



# STRATEGIC VISION FOR 2030

**In 2017 Arizona's community colleges embraced a Strategic Vision for 2030, which focuses college efforts around three major goals: expanding access to postsecondary credentials; increasing transfer and completion of associate degrees and certificates; and improving alignment between college programs and workforce needs.**

The Strategic Vision for 2030 builds upon the colleges' previous long-term plan, published in 2011, and outlines how Arizona's ten community college districts will continue to improve student outcomes, as well as how the districts contribute to Arizona's broader economic and educational goals. **In particular, the Strategic Vision for 2030 creates a framework for reaching the Achieve60AZ goal that by 2030, 60% of the Arizona working-age population will hold a postsecondary credential.**

**A major function of the Strategic Vision for 2030 is the collection, analysis, and publication of data pertaining to 33 short-term, mid-range, long-term, and follow-up metrics.** The majority of these metrics have been in place for years, making it possible to evaluate trends in student progress and outcomes.

Statewide and district-level data will continue to be used to guide improvement efforts at community colleges across the state. Statewide data will also be shared with the Arizona Board of Regents, the Arizona Department of Education, and Arizona's workforce development and business communities in order to assist in the improvement of educational and economic pathways.

**The Strategic Vision for 2030, as well as a Technical Guide that provides detailed definitions of each metric, can be found online at: [www.arizonacommunitycolleges.org](http://www.arizonacommunitycolleges.org).**

# METRICS AND COHORTS

## METRICS

The 2021 Strategic Vision Outcomes Report presents data related to 33 short-term, mid-range, long-term, and follow-up metrics. These data identify areas of strength, as well as places where the Northland Pioneer College (NPC) will need to continue to expand access, increase transfer and completion, and improve alignment with workforce needs.

**Short-term metrics** correspond to enrollment rates, cost measures, and training for high-demand occupations.

**Mid-range metrics** examine student persistence and success in the first two years of college.

**Long-term metrics** pertain to transfer and completion rates.

**Follow-up metrics** examine student success after departing the community college and may be affected by economic forces, as well as the actions of Arizona universities.

## COHORTS

The 2021 Strategic Vision Outcomes Report tracks several cohorts of students.

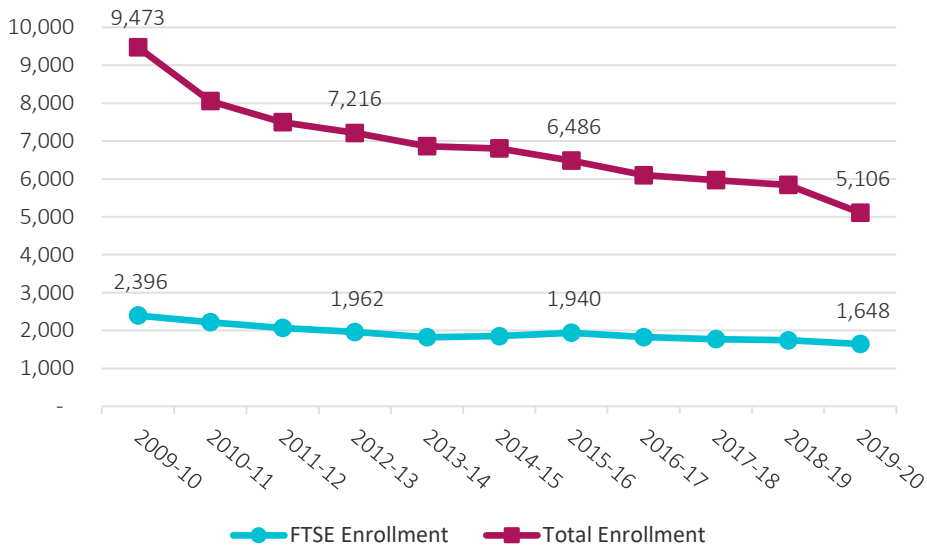
**2018 and 2014 New Student Cohorts** are used to examine student persistence and success after two and six years, respectively.

**2018 and 2014 Credential-Seeking Sub-Cohorts**, defined as cohort members who earned at least 12 credits by the end of their second year, are used for some retention, transfer, and completion measures. Credential-seeking sub-cohorts provide a more accurate gauge of student success, as they take into account learners' diverse education and training goals.

**2017-18 Occupational Cohort**, comprised of students who exited NPC in 2017-18 after completing a specified number of credits in an occupational pathway, is used in a follow-up metric related to earning industry-recognized credentials.

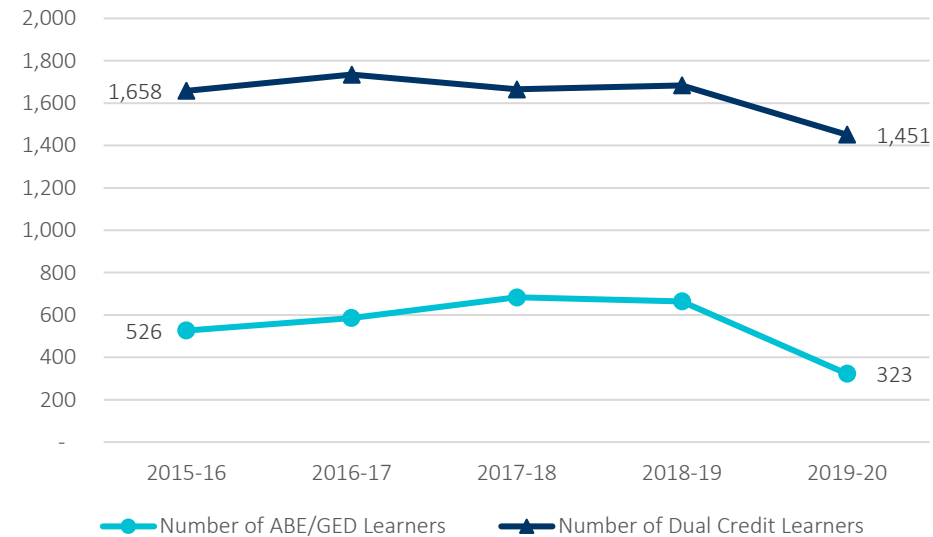
# Expand Access: Short-Term Metrics

## Metrics 1 and 2: FTSE and Total Enrollment



Total annual enrollment at NPC has declined sharply from its recession-era high in 2009-10, although full-time student equivalent (FTSE) enrollment is much more stable. Despite this enrollment decline, which mirrors statewide and national trends, NPC has increased the percentage of students transferring and earning credentials.

