Arizona

Analyzing the learner continuum in Arizona.

Arizona’s focus on K-12 and postsecondary CTE program offerings targeting specific workforce priorities has led to more graduates earning employer-valued credentials. The state’s legislation to incentivize the earning of targeted industry certifications at the secondary level and to require a performance funding model specific to STEM-related credentials at the postsecondary level are notable examples. However, these efforts apply only to certain groups of learners. Arizona can continue its movement toward full alignment of all its offered program pathways with state priorities and provide more robust accountability incentives for its educational institutions.

STRENGTHS

• Arizona’s variety of college acceleration offerings that support learners in earning college credit in high school.

• Arizona’s Data Governance Commission that oversees the state’s longitudinal data system to drive agency policy and program decision making.

• Arizona’s AZTransfer program that minimizes loss of postsecondary credit for transferring students.

OPPORTUNITIES

• Provide funding so all high school advanced-level, college acceleration course offerings can be accessed and completed at no cost to learners.

• Conduct a thorough review of K-12 CTE programs of study offerings to confirm program alignment and quality.

• Implement a statewide last dollar or last mile program for learners attending 2-year state community colleges.
LEARNER PATHWAYS

Ensure vertical alignment to workforce needs, robust funding, collaboration across agencies and equitable access for all students.

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HIGH-QUALITY CTE PROGRAMS
Align all CTE programs with high-demand, high-skill and high-wage occupations that reflect the state’s economic and workforce priorities. Ensure that these programs feature the academic and technical skills and knowledge learners will need to be successful.

TARGETED CTE PROGRAM FUNDING
Dedicate state funding for CTE programs—but only if they are aligned to high-demand, high-skill and high-wage occupations. Target specific funds for pathway completion and demonstrated learner outcomes.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT ANALYSIS
Conduct a biennial return on investment (ROI) analysis of CTE programs to assess whether all learners have access to high-demand, high-skill and high-wage pathways. Collect school- and student-level data to evaluate outcomes of CTE programs against established shared metrics for quality and equity.

STATE CROSS-AGENCY SHARED PRIORITIES
Establish shared priorities and collective accountability across state agencies and education systems for learner pathway development, supports and success. Ensure that business and industry have a seat at the table and can lead discussions related to demand and training requirements.
KEY POLICY

High-Quality CTE Programs

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS
There is no formal statute in place to address vertically aligned, high-quality state CTE programs of study. The Arizona Department of Education (AZE) promotes a K–12 to postsecondary alignment as presented in the state’s Perkins state plan. Arizona’s Perkins plan outlines that each in-demand CTE program is determined through labor market data using the same methodology as the State Workforce Board and that the technical skill standards are developed by employer representatives from that industry. All programs are reviewed and approved by the AZ CTE Quality Commission.

Arizona secondary CTE programs are available at traditional high schools and the 14 Career and Technical Education Districts (CTEDs). In 2021 SB 1179 increased funding for CTEDs to expand down to 9th grade. SB 1179 also requires the Office of Economic Opportunity, in collaboration with the ADE to compile an in-demand regional education list of the approved CTE program that lead to a career in high demand with median to high wage jobs, with industry feedback as part of the process.

Arizona does not have a state agency that oversees postsecondary community colleges, so CTE program review at the postsecondary level varies by individual institution.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN
Arizona can conduct a thorough audit of its existing K–12 and postsecondary CTE programs of study to (a) ensure that the programs of study align with state workforce and economic demands and projections in high-demand, high-skill and high-wage occupations; (b) determine where there are program gap opportunities; and (c) ascertain program quality. A plan can be developed and implemented to phase out all misaligned or low-quality programs of study and phase in revised or new high-quality programs of study fully reflective of the state’s priorities. Arizona can consider implementing a set of unified requirements for postsecondary public institutions.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES
• Delaware – Career and Technical Education Programs
• Tennessee – Career and Technical Education Programs
• Texas – Program of Study Initiative

RESOURCES
• Arizona CTE
• Arizona Perkins Plan

POLICIES
• SB 1179 Career and Technical Education Districts
Targeted CTE Program Funding

State Policy Analysis
Arizona provides for weighted funding specific to CTE curriculum. This includes the Career and Technical Education Districts, which are specialized CTE-focused districts that partner with local districts and charter schools. The state also provides incentive funds to districts for earned industry certifications by students.

