navigation



Review existing career navigation services & supports



Invest in & expand access to career navigation



Integrate tech tools & platforms



Adopt quality standards for career advising



Incentivize cross-system collaboration



Expand career exploration & exposure activities



Build the research base

Thank you

Visit advancevermont.org
or MyFutureVT.org for more
information



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