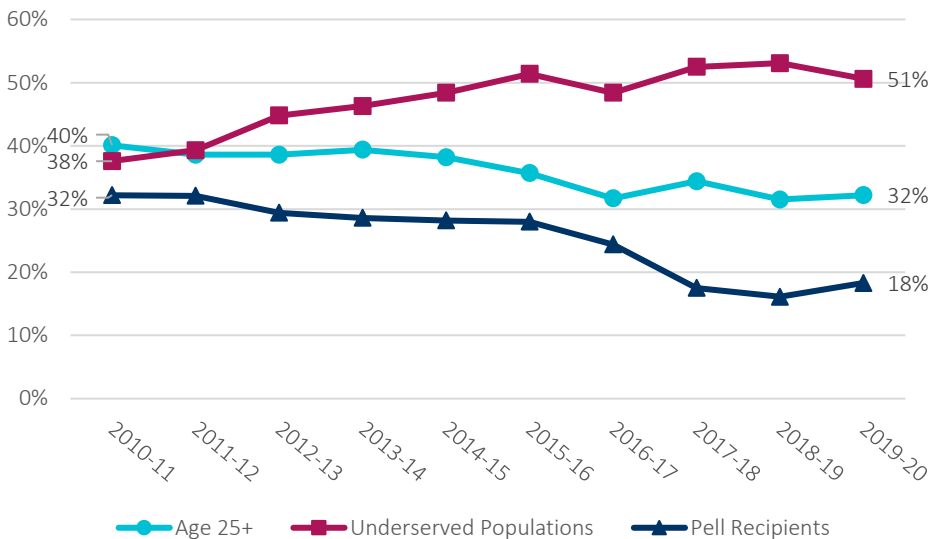
## Metrics 3 and 4: Enrollment of ABE/GED and Dual Credit Learners



At NPC, total annual enrollment in Adult Basic Education (ABE) and/or General Educational Development (GED) courses dropped to 323 in 2019-20. Total annual enrollment of high school learners in dual credit courses was 1,451. These programs are essential in expanding access to NPC.

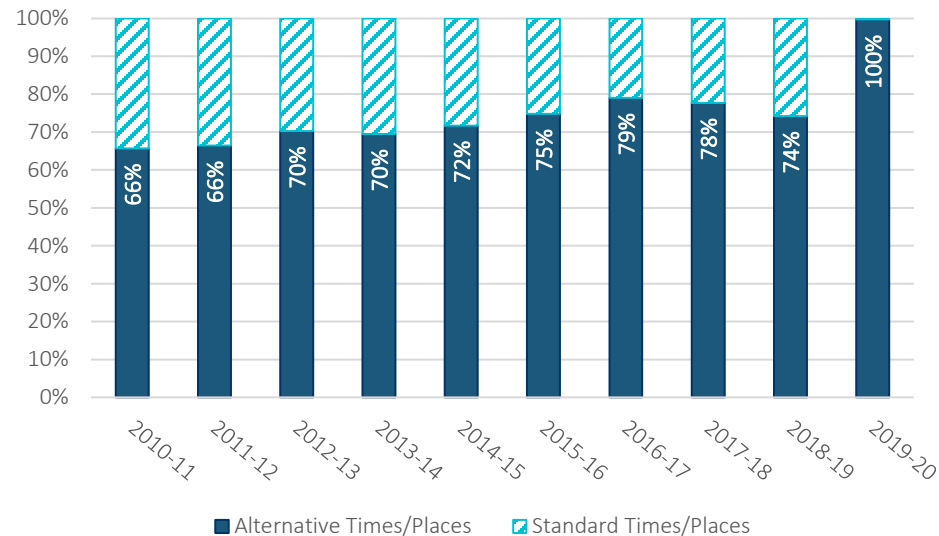
# Expand Access: Short-Term Metrics

### Metric 5: Enrollment of Underserved Populations



The percentage of NPC students who are members of an historically underserved racial/ethnic group has increased substantially since 2010, although it is still lower than the percentage of Navajo and Apache counties belonging to an underserved population (58% and 81%, respectively).<sup>1</sup> NPC enrolls fewer Pell recipients than the statewide average (27%).<sup>2</sup>

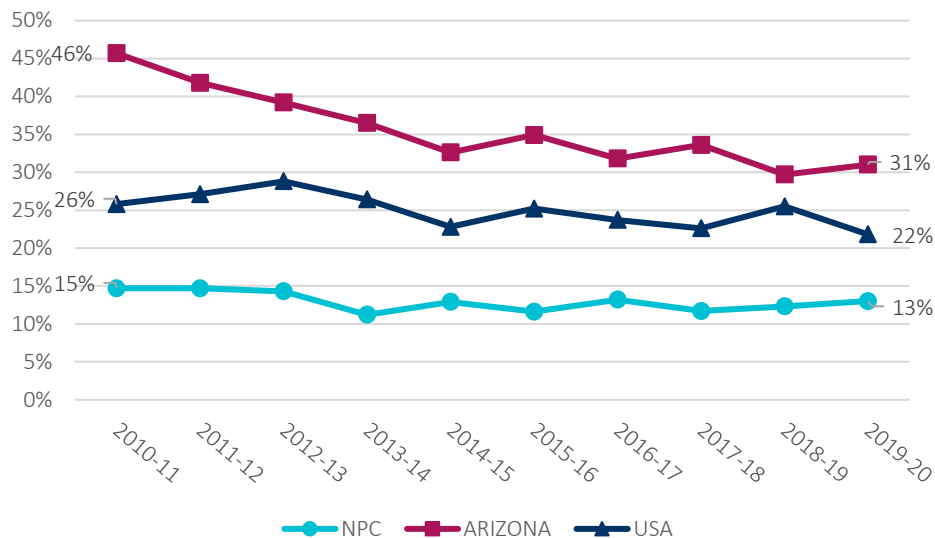
### Metric 6: Percent of Credit Hours Earned Via Alternative Times or Places



At NPC, 97.7% of student credit hours in 2019-20 were earned online, at night or on the weekends, or on land belonging to Indigenous Communities. NPC's ability to convert all classes to alternative instructional formats in response to the COVID-19 pandemic has helped learners to maintain access to postsecondary education across Navajo and Apache Counties.

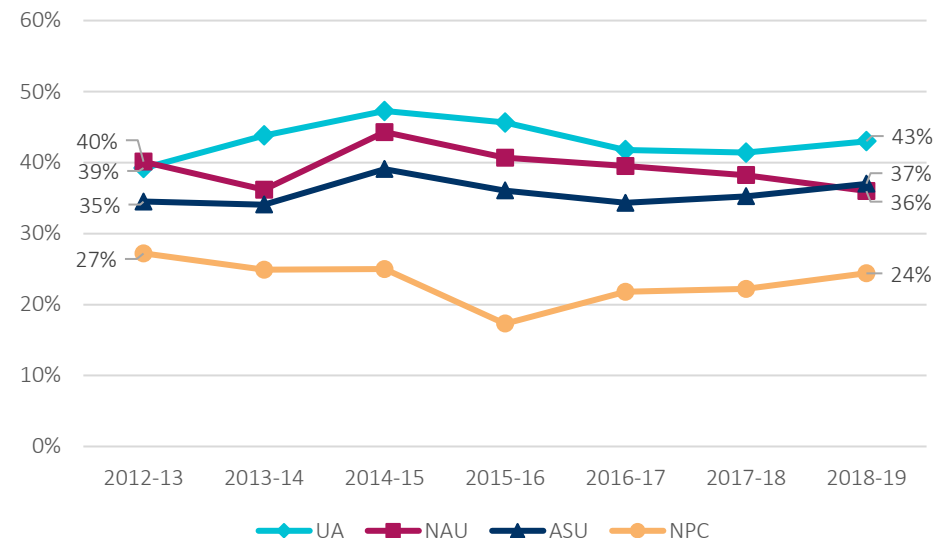
# Expand Access: Short-Term Metrics

## Metric 7: Community College-Going Rate



NPC's college-going rate has remained relatively stable in recent years but is lower than both statewide and national averages (31% and 22%, respectively).<sup>2</sup> NPC will continue to work with high schools, the Arizona Board of Regents, and other community colleges to improve college-going in Navajo and Apache counties and across the state.