Opportunity to Strengthen
Arizona can consider targeted K–12 outcomes-based funding to help incentivize local education agencies in their development and implementation of high-quality, aligned programs of study. This can include funds to support the startup and sustainment of high-quality, aligned programs and incentive funds for students who complete a high-quality, aligned program of study or obtain aligned industry credentials.

Promising Examples from Other States
- Indiana – Funding Methodology
- Ohio – Innovative Workforce Incentive Program
- Texas – House Bill 3

Resources
N/A

Policies
- ARS §15-910.01. School District Budgets
- ARS § 15-249.15. Incentive Payments for Industry Certifications
Arizona does not appear to have a formal statute or agency policy/initiative in place to address equitable access to high-quality CTE programs of study that reflect high-demand, high-skill, high-wage (H3) occupations/industries.

Arizona can consider conducting a thorough audit to (a) ensure that existing CTE programs of study are aligned with workforce needs, informed by labor market demand, linked to occupations that are middle to high wage and vertically aligned to postsecondary programs; (b) know where H3 CTE programs are offered across all recognized local education agencies; and (c) understand student access, participation and completion data by student groups to determine potential inequities. ExcelinEd’s *Auditing a State Career and Technical Education Program for Quality* playbook provides a roadmap for developing and implementing an audit.

**PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES**

- Colorado – [Return on Investment Reports](#)
- Florida – [Executive Order 19-31](#) and [House Bill 7071](#)

  (NOTE: While promising, both could be strengthened by more focused analyses on equity and quality of offerings.)
**Arizona**

**State Cross-Agency Shared Priorities**

**STATE POLICY ANALYSIS**

Arizona does not appear to have a formal statute or agency policy/initiative in place that promotes structured, cross-agency policy supports to drive shared approaches on state education to workforce priorities. Historically, Arizona’s cross-sector collaboration has occurred on an ad hoc basis as individual agencies convene the appropriate stakeholders.

Arizona has the Arizona Career and Technical Education Quality Commission, which is made up of leaders from both the K–12 and workforce sectors. The Arizona Commerce Department designates major employment clusters within the state and uses these clusters to determine representation on the commission. The commission is mandated by Arizona statute to validate the assessments that are administered in CTE programs.

**OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN**

The Governor’s Office can put forward an executive order that establishes a cross-agency council to drive shared priorities and approaches designed to advance the state’s commitment on education to workforce. The grouping can work in concert with other known initiatives, such as Arizona’s Achieve60AZ and Arizona Pathways to Prosperity, to ensure coordinated alignment. ExcelinEd’s *Building Cross-Sector Partnerships to Support Career and Technical Education Pathways* provides a step-by-step process for building cross-agency shared priorities.

**PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES**

- Delaware – Advisory Council on Career and Technical Education (DACCTE)
- Indiana – Governor’s Workforce Cabinet
- Washington – Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board

**RESOURCES**

- Achieve60AZ

**POLICIES**

- ARS § 15-393. Career and Technical Education District Governing Board
**POSTSECONDARY ACCELERATION**

Streamline postsecondary learning and empower high school students to earn credit to reduce the time required to earn postsecondary degrees.

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**COLLEGE ACCELERATION**

Provide and incentivize a range of options for learners to earn college credit while in high school. Ensure that all learners have access and financial support to accelerate their journey to a postsecondary credential.

**CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING AND CREDENTIALS**

Implement a consistent state policy for awarding postsecondary program or elective credit for prior learning, work experience and earned industry credentials.

**COLLEGE ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS**

Establish statewide articulation agreements to ensure college credits earned in K–12 or at one institution transfer and count toward a degree at another. Minimize or eliminate credit loss and misalignment for transitioning learners.

