

## Advancing Equity and Excellence in Education **CHAPTER 1**



# CRADLE TO CAREER

Pima County's Partnership for Graduation and Beyond







Successful Children...Engaged Community...Thriving Economy

Preparing every child for success in school and life, ensuring  
the economic vitality of our community

Cradle to Career

Pima County's Partnership for Graduation and Beyond



## A LETTER FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

Just over two years ago, our community joined forces to begin a new way of working together to address chronic issues in education facing our students, teachers and families. The myriad impacts of poverty, changing demographics and depressed public resources has negatively affected classrooms in many communities, including ours.

We spent the first year gathering data to understand the magnitude of the challenge. What started as a small group of leaders has turned into more than 100 organizations and over 280 individuals coming together to impact the lives of more than 340,000 Pima County students. Our partners have raised their hands and are committed to shared accountability for an education system that works for ALL students across our region.

Consequently, there is a growing sense that education in this county is no longer just the job of educators: We all share responsibility. Based on the data analysis in our January 2016 Baseline Report, networks of Cradle to Career partners identified outcomes to tackle first what will give our kids a better chance to thrive. These include Kindergarten Readiness, High School Graduation and the Re-Engagement of Opportunity Youth.


The nature of collective impact calls for using data as a flashlight to inform decision-making and developing solutions together based on what is working. It is a process that requires partners to constantly re-examine their work, make a commitment to stay engaged with one another and to remain fully open to embracing proven methodologies.

This mission is possible, but not without recognizing that the “we” and the “our” referred to in this report, includes you. Whether you are an investor, an educator, employer, faith-based or community leader, policy maker, student, or parent, we need you as a partner. We invite you to dig into our community report, but mostly, we ask you to join us in this important work.

Onward,



Vicki Balentine  
Co-Chair, Leadership Council



Jon Kasle  
Co-Chair, Leadership Council

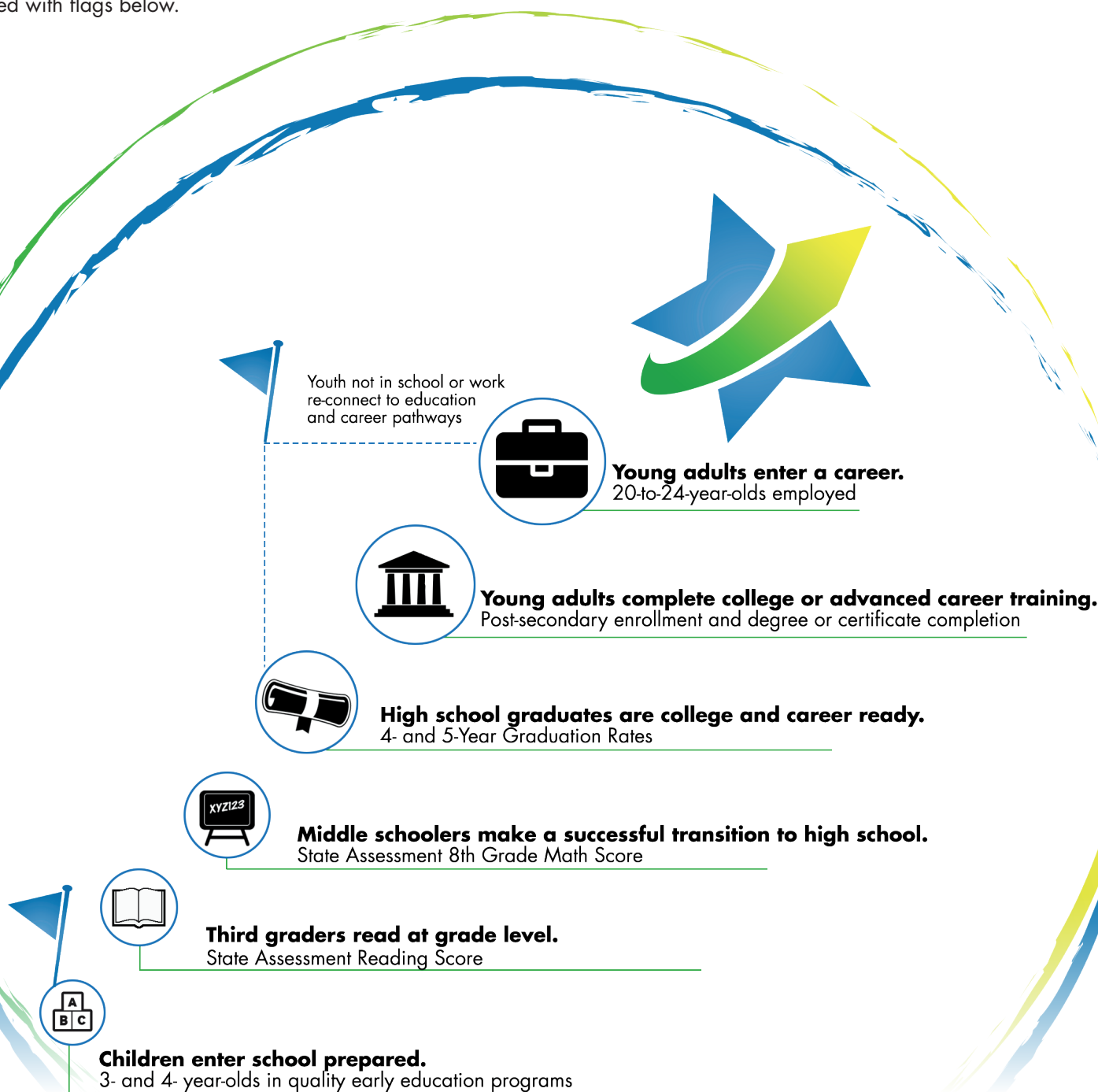
## Contents

What we measure and track over time	4
Who we are	5
Our footprint	8
Who we serve	9
Current areas of focus	10
Kindergarten readiness	12
High school graduation	14
Re-engagement of opportunity youth	16
Future areas of focus	18
Early grade literacy	20
Middle school math	22
Post-secondary education success	23
Career attainment	24
Acknowledgment	26



# What We Measure and Track Over Time

To measure our progress, the Partnership has seven shared outcomes with community-wide indicators for student success, which are tracked and reported annually. These indicators help facilitate thoughtful and measurable action. In our first two years, Change Networks have been established to collaboratively improve two specific outcomes along this continuum as indicated with flags below.





# Who We Are

Learning doesn't begin and end in the classroom. Developing children into educated, independent adults is the job of the entire community. The Cradle to Career Partnership (C2C) galvanizes Pima County's many existing, diverse organizations and initiatives and aligns them in specific work that strengthens supports for young people—from birth to career.

Determined to improve academic success in the greater Tucson Metro Area and across Pima County, a group of leaders from various sectors, including early childhood educators, school district superintendents, a community college chancellor, philanthropists, business and non-profit executives, came together in September 2014 to form the Cradle to Career Partnership.

These leaders had no intention of launching a new program, but rather to pursue a collective effort to transform the larger system of education and learning by aligning their work and investments to a common vision, a set of shared outcomes and a belief that we can achieve greater impact – together.

## WHAT WE DO:



The Partnership is driven by four shared goals.

1. Every child is prepared for school.
2. Every student is successful in school and graduates prepared for college, career and success in life.
3. Every youth who is not in school reconnects to education, training or employment opportunities.
4. Every young adult has access to a post-secondary opportunity or career.





## SHARED RESPONSIBILITY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND CREDIT

The individuals listed here have committed to play their part and stay at the table through successes and failures.