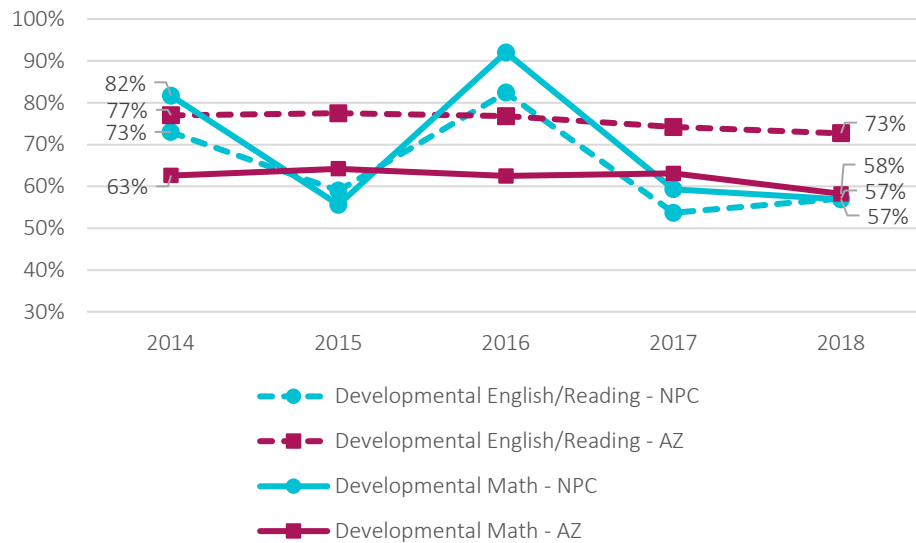
## Metric 8: Cost of Attendance as a % of Median Household Income



At just under \$9,500 per year, the net price of attending NPC is just 24% of the median household income in Navajo and Apache Counties. This rate is higher than the national average (14%, not shown) but substantially lower than Arizona's public universities (36-43%),<sup>3</sup> making NPC an excellent and affordable option for postsecondary education and training.

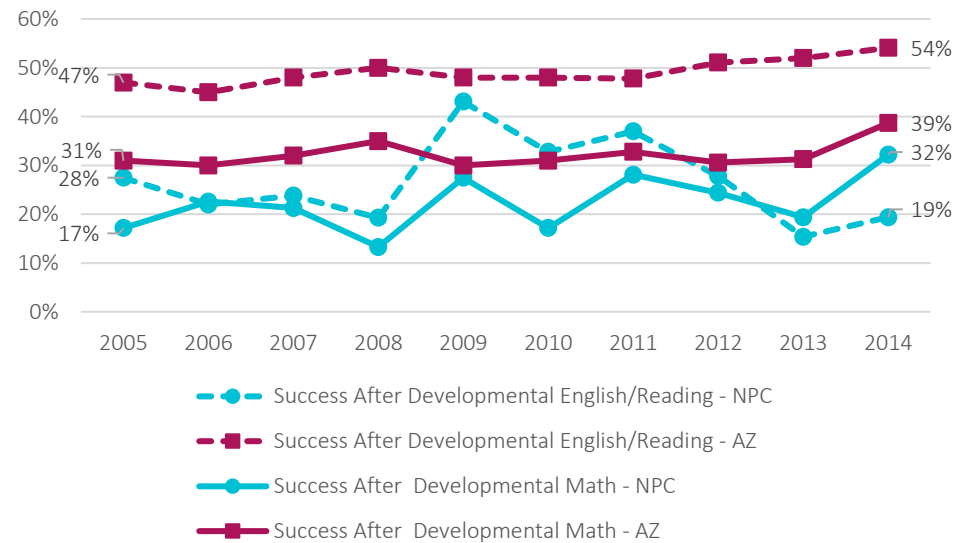
# Expand Access: Mid-Range Metrics

## Metrics 9 and 10: Developmental Course Success Rates



Over two years, 57% of student credit hours attempted in developmental English or reading by NPC's 2018 New Student Cohort were successfully completed (with a grade of A, B, C, or Pass). In that same time period, 57% of student credit hours attempted by the same cohort in developmental math were successfully completed (with a grade of A, B, C, or Pass).

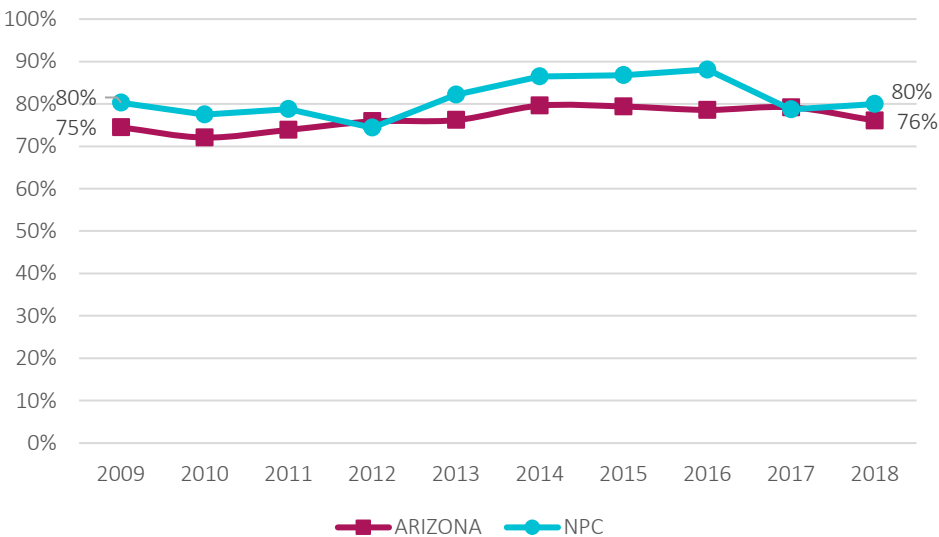
## Metrics 11 and 12: Success After Developmental Education



After six years, 19% of developmental English or reading learners in NPC's 2014 New Student Cohort successfully completed a college-level course in English, and 32% of developmental math learners in the same cohort completed a college-level math course. The success after developmental English or reading rate is somewhat lower than the national average.<sup>4</sup>