**REMEDIGATION**

Replace outdated developmental and remedial education with college credit bearing options paired with intensive supports. Adopt co-requisite remediation programs or offer remediation to learners before they graduate high school.
Arizona

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

Overall, the Arizona Department of Education promotes three forms of early postsecondary credit programs: dual enrollment, concurrent enrollment and credit by exam. Dual enrollment courses are offered on a high school campus or Career and Technical Education District campus through an agreement or contract between a school district/charter school and a community college district governing board. As of 2022, Career and Technical Education Districts can offer associate degree programs that are on the in-demand regional education list. Concurrent enrollment courses are offered on a college campus. The agreement or contract between the school district/charter school and community college district must specify student tuition, financial aid policies—including if scholarships or grants are awarded to secondary students—and expected roles and responsibilities for each of the affected parties. Arizona community colleges are allowed to determine their own dual enrollment tuition and fees, but these costs are not equitably charged to all students. Some community colleges charge different tuition and fees depending on where a student lives in the state while others may charge no dual enrollment tuition or fees at all.

The state also incentivizes early postsecondary credit by exam (e.g., AP, Cambridge, IB). The College Credit by Examination Incentive Program (CCEIP, 15-249.06) provides incentive bonuses to teachers, school districts and charter schools for students who obtain a passing score on a qualifying examination for college credit in mathematics, English language arts, social studies or science while in high school. Qualifying exams may include Advanced Placement (AP), Cambridge International Exam A and AS Level, and International Baccalaureate (IB) exams.

Arizona also has the tribal college dual enrollment program, which reimburses tribal colleges for credit hours taken by high school students, and helps students pay for books and instructional materials. Eligibility is open to students with a tribal affiliation both on and off a reservation.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Arizona can consider requiring all high schools to offer a minimum number of advanced-level, college acceleration courses and providing supplemental funding so all advanced-level offerings can be accessed and completed at no cost to the student. Additionally, Arizona can consider systematizing the agreements statewide so that earned credits are transferable to all postsecondary institutions.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Florida – [High School Acceleration Programs](https://www.floridahighered.com/) and [Statewide Agreements on Credit](https://www.floridahighered.com/)
- Idaho – [Advanced Opportunities Funding](https://www.idaho.gov/highered/financial-aid)

RESOURCES

- [Arizona Department of Education Tribal College Dual Enrollment Program](https://azeducation.gov)

POLICIES

- [ARS § 15-1821.01. Dual Enrollment](https://azleg.gov/leg律as/ars/text/15/15-1821.01)
- [ARS § 15-901.07. Concurrent Enrollment](https://azleg.gov/leg律as/ars/text/15/15-901.07)
- [ARS §15-249.06. CCEIP](https://azleg.gov/leg律as/ars/text/15/15-249.06)
Arizona public higher education institutions each possess policies on prior learning credit. However, there does not appear to be a centralized statute, policy or program.

Despite the decentralized nature of Arizona’s public higher education community colleges and universities, the state can consider pursuing legislation that centralizes a uniform approach to credit for prior learning, including military service and credentials.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES
- Colorado – Prior Learning Assessment Credit Policy
- Kentucky – Prior Learning Initiative
- Ohio – Military Strategic Implementation Team

RESOURCES
N/A

POLICIES
N/A
KEY POLICY

College Articulation Agreements

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS
AZTransfer is a statewide collaboration to help students navigate their higher education options. The AZTransfer Steering Committee was established in part by the Transfer Articulation Task Force Report of 1996 and oversees the Arizona Transfer System. The system is designed to ensure “... that community college students may transfer to Arizona public universities without loss of credit towards a baccalaureate degree.”

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN
Given that variations can still exist across public postsecondary institutions, Arizona can consider revisiting its existing credit articulation policy to cover credit transfer across public institutions and degree programs to minimize student course credit loss and accelerate student completion.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES
- Florida – Statewide Transfer Articulation Agreements
- Indiana – Core Transfer Library
- Kentucky – Transfer Articulation Agreements

RESOURCES
- AZTransfer 2019 Annual Report
- AZTransfer

POLICIES
- ARS § 15-1824. Transfer

STATE CASE STUDY
KEY POLICY
College Articulation Agreements
POSTSECONDARY ACCELERATION
STATE POLICY ANALYSIS
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- Indiana – Core Transfer Library
- Kentucky – Transfer Articulation Agreements

