



TO: Interested Parties

FROM: Bipartisan Research Team of FM3 Research (D) and HighGround Public Affairs (R)

RE: Findings from the Arizona Post-High School Education Policy Issues Survey

DATE: October 2024

Introduction: Education Forward Arizona, as part of its [Everything to Gain campaign](#), unveiled a new poll in an ongoing study regarding the state of attainment of education and training after high school. The results show that Arizonans overwhelmingly support specific policy actions from leaders and lawmakers to increase support and resources to help Arizonans attain a degree or certificate. The poll also showed that voters want to see candidates they are considering voting for this November supporting these policies.

Overview

A survey conducted by FM3 Research and HighGround Public Affairs from September 19-26, 2024, provides valuable insights into Arizona voters' attitudes toward postsecondary education policies. The survey included 602 likely November 2024 voters and has a margin of error of $\pm 4.0\%$ at a 95% confidence level.

Key Findings

1. **Voter Engagement:** Arizona voters are highly engaged in this year's election. A majority report a high level of motivation to vote in the upcoming election, with more than 90 percent intending to vote in all or most candidate races and ballot measures.
2. **State Direction and Partisan Divide:** Voters remain divided on the state's direction. A majority (55 percent) feel the state is on the wrong track, with views strongly split along partisan lines.
3. **Favorability of Public Educational Institutions:** Voters maintain favorable opinions of Arizona's public colleges, universities, and community colleges. Six in ten voters have a positive impression of the state's community colleges and universities.
4. **Support for Educational Attainment:** A significant portion of Arizona voters believe that more should be done to increase the percentage of students pursuing education or training beyond high school. Currently, only 48 percent of Arizonans aged 25 to 64 have earned a postsecondary certification or degree, and voters overwhelmingly support reaching the state's goal of 60 percent earning a postsecondary certification or degree by 2030. Support for this initiative spans across demographics, including age, education

level, gender, and political affiliation. However, concerns about the rising cost of education and student debt remain pervasive among voters.

5. **Policy Proposals:** The survey indicates robust voter support for policies aimed at expanding access to education and training. Key initiatives include:
 - **Career and technical training programs:** 95 percent support increasing access to apprenticeships, internships, and professional certification training programs.
 - **Dual enrollment:** 93 percent favor expanding dual enrollment opportunities for high school students to earn college credit.
 - **Online education:** 89 percent support increasing online education options to make college more accessible for working adults and rural residents.
 - **Adult technical education funding:** 83 percent support additional funding to help adults access job training and career education programs.
6. **FAFSA and College Affordability:** Two-thirds of voters are familiar with FAFSA, the federal application for student aid, and there is strong support for promoting its completion. Moreover, 74 percent of voters favor requiring high schools to provide assistance to students and families in completing FAFSA.
7. **Impact on Voting Behavior:** Voters are likely to support candidates who prioritize increasing educational attainment. Three in four voters say they would be more inclined to vote for a candidate who supports efforts like those outlined in #5 to hit the Achieve60AZ goal.

Conclusion

Arizona voters express strong support for increasing educational attainment through various means, including expanding career and technical education opportunities and improving access to higher education. A majority of voters would support candidates who champion these initiatives. Policymakers who prioritize education and workforce development stand to gain significant voter support.