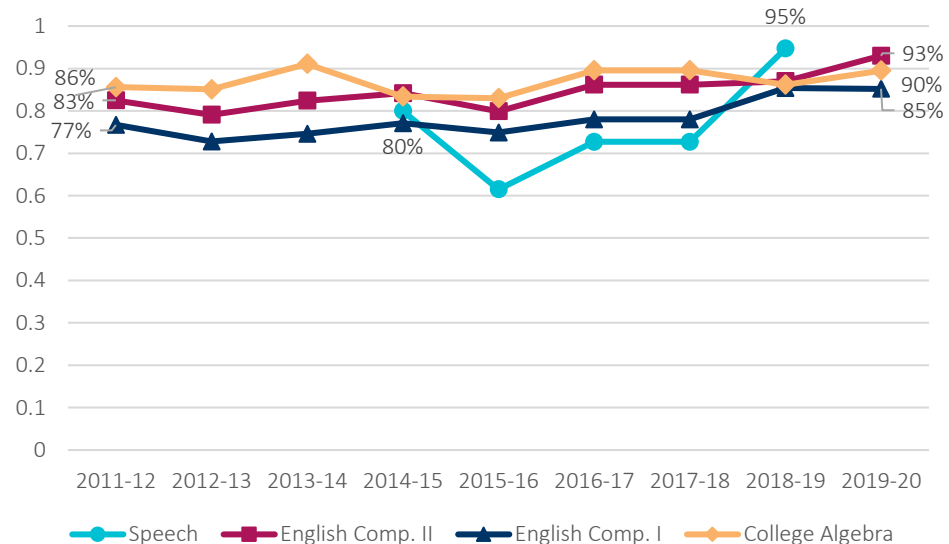
# Increase Transfer & Completion: Mid-Range Metrics

**Metric 13:  
College-Level Course Success Rate**



Over two years, 80% of student credit hours attempted in college-level courses by NPC's 2018 New Student Cohort were successfully completed (with a grade of A, B, C, or Pass). Historically, NPC's college-level course success rate has been slightly higher than the statewide number.

**Metric 14: Percent of First College-Level Math & English Credit Hours Completed**

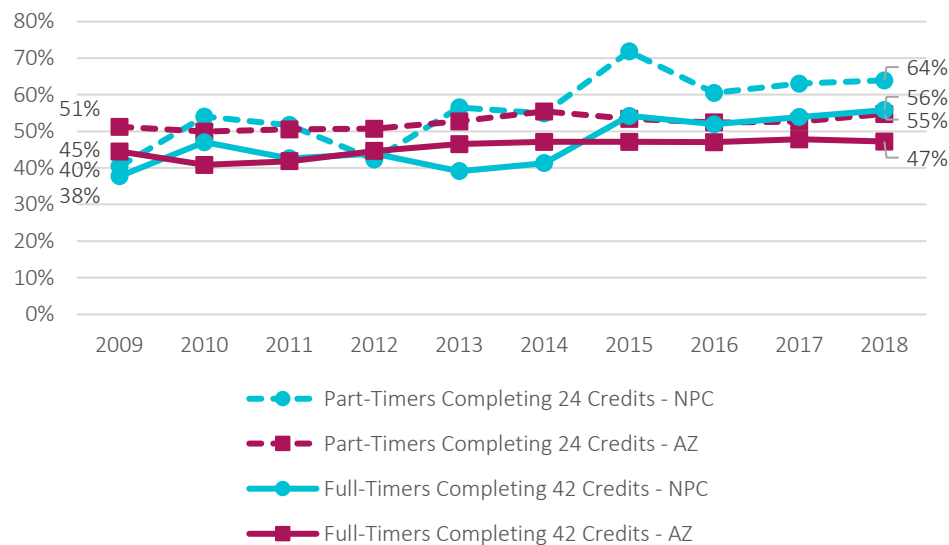


The rates at which NPC students successfully complete College Algebra, English Composition I and II, and Speech (with a grade of A, B, C, or Pass) have steadily increased since 2011-12 (although Speech was not taught in 2019-20). These rates mirror or exceed corresponding statewide and national averages (67-78% and 66-79%, respectively).<sup>5</sup>



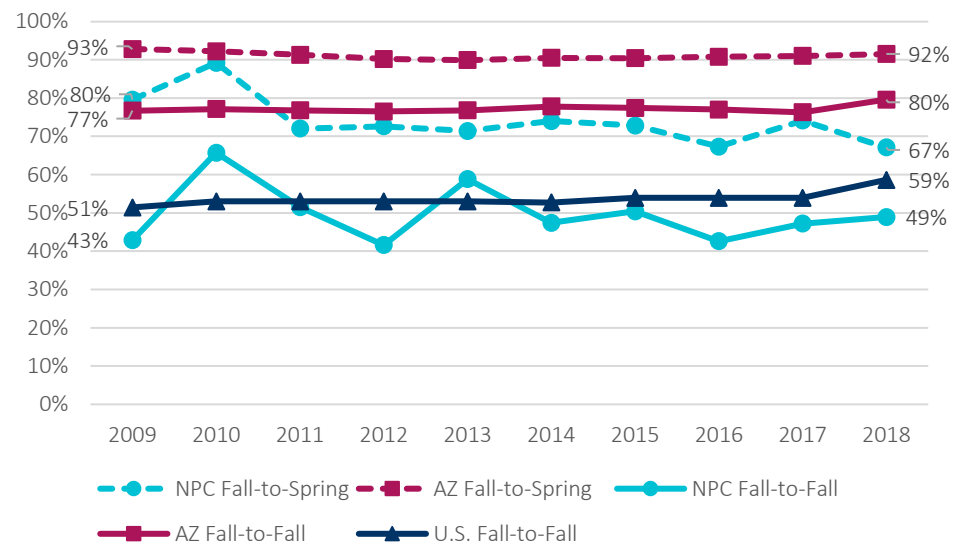
# Increase Transfer & Completion: Mid-Range Metrics

## Metrics 15 and 16: Percent of Learners Attaining Two-Year Credit Thresholds



By the end of their second year, 64% of part-time learners in NPC’s 2018 Credential-Seeking Cohort had completed 24 credits, and 56% of full-time learners in the same cohort had completed 42 credits. These rates are notable, as students who attain these credit thresholds are more likely to persist and earn a degree or certificate.<sup>6</sup>