RESOURCES
- AZTransfer 2019 Annual Report
- AZTransfer

POLICIES
- ARS § 15-1824. Transfer
KEY POLICY

Remediation

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

Arizona public higher education institutions each possess policies on remediation. However, there does not appear to be a centralized statute, policy or program.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Despite the decentralized nature of Arizona’s public higher education community colleges and universities, the state can consider pursuing legislation that centralizes a uniform approach to remedial requirements. This action will provide necessary clarity for potential applicants. Arizona can also consider pursuing a postsecondary and/or K–12 co-requisite remediation policy. Co-requisite remediation allows students to concurrently enroll in remedial and credit bearing coursework. As part of the policy Arizona can consider having multiple measures to determine the need for remediation, beyond just ACT scores.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Georgia – Complete College Georgia
- North Carolina – Multiple Measures of Placement Policy
- Tennessee – Co-Requisite Remediation and Seamless Alignment and Integrated Learning Support (SAILS)

RESOURCES

N/A

POLICIES

N/A
POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT

Reduce barriers—such as funding, lack of alignment and missed opportunities—to help more students attain postsecondary credentials.

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REVERSE TRANSFER CREDENTIALS
Establish a statewide policy to allow students to earn an associate degree while continuing to work toward a bachelor’s degree. Ensure two-year and four-year college credits can be combined toward the credential.

LAST DOLLAR/LAST MILE FINANCIAL AID
Provide dedicated state financial aid to qualifying learners that fills in gaps in federal assistance (last dollar) and promotes attainment for learners just shy of completing a degree (last mile).

OUTCOMES-BASED FUNDING
Transition postsecondary funding models from those based on learner enrollment to ones based on learner outcomes. Dedicate more funding to programs and institutions that show demonstrated success in meeting success metrics such as job placement and long-term wage earnings.

STACKABLE DEGREES AND CREDENTIALS
Define and promote a combination of industry and academic credentials that reflect articulated pathways to advanced learning and employment. Ensure that postsecondary credential programs are widely accessible to all learners and reflect value in the labor market.
Reverse Transfer Credentials

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS
Individual community colleges, such as Maricopa Community Colleges (MCC), have in place policies to address reverse transfer offerings for students who transfer to an in-state public four-year university.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN
Despite the decentralized nature of Arizona’s public higher education community colleges and universities, the state can consider pursuing legislation that formally promotes a uniform reverse transfer policy. This action will provide necessary clarity and efficiency for interested students.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES
- Colorado – Reverse Transfer Process
- Florida – Reverse Transfer Statewide Articulation Agreements
- Texas – Reverse Transfer Process

RESOURCES
- MCC Reverse Transfer Program
- Arizona State University Reverse Transfer Policy

POLICIES
N/A
KEY POLICY

Last Dollar/Last Mile Financial Aid

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS
The landscape of financial aid opportunities for students is decentralized in Arizona. Higher education institutions manage and disburse aid programs from public dollars they receive combined with their own sources of institutional revenue.

The Arizona Commission for Postsecondary Education (ACPE) offers the Arizona Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership (AzLEAP) grant which provides student financial assistance in the form of need-based grants to low-income, undergraduate, Arizona resident students who have demonstrated substantial financial need. The grant is awarded by each participating institution. The maximum AzLEAP award for the academic year is $2,500 however; the average amount awarded is $1,000 for the academic year.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN
To reduce financial barriers and increase postsecondary completion for its citizens, Arizona can consider implementing a more comprehensive last dollar or last mile program for students attending public postsecondary institutions.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES
• Florida – Last Mile College Completion Program
• Rhode Island – Rhode Island Promise
• Tennessee – Tennessee Promise and Tennessee Reconnect

RESOURCES
• AzLEAP

POLICIES
N/A
KEY POLICY

Outcomes-Based Funding

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

Through the Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) and under statute (15-1464), public higher education institutions have participated in a targeted performance-based funding formula since 2012. The Higher Education Budget Reconciliation Bill requires ABOR and the universities to adopt a performance funding model specific to credentials related to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The model uses performance metrics that include the increase in degrees awarded, the increase in completed student credit hours, and the increase in externally generated research and public service funding related to STEM, as well as other high-value degrees that are in short supply or are essential to the state’s long-term economic development strategy.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Arizona can conduct a review of the data through the lens of equity to ensure that the outcomes-based funding model is appropriately incentivizing and supporting outcomes for all students. Arizona can also consider including additional metrics such as job placement and wage earnings (over time).

