



Lumina[™]
FOUNDATION



Understanding the 2040 Goal: Essential Elements

What is the 2040 Goal?

By 2040, 75 percent of adults in the U.S. labor force will have college degrees or other credentials of value leading to economic prosperity.

How will Lumina define economic prosperity?

We will initially measure economic prosperity as people with college degrees, certificates, or industry certifications who earn at least 15 percent more than the national average for adults with only high school diplomas.

Who will Lumina include in this measurement?

Working-age adults ages 25 to 64 in the United States who are part of the labor force—that is, individuals who are working, unemployed seeking work, or serving in the U.S. armed forces.

Will the goal data be public?

Yes, through A Stronger Nation. Lumina’s data visualization tool offers state and national insights. Users can explore prosperity-related and attainment data disaggregated by state, age, credential type, race, and ethnicity.

Why is Lumina limiting its measure to earnings initially?

The federal government reliably reports earnings nationally. We recognize that credential value goes beyond income. However, existing data sources limit our ability to measure other aspects of prosperity. We seek data that allows us to assess other economic and social well-being dimensions. Our ability to gauge prosperity will evolve, and we are committed to incorporating broader measures such as:

- ▶ Return on Investment (ROI): Comparing education expenses to long-term financial benefits.
- ▶ Job Satisfaction and Well-Being: Assessing professional fulfillment and career stability.
- ▶ Community Prosperity: Examining workforce participation, economic growth, and societal well-being.

Will Lumina still track education attainment?

Yes. A Stronger Nation will continue to track the percentage of the working-age population with college degrees and other credentials.

How does the 2040 Goal differ from the 2025 Goal?

	2025 Goal	2040 Goal
<i>Our Focus</i>	Increasing education attainment beyond high school.	Increasing economic prosperity through higher attainment + higher earnings.
<i>What Counts</i>	Number of people with college degrees or other credentials beyond a high school diploma.	Number of people earning at least 15% more than the average high school graduate.
<i>Population</i>	U.S. adults ages 25 to 64.	U.S. adults 25 to 64 in the labor force (working, seeking work, or in the armed forces).
<i>Data Source</i>	American Community Survey	American Community Survey

Is increasing education attainment still a national priority?

Yes. Increasing education is essential to achieving the new goal. However, we will focus on ensuring that the degrees and other credentials people earn provide real economic value and returns on investment.

How close is the nation to 75 percent today?

As of 2023, the most recent year for which data are available, 44.1 percent of working-age adults in the U.S. labor force have degrees, certificates, or industry certifications and earn at least 15 percent more than the average high school graduate.