Along with the dedicated members of our Change Networks, these leaders have placed the Cradle to Career Partnership at the forefront of the regional and statewide movement to improve student outcomes.

We are one of Arizona's three collective impact partnerships for education and have received the Sustaining Gateway designation within the national Strive Together Network.

## 2016 C2C Leadership Council

### **Linda Arzoumanian**

Office of the Pima County School  
Superintendent

### **David Baker**

Superintendent  
Flowing Wells Unified School District

### **Vicki Balentine, Co-Chair**

Education Consultant

### **Jessica Brisson**

Senior Director, SE Regional Area  
First Things First

### **Collette Brown**

Community Development Manager  
Freeport-McMoRan

### **Melinda Cervantes**

Director  
Pima County Public Library

### **Andrew Comrie**

Provost  
University of Arizona

### **Sherri Dahl**

Superintendent  
Diocese of Tucson Catholic Schools

### **Debby Embry**

President & CEO  
Tucson Urban League

### **Francisco Garcia**

Director of Public Health  
Pima County Health Department

### **Bernadette Gruber**

Education Domain Director  
4Tucson

### **Steve Holmes**

Superintendent  
Sunnyside Unified School District

### **Barry Julian**

University Development Tucson  
Representative  
Grand Canyon State University

### **Jon Kastle, Co-Chair**

VP, Communications and External Affairs  
Raytheon

### **Lee Lambert**

Chancellor  
Pima Community College

### **Jennifer Lohse**

Program Director  
Tucson Foundations

### **Erin Lyons**

CEO  
Child Parent Centers, Inc.

### **Clint Mabie**

President & CEO  
Community Foundation for Southern  
Arizona

### **Lea Marquez-Peterson**

President & CEO  
Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

### **Doug Martin**

President & General Manager  
Good News Radio Broadcasting

### **Ron Marx**

Dean of College of Education  
University of Arizona

### **Stu Mellan**

President & CEO  
Jewish Federation of Southern Arizona

### **Charlene Mendoza**

Founder and Principal  
Arizona College Prep Academy

### **Patrick Nelson**

Superintendent  
Amphitheater Public Schools

### **Tony Penn**

President & CEO  
United Way of Tucson and Southern  
Arizona

### **Kathleen Quigley**

Presiding Judge  
Pima County Juvenile Courts Center

### **Jonathan Rothschild**

Mayor  
City of Tucson

### **Tracy Salkowitz**

President & CEO  
Jewish Community Foundation of  
Southern Arizona

### **HT Sanchez**

Superintendent  
Tucson Unified School District

### **Eric Schindler**

President & CEO  
Child & Family Resources

### **Joseph Snell**

President & CEO  
Sun Corridor Inc.

### **Betty Stauffer**

Executive Director  
Literacy Connects

### **Alan Storm**

Superintendent  
Pima County JTED

### **Manuel Valenzuela**

Superintendent  
Sahuarita Unified School District

### **Michael Varney**

President & CEO  
Tucson Metro Chamber

### **Mark Vitale**

Campus Director  
University of Phoenix

### **Jenny Volpe**

Executive Director  
Make Way for Books

### **Doug Wilson**

Superintendent  
Marana Unified School District





## Data & Research Team

**Brett Bonner**  
Sahuarita Unified School District

**Lisa Colling**  
First Things First

**Danielle Flink**  
Girl Scouts of Southern Arizona

**Roopa Iyer**  
First Things First

**Cindy Hurley**  
Tucson Unified School District

**Juliet King**  
Tucson Unified School District

**Darlene Lopez**  
LeCroy & Milligan Associates

**Jay Midyett**  
Amphitheater Public Schools

**Kristin Reidy**  
Marana Unified School District

**Nic Richmond**  
Pima Community College

**Abel Vazquez**  
Pima JTED

## Communications Team

**LaVonne Douville**  
United Way of Tucson & Southern Arizona

**Doug Martin**  
Good News Broadcasting

**Daniela Siqueiros**  
Office of the Pima County School Superintendent

**Tracy Salkowitz**  
Jewish Community Foundation of Southern Arizona

## Fundraising Team

**Vicki Balentine**  
Education Consultant

**LaVonne Douville**  
United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona

**Nikki Halle**  
Halle Foundation

**Jennifer Lohse**  
Tucson Foundations

**Jon Kasle**  
Raytheon Company

**Clint Mabie**  
Community Foundation for Southern Arizona

**Stu Mellan**  
Jewish Federation of Southern Arizona

**Tony Penn**  
United Way of Tucson & Southern Arizona

## Public Policy Team

**David Baker**  
Flowing Wells Unified School District

**Vicki Balentine**  
Education Consultant

**Clint Mabie**  
Community Foundation for Southern Arizona

**Ron Marx**  
University of Arizona College of Education

**Eric Schindler**  
Child & Family Resources

**Manny Valenzuela**  
Sahuarita Unified School District

## C2C Staff

**Robert Clark**  
Youth Leadership Coordinator

**Bea Gallivan**  
Program Coordinator

**Amanda Kucich**  
Senior Director

**Ashley Janicki**  
Opportunity Youth Facilitator

**Kassondra Silva**  
Data Manager

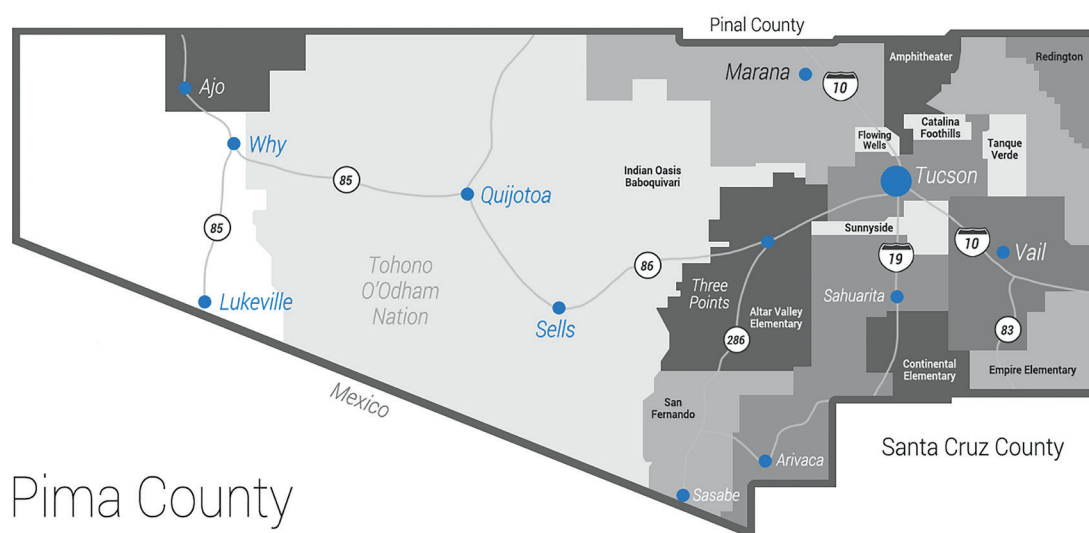
**Allison Titcomb**  
Kindergarten Readiness Facilitator



# Our Footprint

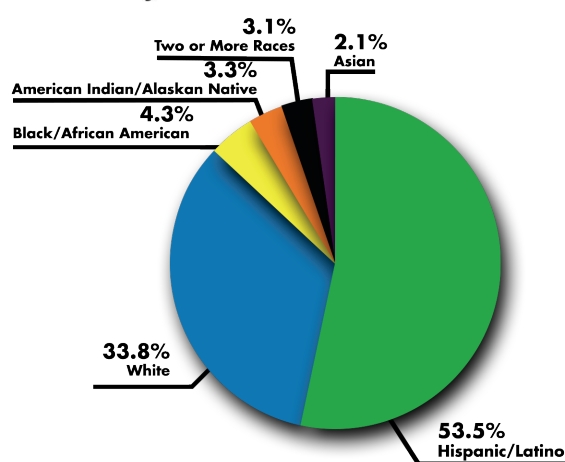
The Cradle to Career Partnership includes more than 280 individuals and 100 organizations that are holding themselves accountable to improve educational outcomes for young people throughout Tucson and Pima County.