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Missouri – Performance Funding
- Tennessee – Outcomes-Based Funding Formula
- Texas – State Technical College Funding Model

RESOURCES

N/A

POLICIES

- ARS § 15-1464. Performance-Based Funding—STEM
### KEY POLICY

**Stackable Degrees and Credentials**

**STATE POLICY ANALYSIS**

In 2021, Arizona passed its first legislation regarding stackable credentials. The state will now allow the community college district governing board to offer accredited baccalaureate degrees. The new baccalaureate programs must meet specific criteria related to student demand and workforce needs in the community college's local region. The legislation also requires that both annual and five-year review processes must be in place to ensure that the programs are meeting current trends in Arizona's labor market.

**OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN**

Arizona can consider establishing a cross-agency committee that affirms what constitutes stackable credentials from K–12 through postsecondary, including skills retraining certificates. The committee can help ensure that all stackable credentials hold market value in the workforce.

### PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Colorado – [Stackable Credential Legislation](#)
- Idaho – [SkillStack](#)
- Indiana – [Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant](#)

### RESOURCES

N/A

### POLICIES

- [SB 1453](#)
WORKFORCE READINESS

Ensure the skills, credentials and apprenticeships students pursue help to prepare a strong workforce within the state.

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WORK-BASED LEARNING
Establish a statewide K–12 and postsecondary work-based learning program that promotes learning through a series of progressive learner experiences both in the classroom and in a work setting. Provide guidance and support for how education and business and industry collaborate to achieve mutual priorities.

APPRENTICESHIPS
Establish clearly defined program guidance for state-promoted apprenticeships outlining prerequisites, requirements, funding, stakeholder incentives and participant outcomes.

INDUSTRY-VALUED CREDENTIALS
Ensure all industry credentials earned in K–12 or postsecondary are aligned with high-demand, high-skill, high-wage occupations and valued by state and regional employers.

SKILLS RETRAINING/ CREDENTIALING
Identify and promote non-degree programs and credentials that support new, transitioning and displaced learners in career change and advancement. Ensure that supports include funding supports for learners and incentives for participating employers who train or retrain them.
**KEY POLICY**

**Work-Based Learning**

**STATE POLICY ANALYSIS**

The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) promotes work-based learning at the secondary level. However, it does not appear that the department promotes a progressive series of learning-embedded student engagements (classroom and work setting) more reflective of a comprehensive approach to work-based learning.

Though there is no state statute specific to work-based learning, Career and Technical Education Districts must include work-based learning elements. Work-based learning is defined as “a coherent sequence of job training and work experience that involves actual work experience and connects classroom learning to work activities.”

**OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN**

Arizona can consider affirming the robustness of its existing ADE work-based learning program by examining the progressive nature of its promoted experiences and exposures in the classroom and in work settings and to confirm that these touch points are embedded in course standards and instruction to ensure full relevance and alignment. ExcelinEd’s *Developing High-Quality State Work-Based Learning Programs* playbook provides guidance on developing a comprehensive work-based learning program.

**PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES**

- Delaware – Work-Based Learning Practicum
- Georgia – Work-Based Learning Framework
- Rhode Island – PrepareRI Work-Based Learning Navigator

**RESOURCES**

- ADE Work-Based Learning Manual
- CTE Work-Based Learning

**POLICIES**

N/A
Arizona promotes registered apprenticeships. The Arizona Apprenticeship Advisory Committee, under the Department of Economic Security (ADES), coordinates and recommends approval of procedures for the registration of apprenticeship programs and establishes program quality thresholds.