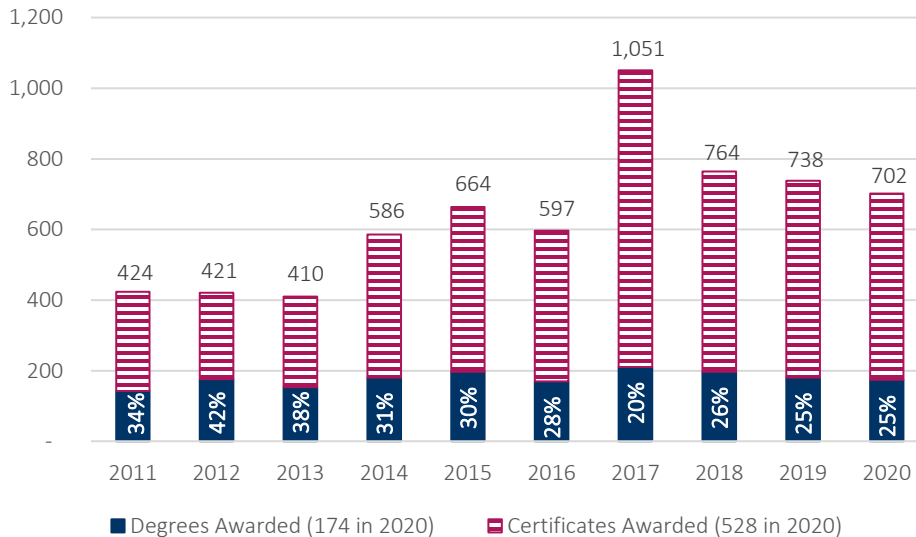
## Metrics 17 and 18: Retention Rates



Sixty-seven percent of NPC’s 2018 Credential-Seeking Cohort (excluding those who transferred and/or earned a degree or certificate) persisted to spring 2019, and 49% of them returned the following fall. The fall-to-fall rate is lower than the 59%<sup>7</sup> reported as a national comparison, even though the national figure is not limited to credential-seekers.

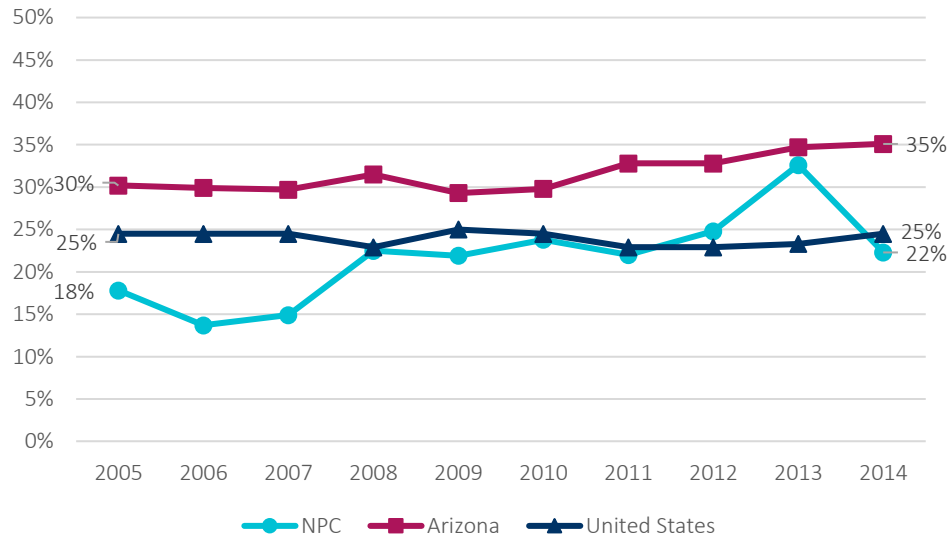
# Increase Transfer & Completion: Long-Term Metrics

**Metric 19:  
Degrees and Certificates Awarded**



Between 2011 and 2020, the number of degrees and certificates awarded by NPC increased by 66% to 702, despite declining enrollments. Of the 2020 total, 25% were degrees and 75% were certificates. These data reflect a concerted effort by NPC to increase the number of learners earning postsecondary credentials.

**Metric 20: Graduation  
(Degree/Certificate Completion) Rate**

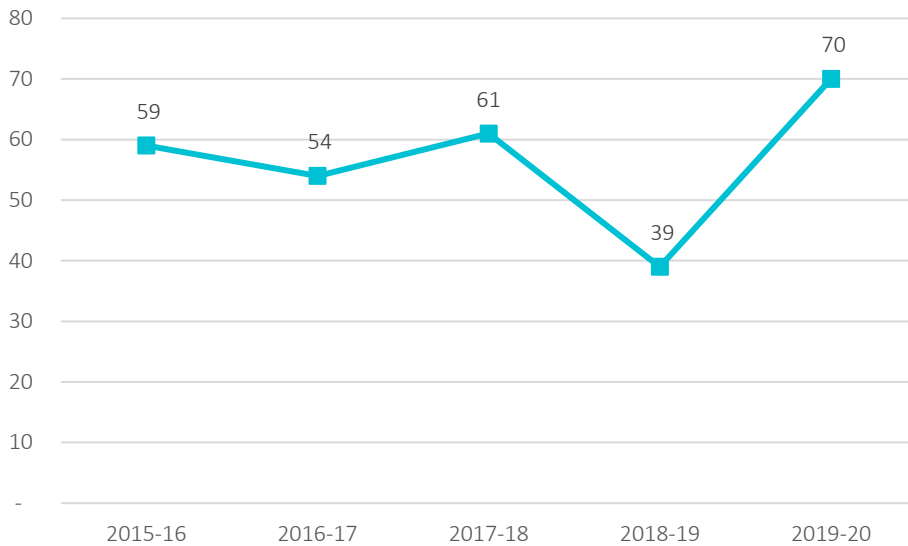


After six years, 22% of NPC's 2014 Credential-Seeking Cohort had completed a degree or certificate. NPC's most recent graduation rate is slightly lower than the most recent national comparison (25%),<sup>2</sup> although the national number is not limited to credential-seekers.

# Increase Transfer & Completion: Long-Term Metrics

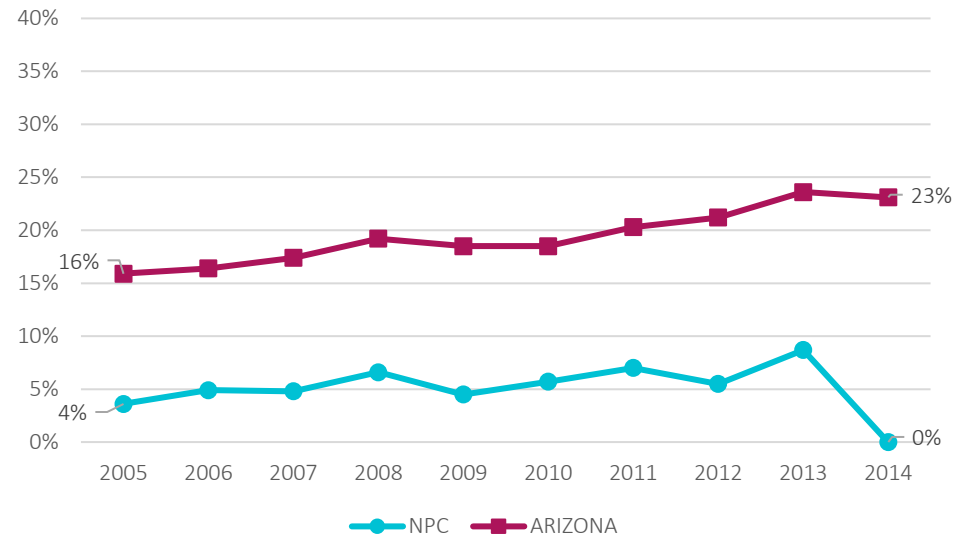
10

**Metric 21:  
AGECs Awarded**



In 2019-20, NPC awarded 70 Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC) certificates, the most ever awarded in an academic year. The AGEC is comprised of 35-37 credit hours of coursework that, upon completion, transfer to all public colleges and universities in the state and fulfill lower division, general education requirements.