Our seven partner school districts that have agreed to share data—Amphitheater, Flowing Wells, Marana, Pima JTED, Sahuarita, Sunnyside and Tucson – are central to this partnership. We are in dialogue with additional school districts to join in our work.

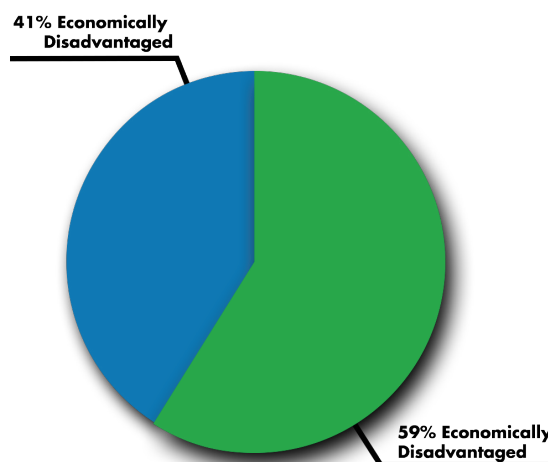


In Pima County for 2015, there were 151,731 students enrolled in pre-school to 12th grade, with 63.1% identifying as students of color.

## Pima County



Source: Arizona Department of Education; Economically disadvantaged based on eligibility for free/reduced lunch



Arizona Department of Education, October 1 Enrollment Figures

The Cradle to Career Community Impact Report shows how well we are currently supporting more than **341,000** children, youth, and young adults in Pima County on their journey through the education pipeline. It represents a tool to engage others and to inform action that will drive change for all of Pima County's young people.



This icon signifies the inclusion of new baseline data for indicators spanning early childhood to young adulthood.

# Who We Serve

More than **341,000** children and youth live in Pima County  
(US Census, ACS, 2015, 1-year Estimates).



**Under 5-years old**  
59,416 (17.4%)

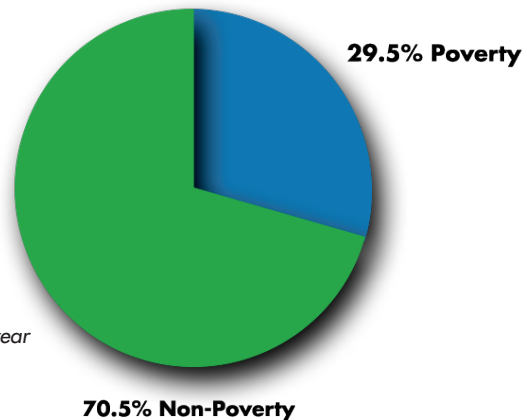


**6- to 18-years-old**  
159,362 (46.7%)



**19- to 24-years-old**  
122,556 (35.9%)

**29.5% of children, youth and young adults (aged 0-24 years) live in poverty.**



US Census, ACS, 2015, 1-year

## **Equity in Education**

Equity continues to be a priority of the Partnership. All the work of C2C is grounded in the belief that every child can be successful and that success should not be related to individual characteristics, unique challenges or family background. The path to success will not look the same for every child. The use of data-driven processes, along with new types and levels of coordinated community support, allows C2C to identify and spur practices that improve student outcomes.

Along with updated data on the core indicators, this year's report includes achievement gaps where possible. Achievement gaps represent the difference between how one subgroup is performing compared to the highest-achieving subgroup. This type of data helps identify issues of equity and assists in tracking progress toward achieving equity for all our children.



# Current Areas of Focus

The following pages present data for C2C's current areas of focus:

- Kindergarten Readiness
- High School Graduation
- Re-engagement of Opportunity Youth









# Kindergarten Readiness

**Our Aspiration:** Every child is prepared for school.

**Indicator:** Percent of 3- and 4-year-olds enrolled in a high-quality early education program

*This indicator was selected in the absence of a state-wide assessment for kindergarten readiness. Once an assessment is available in Pima County, this core indicator will change and high-quality early education program enrollment will be tracked as a contributing indicator.*

## Annual Change:



The number of 3- and 4-year-olds in high-quality programs increased to 20.6%. Compared to the 2015 ratio of 1 in 6 children, now 1 in 5 are getting a better opportunity to enter Kindergarten prepared for success. However, that means there are more than **18,200** 3- and 4-year-olds who are missing out on getting a better start in education. Quality early education programs are defined as either Head Start programs or those programs with a 3-, 4-, or 5-star rating in the statewide quality rating system, Quality First.

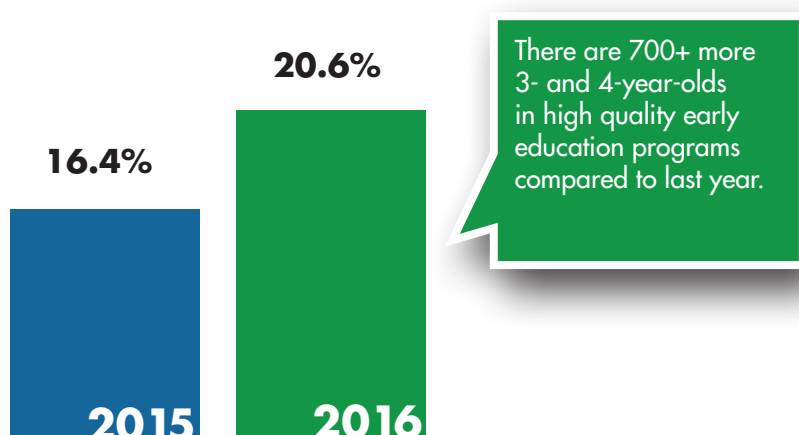


*Participating in the Kindergarten Readiness Change Network has caused us to look at Quality First data made available through First Things First in new ways. Looking at it with community partners, we've been able to think critically through opportunities, assumptions, challenges and approaches, which has encouraged thoughtful and impactful decision-making, ensuring more young children have access to quality early education across the region.*

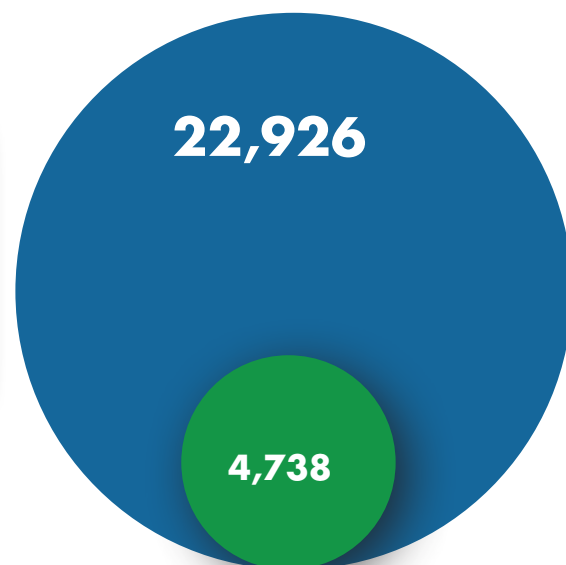
- Jessica Brisson, First Things First, Senior Director, Southeast



## 3- and 4-Year-Olds in High-Quality Early Education Programs Pima County



There are 700+ more 3- and 4-year-olds in high quality early education programs compared to last year.

