



Lumina's Goal 2040 is a value-centered attainment goal.

The primary objective of the State Attainment Collaborative is for states to explore and establish value-centered, population-based attainment goals.

Value-Centered Attainment Goals Provide a Clear Signal: What Matters is the State Population Holding Credentials that Lead to Economic Opportunity

Attainment refers to the educational level reached by a specific population. State attainment includes residents that received credentials¹ from postsecondary institutions in the state, as well as those that moved into the state (in-migration) with a credential.

- **What does a value-centered attainment goal look like?** 75% of adults in the labor force will have a postsecondary credential and earn 15% more than the median wage for high school graduates by 2040.
- **What is the role of value in attainment goals?** The value lens signals overall economic and community health rooted in meeting state talent needs. Value-centered attainment draws clear lines between education attainment and economic benefit for both individuals and the state.
- **Why is attainment important?** Value-centered attainment goals position education as a tool to drive economic development. A goal provides a north star that promotes cross-sector alignment across workforce and education to connect the full population with credentials that meet labor market needs and unlock economic opportunity.
- **What are the data sources?***
 - US Census Bureau American Community Survey
 - Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement
 - National Training, Education, and Workforce Survey
 - Lumina Stronger Nation

**Note: Attainment data sources generally do not drill down to specific postsecondary programs.*

Adopting Value-Centered Attainment Goals Key Decision-Points for Crafting Strong, Value-Centered Attainment Goals

- » **Quantifiable and Measurable:** What is the numeric target for the population-based, value-centered attainment goal? How does that target align to state workforce needs? How will progress be tracked over time?
- » **Value-Centered:** What measure of value is used for the attainment goal?
- » **Defined Population:** What population age range is used for goal-setting and progress monitoring? Does the goal include any other priority populations for closing gaps in economic opportunity?
- » **Time Bound:** What target date is established for achievement of the value-centered attainment goal?
- » **Ambitious and Achievable:** Does the goal depend on meaningful system change and re-engagement of state populations not currently well served, while remaining achievable within the time established?
- » **Formally Set:** Is the goal established through legislation, formal state action, or an official statewide plan?

¹ This resource defines credentials as degrees (associate degree or higher) and short-term credentials (certificates and certifications).

Strategies for Applying a Value Lens to Attainment:



Leverage Lumina's [Stronger Nation](#) state data, adjusting the target goal based on state workforce needs and current credential of value attainment rate.



Apply a [similar methodology](#) as Lumina's Stronger Nation data while using an adjusted wage threshold based on state context.



Explore other state-defined population-level measures of value using existing data such as attainment in certain high-priority fields or attainment with low rates of food stamp or Medicaid reciprocity.



Adopt new instruments to ask state residents about postsecondary value.

The Role of Completion in Advancing Attainment:

Completion metrics also have important roles to play in advancing value-centered attainment goals. Completion refers to students completing postsecondary credentials during a particular time. States can calculate the number of credentials awarded annually or rate of students completing. Increasing completion is a key strategy for states to advance value-centered attainment goals and completion goals are a leading indicator to track progress and maintain accountability.

The Value Lens:

Applying a value lens to completion goals signals the importance of student access to and support in credential programs that lead to opportunity in the state. Through this lens, institutions gain clarity on the programs and/or outcomes they should prioritize through policy and practice while states gain additional ways to measure value. Further, completion is a tool to incentivize and hold in-state institutions accountable to prioritizing specific programs that lead to high-wage, high-demand jobs, have high societal value, and/or are undersupplied.

Completion as a Leading Indicator for Attainment:

Increasing postsecondary completion can contribute to increasing state attainment rates. Credentials prioritized for completion should align to value thresholds established in attainment goals. Further, states can articulate how completion initiatives are a strategy to reach the ultimate north star: value-centered attainment.