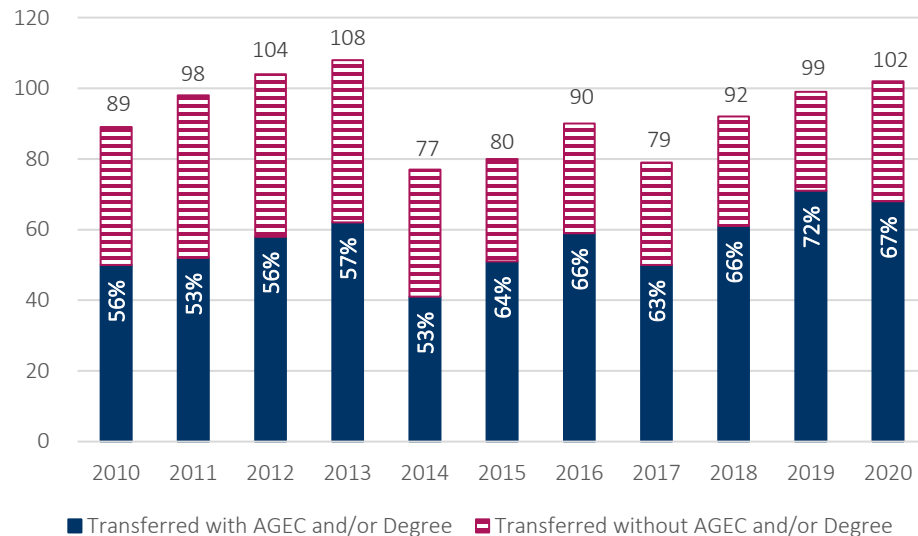
**Metric 22:  
AGEC Completion Rate**



At NPC, none of the 2014 Credential-Seeking Cohort completed an AGEC within 6 years, a change from previous cohorts. Increasing the AGEC completion rate—a key priority for the state’s community colleges—will not only ease transfer to Arizona’s public universities but also help students earn bachelor’s degrees in less time and with fewer excess credits.<sup>8</sup>

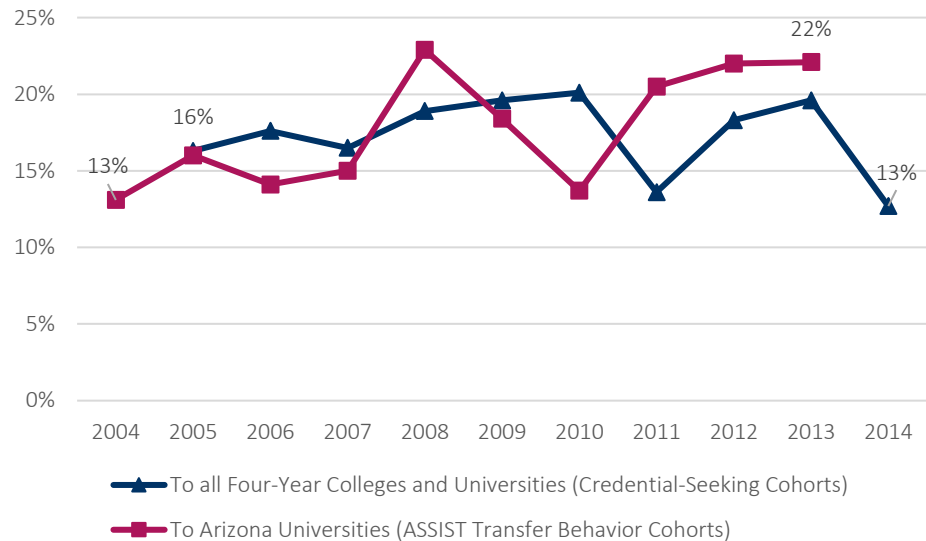
# Increase Transfer & Completion: Long-Term Metrics

## Metrics 23 and 24: In-State Transfers and Percent with AGEC and/or Degree



In 2020, the number of students transferring from NPC to an in-state, public university was 29% higher than in 2017, despite declining enrollments. As well, the percentage of transfers who earned an AGEC and/or degree prior to transferring has increased 4 percentage points since 2017, indicating that the transfer process is becoming more efficient and cost effective.

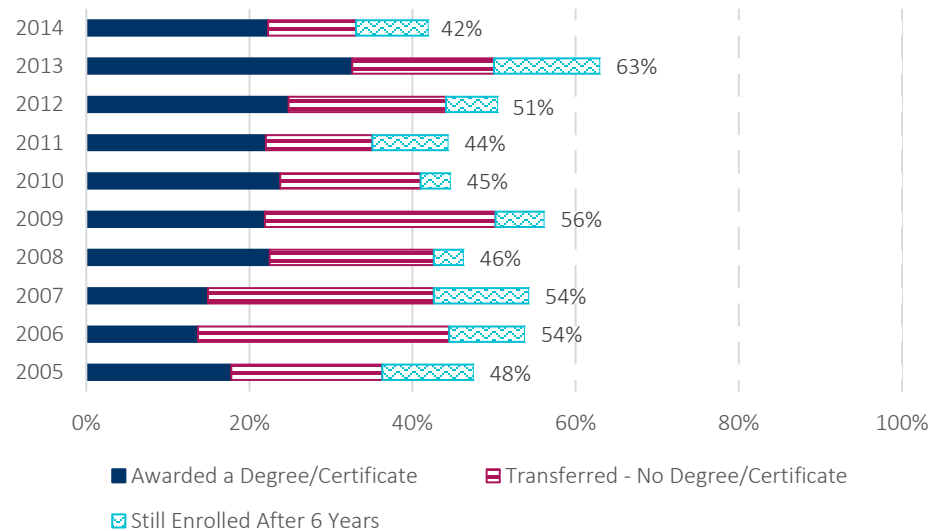
## Metrics 25 and 26: Transfer Rates



NPC's transfer rate to public universities rose to 22% for the 2013 ASSIST Transfer Behavior Cohort, although the overall transfer rate (the percent of learners in credential-seeking cohorts who transfer to any four-year college or university within 6 years) dropped to 13%. The former rate nears than the most recent national average (25%).<sup>9</sup>