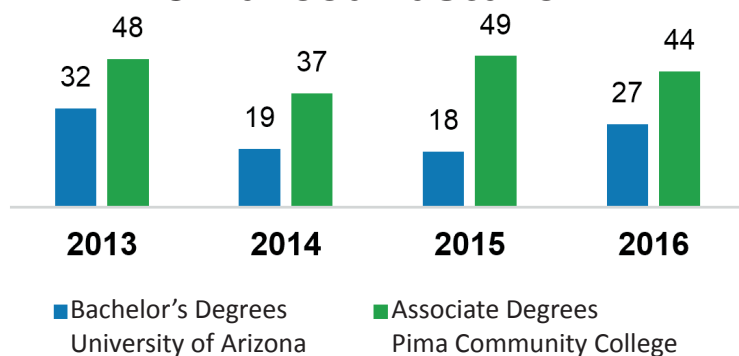


- 3- and 4-year-olds in high quality programs
- Total 3- and 4-year-olds in Pima County

Sources: Self-reported child care provider data provided by First Things First, August 2016 (excludes protected tribal data) and Child Parent Centers, Inc.; US Census, American Community Survey, 1-year estimates, 2015.



## Degrees in Early Childhood Education



C2C is also tracking the number of degrees awarded for Early Childhood Education from our region's largest university and community college network as a contributing indicator to Kindergarten Readiness. Although changes in degree requirements, federal student aid, and overall enrollment likely contributed to decreases in 2014, the total number of degrees for both schools has increased from 2009, when Great Expectations began, a collaborative effort of First Focus on Kids to increase early childhood degree attainment supported by First Things First funding.

## What does quality early care and education look like?

A high-quality child care or preschool setting has teachers and caregivers with expertise in working with kids five and younger, includes a learning environment that nurtures the emotional, social, and academic development of every child and prepares children for kindergarten. Quality child care and preschool settings build on basic health and safety to include:

- Teachers and caregivers who know how to work with infants, toddlers and preschoolers;
- Positive, nurturing relationships that give young kids the individual attention they need;
- Learning environments that encourage creativity and imaginative play;
- Hands-on activities that stimulate and encourage positive brain connections in children; and,
- Caregivers who provide regular feedback to parents on the development of their child.

First Focus on Kids (FFK), the Kindergarten Readiness Change Network, brings together organizations working in early education to increase the number of 3- and 4-year-olds who are in high-quality programs. FFK partners are using data to identify providers that have improved their Quality First star rating and study specific practices these centers are implementing. As these practices are better understood, FFK intends to do small tests of change to learn which ones are most impactful.

*(Adapted from First Things First. Learn more at [QualityFirstAZ.com](http://QualityFirstAZ.com))*

### First Focus on Kids – Kindergarten Readiness Change Network Goal:

By 2020, 1 in 3 (33%) of 3- and 4-year-olds are in a high-quality early education program.

## Additional Momentum

Two research and development projects are also underway related to C2C's goal that every child is prepared to succeed in kindergarten. In partnership with Great Expectation's Communities of Practice, (created to help more early childhood educators earn post-secondary degrees), C2C is collecting survey data to identify barriers these students face in completing their education to inform strategies to overcome them. The second project is located at Maldonado Elementary School serving predominantly Hispanic and economically disadvantaged students. Data is being collected to study how a Community Connector placed at Maldonado can better engage and encourage parents to take advantage of available services that promote kindergarten readiness, such as early literacy programs, home visitation and oral health services.



# High School Graduation

**Our Aspiration:** Every youth graduates from high school ready for college and a career.

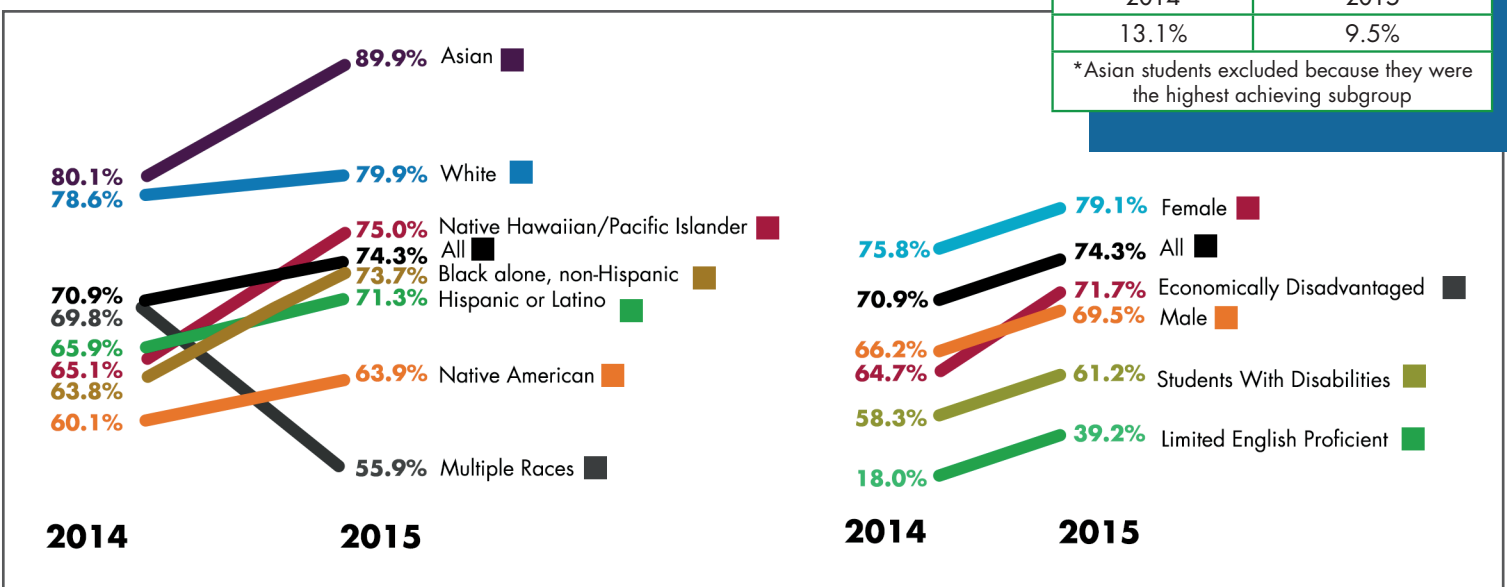
**Indicator:** Percent of students graduating in 4 and 5 years

**Annual Change:**



The 4-year graduation rate for Pima County increased from 70.9% to 74.3%. Additionally, most subgroups also saw an increase in graduation rates. An additional 5.5% of students graduated within 5 years.

## 4-Year High School Graduation Rates



### Achievement Gap between White Students and Students of Color\*

2014	2015
13.1%	9.5%
*Asian students excluded because they were the highest achieving subgroup	

## Additional Percentage of Students Graduating in 5 Years in Pima County

All	Hispanic/Latino	White	Black/African American	American Indian/Alaskan Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	Multiple Races	Economically Disadvantaged	Limited English Proficient	Students With Disabilities
5.5%	6.8%	3.2%	5.0%	4.4%	2.6%	2.4%	13.4%	7.1%	10.2%	12.6%

Arizona Department of Education 2015

Obtaining a high school diploma is a critical step in becoming a skilled member of Pima County's workforce. Unfortunately, too many students are failing to achieve this milestone. This is especially true for many students of color and students facing unique challenges in school.