Arizona can consider building out a youth apprenticeship program at the K–12 level that vertically ties to the state’s registered apprenticeship program. One promising example that could be expanded is a pilot youth apprenticeship program led by the Greater Phoenix Chamber and Center for the Future of Arizona in cybersecurity that includes Kudelski Security and the Maricopa County Community College District.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES
- Iowa – Earn and Learn
- Kentucky – Tech Ready Apprentices for Careers in Kentucky and Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship
- New Jersey – Apprenticeship Network
- South Carolina – Apprenticeship Carolina

RESOURCES
- ADES Registered Apprenticeship Program

POLICIES
N/A
Arizona

KEY POLICY

Industry-Valued Credentials

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

Under state statute (15-249.15), the Arizona industry credentials incentive program is established within the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) to provide incentive awards to school districts, charter schools, and Career and Technical Education Districts for high school graduates who obtain a certification, credential or license that is accepted by a vocation or industry through a CTE course or program. Each year, the Office of Economic Opportunity provides an in-demand education list to ADE that includes information related to wages, business growth and job openings and that identifies and ranks the top occupations in each industry that address a critical statewide, regional or local economic need.

Based on this list, “the department of education shall align the office of economic opportunity in-demand education list to the career technical education industry credentials list of approved career technical education programs. … [T]he department of education shall convene a quality skills commission to be composed of individuals from the office of economic opportunity, the department of education, the Arizona commerce authority, school districts, charter schools, career technical education districts, industry partners and business organizations to review a separate career technical education industry credential list that includes only those certificates, credentials and licenses that would qualify for the Arizona industry credential incentive program. … [T]he department of education shall pay an incentive award of $1,000 to school districts, charter schools and career technical education districts.”

ADE also promotes other industry certification lists not tied to the industry credentials incentive program, which students can pursue. These are in support of Career and Technical Education District funding and the College and Career Readiness Index (Schools A–F).

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Arizona can consider consolidating and affirming the alignment of its promoted industry certification lists with the state’s high-demand, high-skill and high-wage occupations at the state and regional levels. To start, Arizona can consider conducting an audit of all existing offerings. The audit can also lead to the development and promotion of a singular process and criteria used by ADE and its contributing state agencies to identify all industry-valued certifications.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Indiana – [Promoted Industry Certifications](#)
- Kentucky – [Valid Industry Certifications](#)
- Louisiana – [Industry-Based Certification State Focus List](#)

RESOURCES

- ADE CTE Industry Credentials
- CredentialsMatter.org

POLICIES

- ARS § 15-249.15. Incentive Payments for Industry Certifications
KEY POLICY
Skills Retraining/Credentialing

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS
Several Arizona higher education institutions promote Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (IBEST), which is a supportive program for adult education and workforce development. IBEST is a nationally recognized instructional model that boosts students’ basic skills in reading, writing and math while they pursue a certificate in a career/technical program. Through IBEST programs, students are able to enroll for credit classes and work simultaneously toward attaining their career/technical certificate and passing the GED® exam. However, there do not appear to be any statutes to reinforce education to workforce retraining initiatives beyond typical workforce-related programs.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN
Arizona can consider focusing its efforts and ensure its skills retraining programs align with high-demand job fields. Arizona can consider providing a grant that provides employers or individuals reimbursement for skills retraining upon completion of a qualifying degree within an in-demand, high-skill field.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES
- Indiana – Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant
- Ohio – TechCred
- Washington – Worker Retraining Program

RESOURCES
- Pima Community College IBEST
- Arizona @ Work

POLICIES
N/A
Incentivize workforce engagement in student pathways and reduce the barriers that keep employers from participating.

**INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT INCENTIVES**
Establish, sustain and promote a comprehensive set of industry and employer engagement incentives for supporting education to workforce pathways. Incentives may include grant funds, tax credits, or local and regional support services.

**LEGAL BARRIERS**
Remove or lessen legal barriers such as liability insurance, workers’ compensation and worksite age restrictions to provide more learners with work-based learning opportunities.
Arizona does not appear to have a formal statute or agency policy/initiative in place to address industry engagement incentives as they relate to educational engagement.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN
Arizona can also consider providing financial incentives or tax credits for employers that hire students participating in a formal work-based learning program or funding reimbursement for employers who train, hire and retain new or incumbent workers to fill in-demand positions within recognized job fields.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES
- Georgia – Work-Based Learning Premium Credit
- Indiana – Next Level Jobs Employer Training Grant
- Iowa – Tax Credit

RESOURCES
N/A

POLICIES
N/A
Arizona does not appear to have a formal statute in place to address existing barriers that often limit employer engagement in various educational initiatives, particularly as it relates to direct engagement with K–12 students.