# Increase Transfer & Completion: Long-Term Metrics

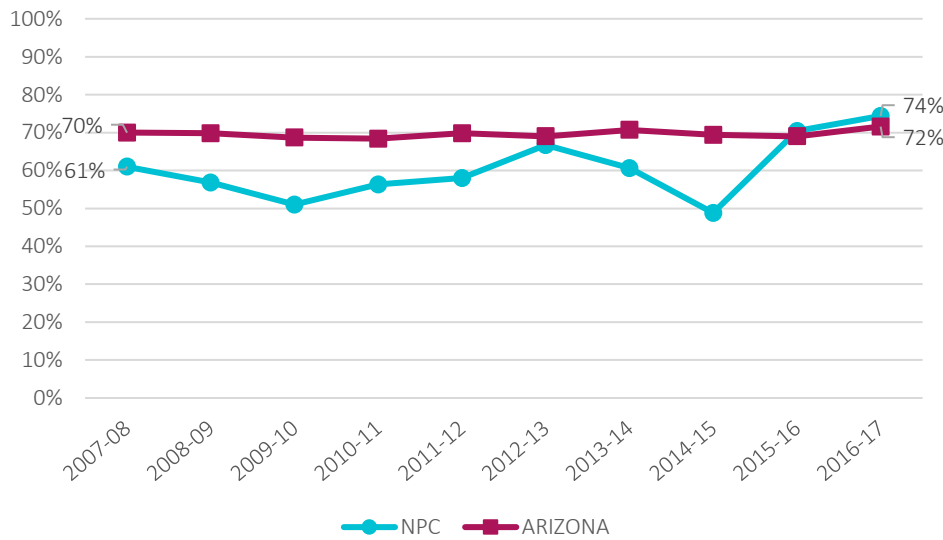
### Metric 27 : Percent of Learners Achieving a Successful Outcome



Forty-two percent of learners in NPC’s 2014 Credential-Seeking Cohort achieved a successful outcome within six years. Because community college learners enter college with diverse education and training goals, and because they often attend part-time and/or earn credits from more than one institution, several national accountability initiatives—including the Student Achievement Measure—have broadened the definition of a successful outcome to include earning a degree or certificate, transferring to another two- or four-year college or university, or continued enrollment. Nationally, 56% of all community college students (64% of full-timers and 52% of part-timers) achieve one of these successful outcomes within 6 years.<sup>10</sup>

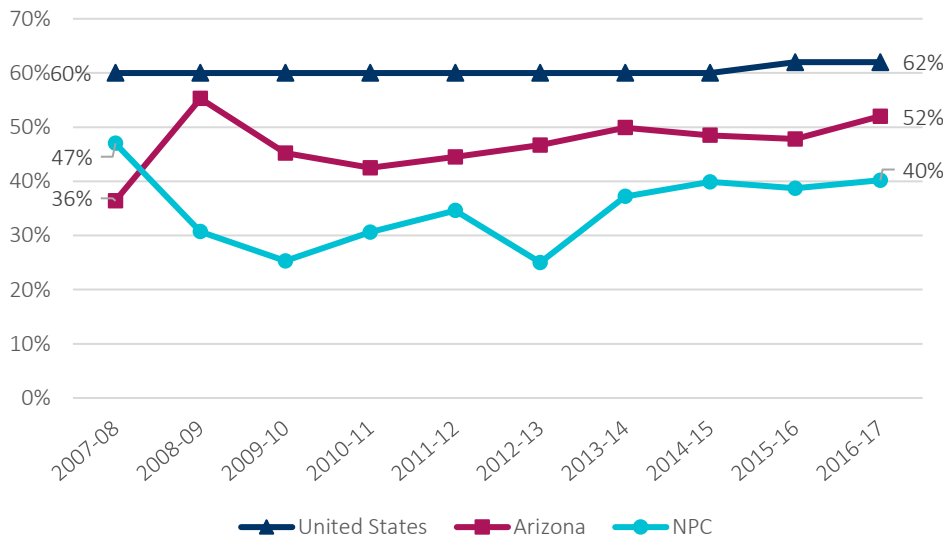
# Increase Transfer & Completion: Follow-Up Metrics

**Metric 28: Percent of Full-Time Transfers to AZ Universities Earning Bachelor's Degrees within Four Years**



Seventy-four percent of all 2016-17 full-time transfers from NPC to in-state, public universities earned a bachelor's degree within four years. This rate has increased in recent years and indicates that most full-time transfers are graduating from the state's public universities in a timely manner.

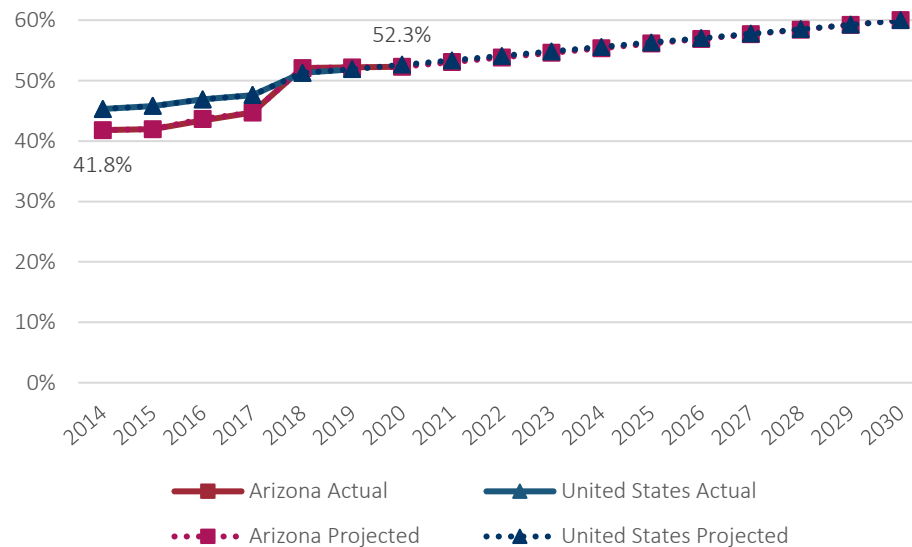
**Metric 29: Percent of All Transfers Earning Bachelor's Degrees within Four Years**



Forty percent of 2016-17 transfers from NPC to all four-year institutions (public and private, in-state and out) earned a bachelor's degree within four years. Somewhat lower than statewide (52%) and national (62%)<sup>9</sup> averages, this percentage may reflect a high incidence of part-time attendance after transfer.