To address this issue and ensure all students successfully transition out of high school, C2C has been working closely with superintendents and their teams to identify what and where strategies will be most effective in increasing graduation rates.

To begin this work, C2C partner school districts are sharing and studying 9th grade chronic absenteeism and Algebra I credit attainment data in order to identify "bright spot" schools that may have effective practices in place that could be spread and studied in other schools.

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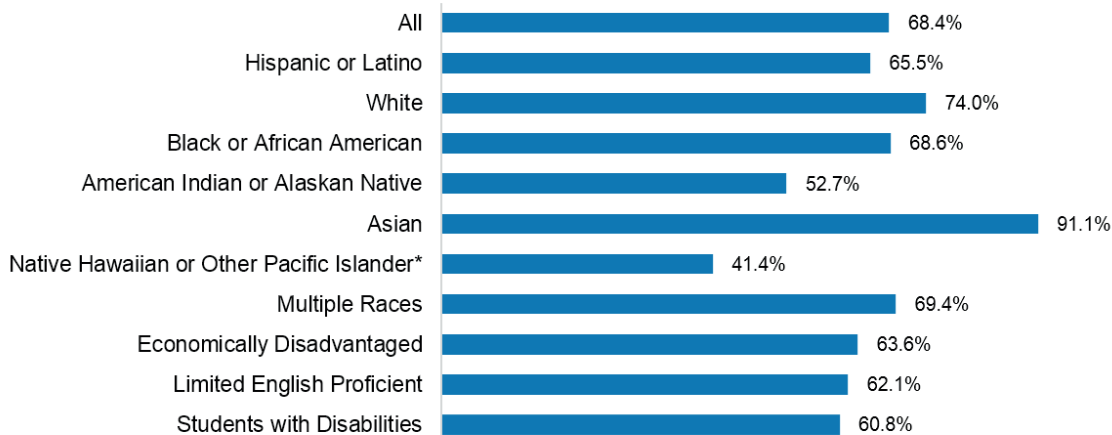
*Bringing the data of partnering districts to the forefront of our community has helped bring clarity to the high impact strategies that many of my colleagues are implementing across our city. The dialogue we have had as superintendents around the data and the sharing of best practices has been critical to ensuring the academic success of every student.*

”

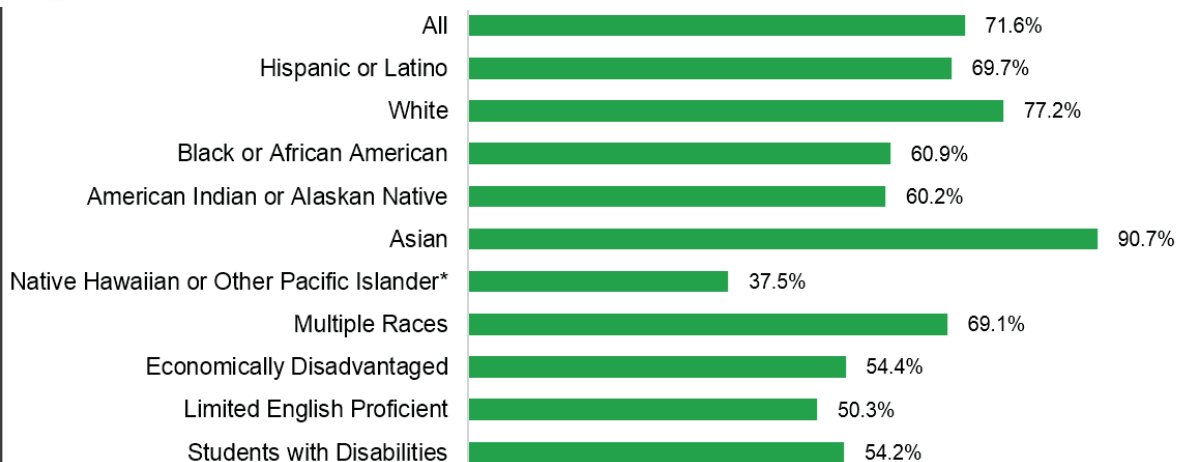
*-Steve Holmes, SUSD Superintendent*

## 2016 Percentage of 9th Graders on Track (Partnership Districts Only)

### Students Attending 90% of School Days



### Students Passing Algebra I by 9th Grade



Data provided by C2C partnering school districts; Data include traditional high schools only.



# Re-engagement of Opportunity Youth

**Our Aspiration:** Every youth who is not in school or work reconnects to education and career pathways.

**Indicator:** Percent of 16- to 24-year-olds NOT connected to school or work

**Annual Change:**



From 2014 to 2015, the percent of opportunity youth increased from 15.2% to 17.1%. **That's more than 25,000 16-24-year-olds that are not in school nor working.**



*When I was trying to get back into school and find a job, it was hard to do alone. I needed someone who I could go to that could help me learn about what schools were out there and how to get into programs that helped me support myself. With that kind of support, I was able to do the things I wanted and am working on new goals.*



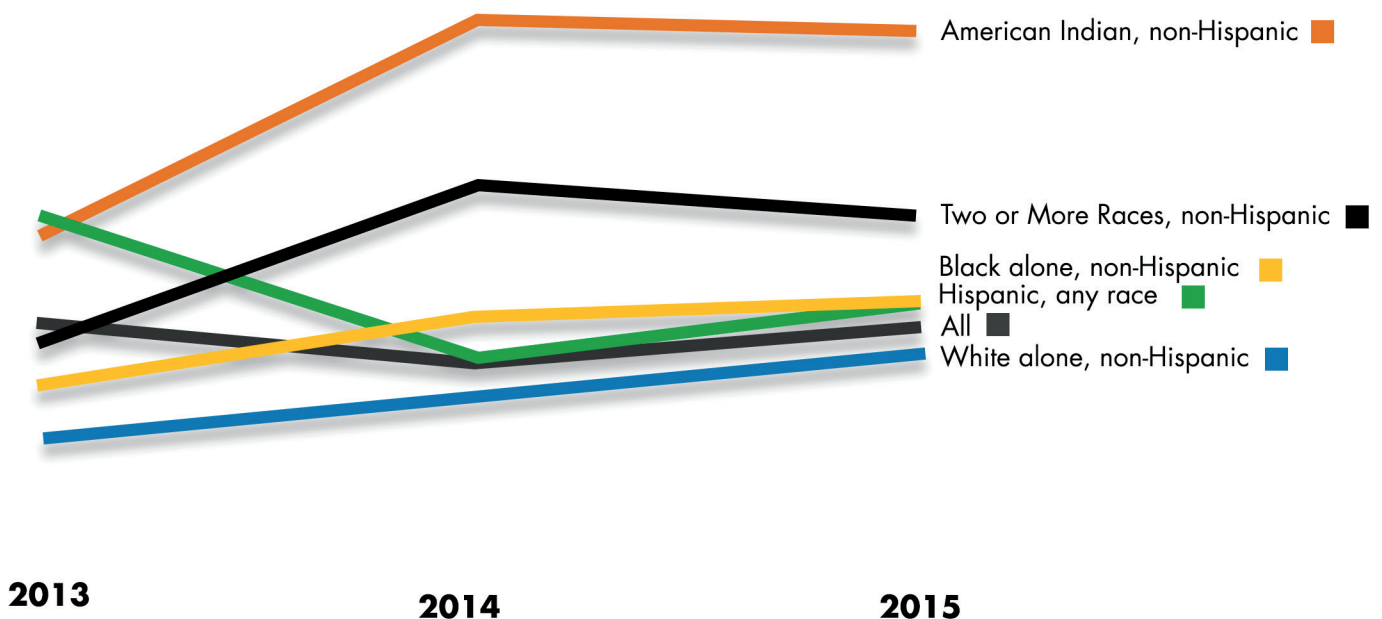
- Janai Molina, Opportunity Youth

## Percentage of 16- to 24-year-olds Not in School and Not Working

35%

25%

10%



**Data note:** The 2016 Baseline Report used data from the Opportunity Index reported as 13.7%, which was a 3-year estimate. In order to provide disaggregated data on an annual basis and identify issues of equity, C2C is now using the American Community Survey's Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) 1-year estimates.