**KEY POLICY**  
Legal Barriers

**STATE POLICY ANALYSIS**
Arizona can consider implementing policies to reduce legal barriers for employers engaging in K–12 and postsecondary worksite-based learning. Arizona can consider a partnership with an external company to employ work-based learning students who are then placed at businesses. This helps to reduce many of the burdens such as worker’s compensation liability and other restrictions. Arizona can also consider allowing public schools to purchase certain insurance coverage for the benefit of businesses and students participating in career and technology programs and provide for some immunity from liability for certain public school students participating in these programs.

**OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN**

**PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES**
- Kentucky – Apprenticeship Programs & Partnerships
- Rhode Island – Work Immersion Training Grant
- Texas – Insurance Coverage

**RESOURCES**
- N/A

**POLICIES**
- N/A
DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

To ensure the strength of all the other policies, there must be cross-sector agreement on outcomes, strategies to get there and data to track progress.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>K–12</th>
<th>SUB-ASSOCIATE</th>
<th>ASSOCIATE</th>
<th>BACHELOR’S OR HIGHER</th>
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<td>PROGRAM QUALITY MEASURES</td>
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<td>STATE LONGITUDINAL DATA SYSTEM</td>
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PROGRAM QUALITY MEASURES
Establish shared statewide definitions and measures for quality of and success in education to workforce pathways. Ensure these shared priorities extend across agencies and systems and inform decisions about program offerings, funding and outcomes.

STATE LONGITUDINAL DATA SYSTEM
Ensure the state’s cross-agency data system collects and reports on data needed to evaluate education workforce programs against shared metrics for quality and success. Data should span agencies and education systems and into the workforce to inform decision-making and drive outcomes.
DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

STATE CASE STUDY

KEY POLICY
Program Quality Measures

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS
Achieve60AZ, a newly formed education alliance, has set an attainment goal for all sectors of the postsecondary education system. The goal is to have 60 percent of Arizona’s working-age adults hold a postsecondary degree or certificate by 2030. More than 150 community, business, philanthropic and education organizations and 40 local governments are part of the alliance.

As of 2021, Arizona now requires the Arizona Commerce Authority to annually collect and publicly report the following data on the most in-demand jobs in the state: starting salary, required education level, student loan information, completion rates and cost of education.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN
Arizona can consider setting shared cross-agency definitions and quality indicators to further support agency alignment and priorities associated with education to workforce pathways.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES
• Colorado – Talent Pipeline Report
• Indiana – Governor’s Workforce Cabinet
• Rhode Island – PrepareRI

RESOURCES
• Achieve60AZ
• AZ CTE Quality Commission

POLICIES
• HB 2438 - Data Reporting
KEY POLICY

State Longitudinal Data System

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

The Arizona Education Learning and Accountability System (AELAS) is Arizona’s K–12 state longitudinal data system managed by the Arizona Department of Education. The AELAS, which was created for the purpose of collecting and analyzing Arizona public education data at the individual, course, institution and system levels, aggregates data records from the breadth of the Arizona public education collection systems. A Data Governance Commission was established to provide oversight of the data system. Membership on the commission includes various representatives from K–12, higher education, elected officials and community leaders.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Presently, the data and system appear to be used solely for reporting and research purposes at the K–12 level. Given this, the state can consider clarifying and affirming participation by other state agencies in the provision of education and workforce-related data to inform and support education to workforce policy and program decision-making across state agencies and at the gubernatorial and legislative levels. Arizona can also consider how to leverage and utilize the information for creating shared priorities and mapping progress against meeting them.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Colorado – Talent Pipeline Report
- Florida – Talent Development Council
- Kentucky – KYStats

RESOURCES

- AELAS

POLICIES

- ARS § 15-249. AELAS
- ARS § 15-249.01. AELAS Data Governance Commission