# Increase Transfer & Completion: Follow-Up Metrics

## Metric 30: Estimated Percent of the Arizona Working-Age Population with a Postsecondary Credential



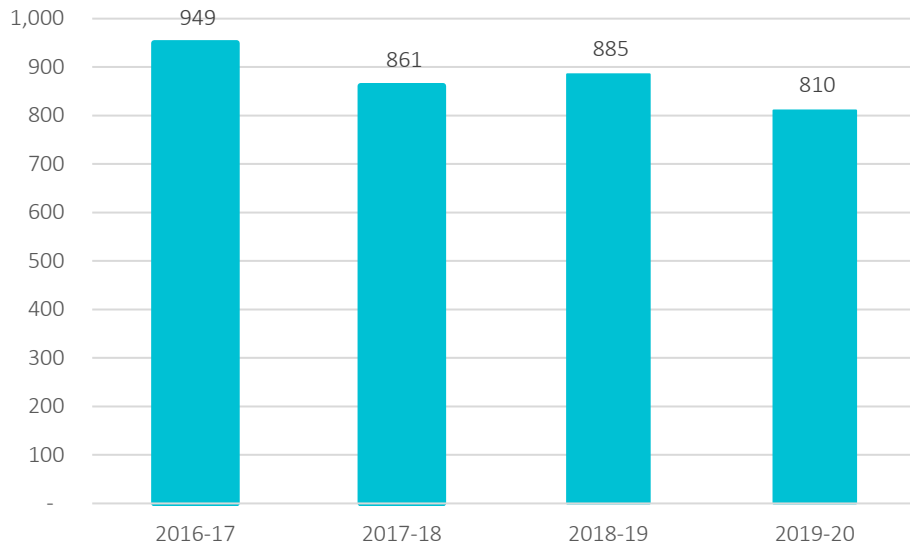
In 2020, an estimated 52.3% of the Arizona working-age population (residents aged 25–64) held a workforce certificate, associate degree, or bachelor’s or higher degree (up from 52.2% in 2019). Arizona’s community colleges are working closely with the Arizona Board of Regents and other postsecondary institutions across the state to reach the Achieve60AZ goal that by 2030, 60% of the Arizona working-age population will hold a postsecondary credential.

Note: In 2018 Arizona’s Community Colleges began using data from the Census Bureau’s Current Population Survey instead of its American Community Survey to illustrate progress toward the 60% goal. This change accounts for much of the apparent increase between 2017 and 2018.

# Improve Alignment: Short-Term & Follow-Up Metrics

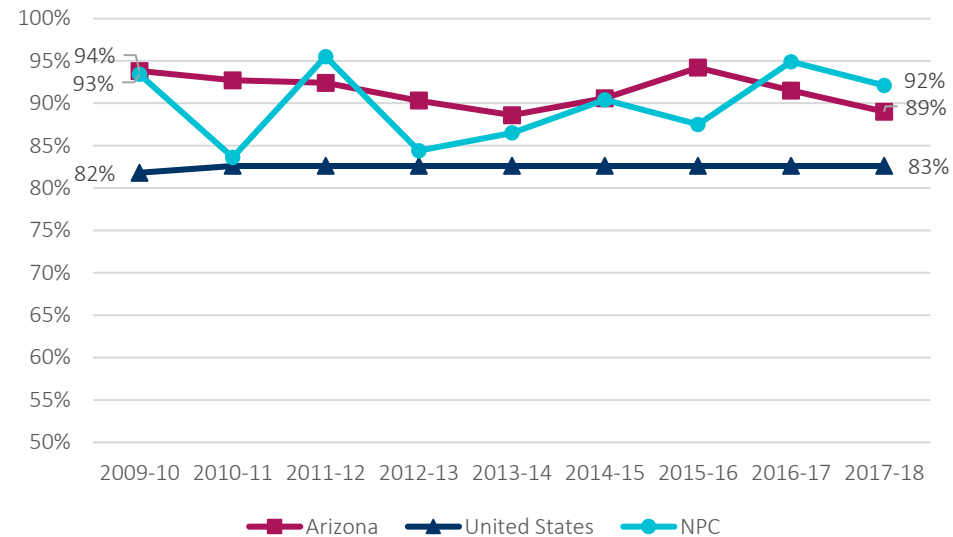
15

### Metric 31: FTSE Enrollment in Occupational Courses



Over the past four years, NPC's FTSE enrollment in occupational courses has declined slightly. However, many of the district's enrollments are in degree or certificate programs associated with the highest-demand occupations in the state, including (among others) nurses, preschool teachers, computer support specialists, web developers, and medical or dental assistants.

### Metric 32: Percent Earning Industry-Recognized Credentials



Out of all learners in the 2017-18 Occupational Cohort who took a technical skill or end-of-program assessment up to one year after college exit, 92% passed the assessment and/or earned an industry-recognized credential. Examples of occupational programs leading to industry-recognized credentials include nursing, EMT, construction, and fire science.



# Improve Alignment: Short-Term & Follow-Up Metrics

16

## **Metric 33: Percent of the 25 Highest-Demand Occupations in Navajo County requiring more than a High School Diploma but less than a Bachelor's Degree for which NPC offers Degree and/or Certificate Programs**

- ✓ Medical Assistants
- ✓ Massage Therapists
- Computer User Support Specialists
- Dental Assistants
- Respiratory Therapists
- Occupational Therapy Assistants
- ✓ Nursing Assistants
- ✓ Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses
- Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
- Radiologic Technologists and Technicians
- Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians
- ✓ Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics
- Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers, Except Line Installers
- Forest and Conservation Technicians
- ✓ Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education
- ✓ Firefighters
- Dental Hygienists
- ✓ Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks
- ✓ First-Line Supervisors of Firefighting and Prevention Workers
- ✓ Health Information Technologists, Medical Registrars, Surgical Assistants, and Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Workers
- ✓ Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary
- Calibration Technologists and Technicians and Engineering Technologists and Technicians, Except Drafters, All Other
- Plebotomists
- ✓ Surgical Technologists
- ✓ Medical Dosimetrists, Medical Records Specialists, and Health Technologists and Technicians

Northland Pioneer College offers degree and/or certificate programs training workers for 52% (13 of 25) of the highest-demand occupations in Navajo County.

# Strategic Vision Data: Sources and Attributions

- <sup>1</sup>U.S. Bureau of the Census. (2021). *American Community Survey, 2015-19 5-year estimates*. Washington, DC: Author.
- <sup>2</sup>U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2021). *Digest of education statistics*. Washington, DC: Author.
- <sup>3</sup>U.S. Bureau of the Census. (2021). *American Community Survey, 2015-19 5-year estimates*. Washington, DC: Author; U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2021). *College navigator*. Washington, DC: Author.
- <sup>4</sup>Bailey, T., Jeong, D. W., & Cho, S. W. (2010). Referral, enrollment, and completion in developmental education sequences in community colleges. *Economics of Education Review, 29*, 155-270.
- <sup>5</sup>National Community College Benchmark Project. (2018). *Report of national aggregate data*. Overland Park, KS: Author.
- <sup>6</sup>Moore, C., Shulock, N., & Offenstein, J. (2009). *Steps to success: Analyzing milestone achievement to improve community college student outcomes*. Sacramento: California State University, Institute for Higher Education Leadership and Policy.
- <sup>7</sup>National Student Clearinghouse. (2021). Persistence and retention: Fall 2019 beginning cohort. Herndon, VA: Author.
- <sup>8</sup>Kisker, C. B., & Wagoner, R. L. (2013). *Implementing transfer associate degrees. Perspectives from the states*. New directions for community colleges, no. 160. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- <sup>9</sup>Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University. (2015). *What we know about transfer. Research overview*. New York: Author.
- <sup>10</sup>National Student Clearinghouse. (2021). Yearly success and progress rates (two-year publics, first-time, full-time and first-time, part-time). Herndon, VA: Author.