### Contributing Indicator:



For many opportunity youth, the path to high school graduation is not linear. Because of this, the Partnership is also tracking 7-year graduation rates as a contributing indicator. **The 7-year graduation rate for the 2008 high school cohort in Pima County was 79.3%.**

Youth and young adults of Pima County are key to ensuring the economic vitality of our community. They make up a large part of the workforce and can grow to become our future community leaders. However, there is a large number of 16- to 24-year-olds who have become disconnected from school and work, often without obtaining the credentials needed to find stable employment. They hold enormous opportunity and many are highly motivated to re-engage but struggle to do so without support.

In order to overcome the challenges opportunity youth face, the community must ensure they not only have access to support systems but that the organizations serving them are working together to address gaps inherent to these systems.

Youth on the Rise (YOTR), the opportunity youth change network, is committed to amplifying youth voice, using data and leveraging existing resources to provide opportunity youth quality education and career pathways that lead to economic and social mobility. Over the last year, YOTR has established a charter outlining goals and the scope of work for the next year. This collaborative of more than 40 partners has begun to identify continuous improvement projects aimed at retrieving opportunity youth and increasing the success of alternative education programs. In addition to these projects, YOTR has continued to prototype a Re-Engagement Center (REC) with Pima Prevention Partnership serving as the oversight agency. The REC is a resource hub for opportunity youth, who work with Pathway Coaches to connect with service providers and create their own education and work goals.

### Youth on the Rise – Opportunity Youth Change Network

Goal: By 2020, no more than 12.1% of 16- to 24-year-olds will be disconnected from school and work; a 5% decrease from 2015.



# Future Areas of Focus

The following pages present data for outcomes C2C is committed to improving and will be areas of focus in the future. Tracking these indicators in this early development phase when there is not currently collaborative action happening in the Partnership is still vital to the work, as it allows us to see trends over time that will help inform our work in the future. As the Partnership continues to build resources, we look forward to establishing change networks to initiate and sustain strategies in in the following areas:

- Early Grade Literacy
- Middle School Math
- Post-secondary Education Success
- Career Attainment









# Early Grade Literacy

**Our Aspiration:** Every 3rd grader reads at grade level.

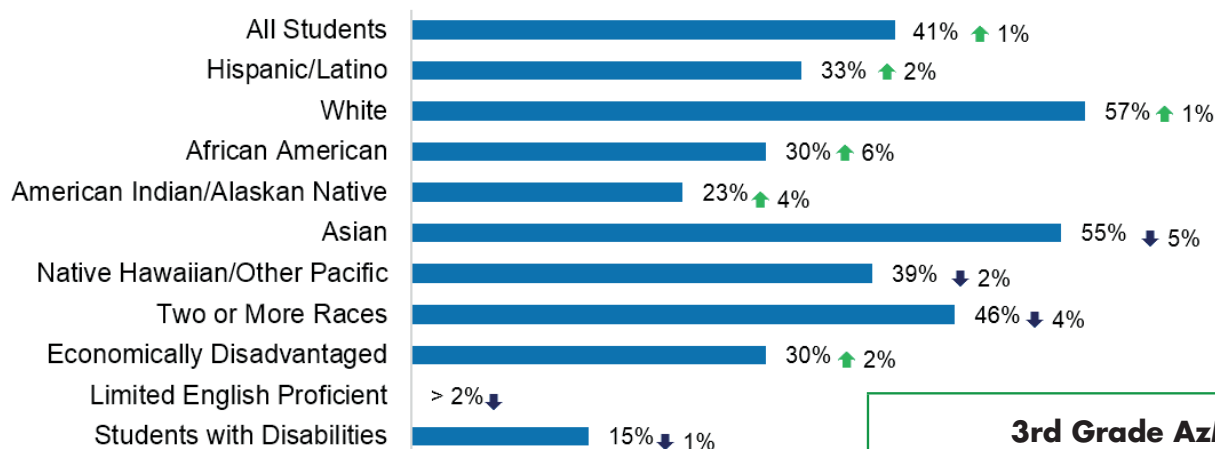
**Indicator:** Percent of 3rd graders passing state standards for Language Arts

**Annual Change:**



The percentage of all 3rd graders passing Arizona's Measurement of Educational Readiness to Inform Teaching (AzMERIT) Language Arts (ELA) assessment increased to 41%. There were also increases for some subgroups with Black/African American students showing the most annual growth. However, there is still considerable work to be done to close the achievement gap, particularly for students with limited English proficiency and students with disabilities.

## Percent Passing 3rd Grade Language Arts Pima County, 2016



Note: Arrows show change from 2015 scores

AzMERIT Scores, Arizona Department of Education

## 3rd Grade AzMERIT ELA Achievement Gap between White Students and Students of Color

	2015	2016
Hispanic/Latino	25%	24%
Black/African American	32%	27%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	37%	34%
Asian	N/A	2%
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific	15%	18%
Two or More Races	6%	11%



When our children transition into kindergarten it can be a big change and not all of them are starting at the same place. The Reading Seed Kinder project is helping Amphi close that literacy gap. Cradle to Career has given us an opportunity to work with Literacy Connects in new ways; looking closely at the data to see what program adjustments have the most impact on our students. This isn't just collaboration as usual. Together we're sharing ownership for student success and that is what makes this so exciting.



- Patrick Nelson, Superintendent, Amphitheater Public Schools





One of the most critical milestones for young children is reading at grade level by 3rd grade. During this period, children transition from “learning to read” to “reading to learn” and reading proficiently at this stage prepares them to be successful as curricula becomes more challenging. Many children who lag behind their peers in 3rd grade continue to struggle and have a higher chance of leaving high school without a diploma.

### **Enabling Collective Impact**

#### **Reading Seed Kinder Project**

With support from United Way, Literacy Connects piloted the Reading Seed Kinder Project during the 2015-2016 school year. This project uses an innovative approach of one-to-one mentorship and literacy coaching to increase the number of kindergartners demonstrating mastery of pre-literacy skills needed to be proficient readers in 3rd grade. All students showed substantial growth with students struggling the most at the beginning of the year eventually making the biggest gains. Not only was this a success for the students in the project but through C2C’s data-sharing network, our partners are learning about promising practices that can be spread to other schools and tracked for effectiveness.

- 64 students received consistent one-to-one mentorship and vital support with reading.
- 24 dedicated volunteers donated 1,240 hours of their time.
- 4,805 books were distributed to children and their families.
- 100% of students showed substantial growth in their reading skills.

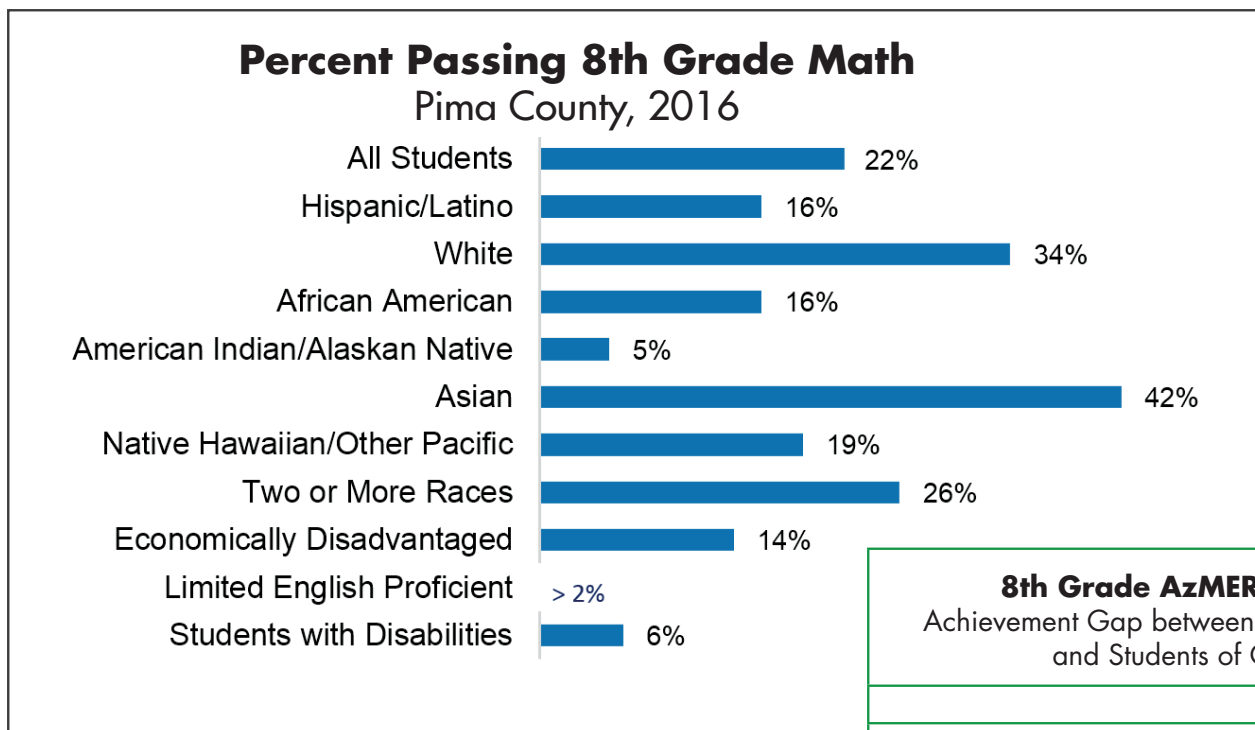
# Middle School Math

**Our Aspiration:** Every 8th grader performs at or above grade level in math.

**Indicator:** Percent of 8th graders passing math state standards

**New Baseline:** 22% of 8th graders in Pima County passed the AzMERIT math assessment.

For the most recent AzMERIT results, the Arizona Department of Education implemented a policy change that allowed high-performing 8th graders taking high school-level courses, such as Algebra I or Geometry, to take the end-of-course assessments for these classes. These advanced students were not required to take the 8th grade math assessment and thus are not included in the data presented. Because of this change, the 2016 results will be used as the new baseline data to ensure more accurate comparisons over time.



AzMERIT Scores, Arizona Department of Education

8th Grade AzMERIT Math Achievement Gap between White Students and Students of Color	
	2016
Hispanic/Latino	18%
Black/African American	18%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	29%
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific	15%
Two or More Races	8%
*Asian students excluded because they were the highest achieving subgroup.	



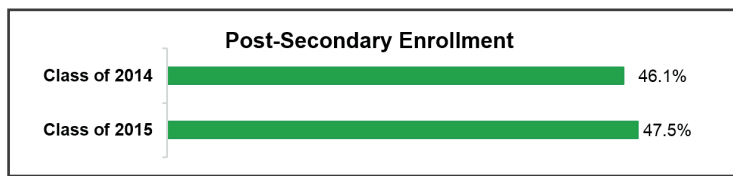
# Post-Secondary Education Success

**Our Aspiration:** Every youth can attain a post-secondary education (PSE) credential leading to a career.

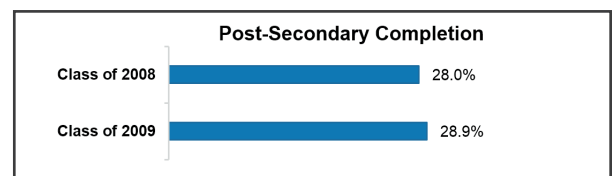
## Indicator:

- Percent of students who enroll in a PSE institution
- Percent of students who obtain a PSE credential

**Annual Change:**  in Enrollment and  in Completion



Percentage of students for each class that enrolled in a post-secondary institution the fall after graduation.



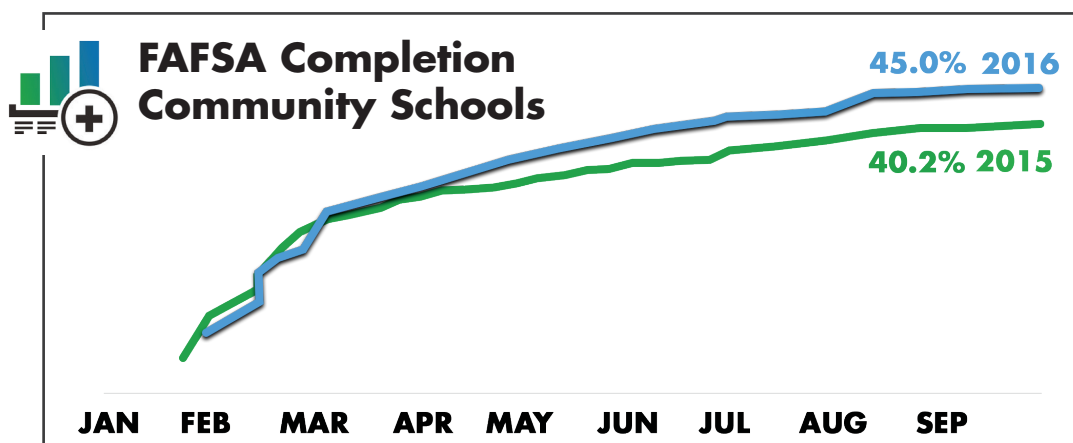
Percentage of students for each class that completed either an Associate or Bachelor's degree within 6 years.

By 2020, 68% of jobs in Arizona will require a post-secondary education. The good news is that the total number of jobs in our state is projected to increase every year over the next four years. However, if we do not work toward supporting our youth in earning post-secondary credentials, our community will not be able to meet the needs of local employers.

[https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Recovery2020.SR\\_.Web\\_.pdf](https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Recovery2020.SR_.Web_.pdf)

Although there were slight increases in college enrollment and completion, there is still much work to be done.

One of the largest factors to post-secondary education success is affordability and students who complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) are much more likely to enroll and complete a post-secondary credential. Important work around FAFSA completion is being led by the Community Schools Initiative sponsored by the City of Tucson Mayor's Office and managed by Arizona Serves at Prescott College. Data below are for the six community schools participating in this FAFSA completion strategy.



# Career Attainment

**Our Aspiration:** Every youth is prepared for a career.

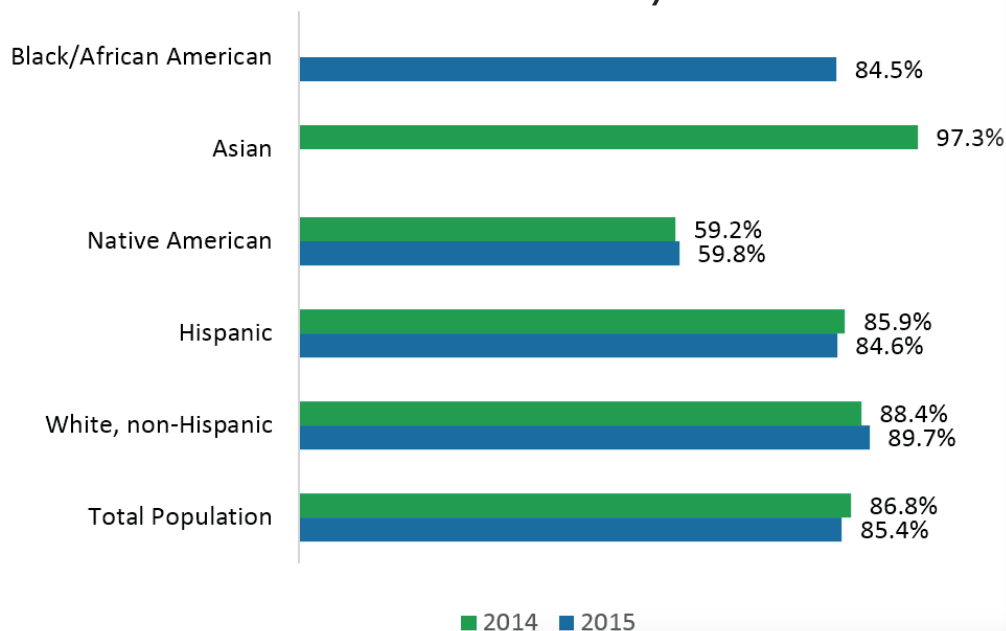
**Indicator:** Percent of 20- to 24-year-olds employed

**Annual Change:**



From 2014 to 2015, the percentage of employed 20- to 24-year-olds decreased 1.4 percentage points to 85.4%. That means nearly 10,000 young adults do not have jobs.

## Employment Rates by Race/Ethnicity for 20- to 24-Year-Olds Pima County



US Census, ACS, 2015, 1-year Estimates

Note: Missing Black/African American for 2014 and Asian for 2015 data due to unavailability of US Census American Community Survey Data.



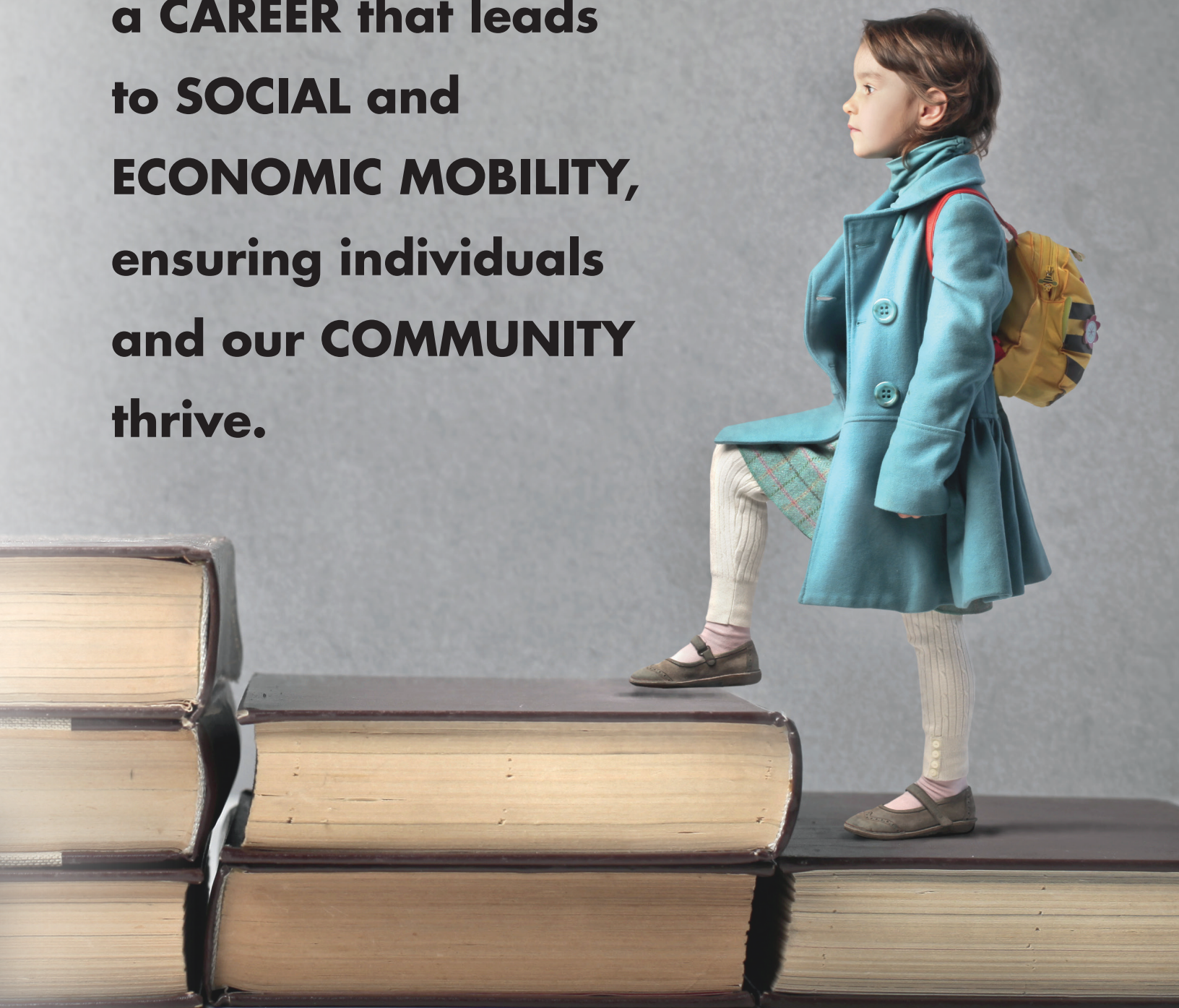
Cradle to Career has brought the community together; corporate, non-profit and education; to develop and promote the best practices that advance our children's education from pre-school to employment. It will take this kind of community effort to see the kind of results we will need for our future prosperity.

- Mayor Jonathan Rothschild, City of Tucson





**A SUCCESSFUL**  
**journey** though the  
**EDUCATION** pipeline  
ends with attaining  
a **CAREER** that leads  
to **SOCIAL** and  
**ECONOMIC MOBILITY,**  
ensuring individuals  
and our **COMMUNITY**  
thrive.







## WITH SINCEREST **THANKS**

Thank you to the pioneering investors with the vision for what is possible when we work collectively to improve outcomes from cradle to career.



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# The Work Ahead

As we move the work forward together to end the cycle of inequity and exclusion, we will reimagine a system where all children, youth and young adults achieve their full potential. As you have read, we have begun to identify big-picture barriers that are keeping our kids from succeeding and are now testing new approaches that are starting to see results. In Chapter 2 we will continue to share our progress in expanding access to quality pre-k education programs, supporting 9th graders to stay on track and bringing back our older youth to pathways that lead them to social and economic mobility.

You can do many things to support every child, cradle to career.

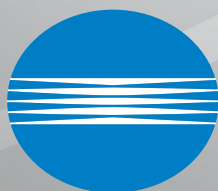
- Use the data in this document to question your assumptions about our schools and our community. Encourage your friends, family, neighbors and co-workers to do the same.
- Be present in your own neighborhood and community to see the unseen and lend a hand to those in need.
- Explore our local nonprofit community, find an organization whose mission matches your passions.

Great work is happening across our education system but too often it's hidden or occurs in isolation. Our role is to lift up the promising practices and inspired innovation to help all our partners take it further, by spreading what works.

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