

GHC Education Summit

February 25, 2026



GHC EDUCATION FORUM

- Our vision is to ensure every resident can earn a living wage. To achieve this vision, we believe that

GHC Education Forum

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Alan

- We'd like to acknowledge the members of the GHC Education Forum who have made this work possible. All of the leaders from our major education institutions are members of this forum. I'd like to specifically call out the members who served on the Advisory Committee (marked by an asterisk).
- This Committee has provided strategic guidance and feedback to our consultant team as they drafted the report and prepared for this Summit.

Agenda & Logistics



8:00 - 8:15 Opening and Framing

8:15 - 8:30 **Act 1:** Living & Working
in Washington County,
Today and Tomorrow

8:30 - 9:15 **Act 2:** Cradle-to-Career
Readiness - Progress
and Opportunities

9:15 - 9:30 Break &
Transition

9:30 - 11:40 **Act 3:** Breakout
Sessions

11:40 - 11:50 Break &
Transition

11:50 - 12:15 Closing & Q+A

Alan

- As you may have seen in your email, here is our agenda for today.
- We've structured our time today like a three-act play. We'll be together in this room for the first two Acts as we explore the current state of career readiness in Washington County AND the skills needed for our future workforce. For the third Act, we'll transition into smaller break-out groups as we explore how our organizations can align efforts and collaborate in this work.
- Q&A at the end of Act 2 for clarifying questions, and more extensive time for questions during our closing, when we come back together after breakout groups

BREAKING NEWS ALERT

With The Educational and Training Requirements Of Tomorrow's Jobs, Our Country Faces A Severe Shortage Of Skilled Employees and More Post-Secondary Education and Career Training Is Needed To Fill The Workforce Skills Gap



• **GOAL 2025:** By 2025, 60% of Americans will hold a high-quality college degree, certificate or other postsecondary credential.

"Let's Get Learning":

• Jumpstarting A Major Educational Movement In Washington County

*The Greater Hagerstown Committee
Education Forum*



Recap the Journey

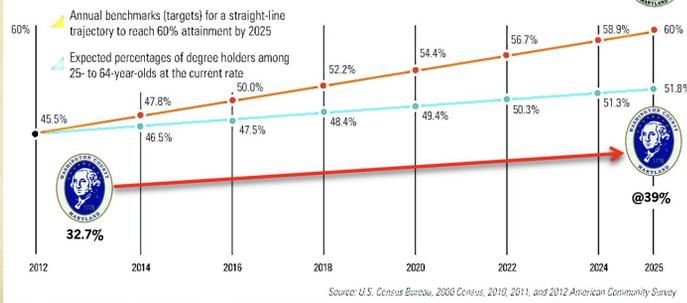
- Briefly remind participants: *this work didn't start today*
- Reference the last summit:
 - 2015
 - Workforce Shortage Coming by 2025
 - 60% of our jobs will need post secondary degrees or credentials (trades)



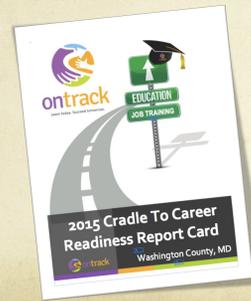
Maryland Falls Short At 51.8%

Howard County: Currently At 72.1%

The path to 60% degree attainment in Maryland



2015 Cradle To Career Report Card



Compilation of Local Education Statistics From Cradle To Career Related to College And Career Readiness



Recap the Journey

- Washington County's educational attainment levels had to double over the next 10 years (we were only at 33%)
- We were in the bottom half of the state, well below counties like Howard (72.7%) or Frederick
- We needed the community to pull together to close this gap and that's exactly what you did thanks to many of the people in this room.
- As a result of that collective action, OnTrack Washington County was born

Cradle-to-Career Readiness in Washington County

Operating from 2015-2020, OnTrack was a coalition of local organizations focused on preparing Washington County residents for the 21st century workforce with a cradle-to-career focus.



Recap the Journey

- Name prior momentum:
 - **OnTrack Washington County** was built around identifying shared metrics on career readiness that we needed to track, regular convening of the stakeholders, creating more cross-sector relationships, and basically *building a shared understanding* of where we need to go and *testing our appetite for alignment*
 - We had many successes thanks to that collaborative work that our consultants will be highlighting today as we look at the 10 years goals we established in 2015 and compare those goals to 2025 data.
- Acknowledge the pause:
 - Unfortunately OnTrack went dormant as the COVID pandemic hit, but **the challenges—and opportunities—did not**
- **Thank the OnTrack Board for providing funding for these Summits**

- Key transition line:
 - *“This summit is about picking up the strongest threads of that work—and jumpstarting that collaboration between stakeholders that that moved us forward”*

What’s Happened Since

- Landscape has continued to shift:
 - The labor market is increasingly requiring post-secondary training or education in order to earn a living wage, yet we’re not seeing post-secondary attainment increase at the same rate.
 - **By 2031, over 85% of jobs will require post-secondary education or training, and 1/3 of those job will be what we call “middle-skill” jobs - requiring more than a high school diploma but less than a four-year degree**
- Important framing:
 - We have **more data, stronger programs, and clearer signals** than we did several years ago
 - What’s been missing is *coordination at scale*

Our Vision

Every Washington County resident
has a clear, attainable path to a
living-wage career

- One thing that hasn't changed over the years is our vision for this work.
- Although we may have phrased it differently at various points in time, our main goal is essentially this: that every Washington County resident has a clear, attainable path to a living-wage career.
- We've planned our time today to make sure that we all understand what this lofty goal will require of us, both as individuals and local organizations charged with being good stewards of our community resources.

Our Purpose Today

Ground our work
and discussion
in **regional
career
readiness data**

Align on a
**shared vision
and framework
for
improvement**

Catalyze
**collaborative,
aligned action**
in the year
ahead

We have three main goals for our time together today:

- **Ground our discussion** in regional career readiness data, **celebrating successes** and areas of real progress while also **highlighting opportunities for improvement** or change, calling out where our outcomes could be better and where our systems and organizations can plug in.
- **Align on a shared vision and framework** for improving career readiness - meaning that we all agree on key changes we can make that we believe will have a strong impact on career readiness
- Get us and our organizations **working together**, collaborating and aligning action for the year ahead



What Does Success Look Like Today?

- If today can be considered a success when we walk out of here at 12:15, what will that look and feel like?
- I'd like to share with you a few things we hope you'll come to **understand** and few things we hope you'll commit to **doing** in the next year.

You UNDERSTAND:

Post-secondary education enables a living wage

Community coordination can align and amplify our efforts



Not all students complete post-secondary education

We're ready to act - together

We want you to UNDERSTAND that:

- **Post-secondary education and training is essential** to earning a living wage in this region. From today forward, we all will speak consistently in the community about post-secondary attainment as the minimum expectation for all.
- Not all Washington County students are currently completing two years of post-secondary education or training.
- The breakdown between K-12 readiness and post-secondary attainment is solvable through **coordinated, focused action across the community.**
- **We are well-positioned to make progress on this critical work**

Framing for this Summit and Beyond

Normalize
**post-secondary
attainment**
expectations

Take individual or
collective **action**



**Align efforts across
organizations** to
make change

Commit **time**,
influence, and
resources in 2026

For this work, we want to:

- Support our shared vision by developing aligned strategies and programming across our organizations
- Identify actions your organization will take, either individually or collaboratively, to influence post-secondary attainment in Washington County AND commit time, influence, or resources to supporting this work in 2026

Remember:

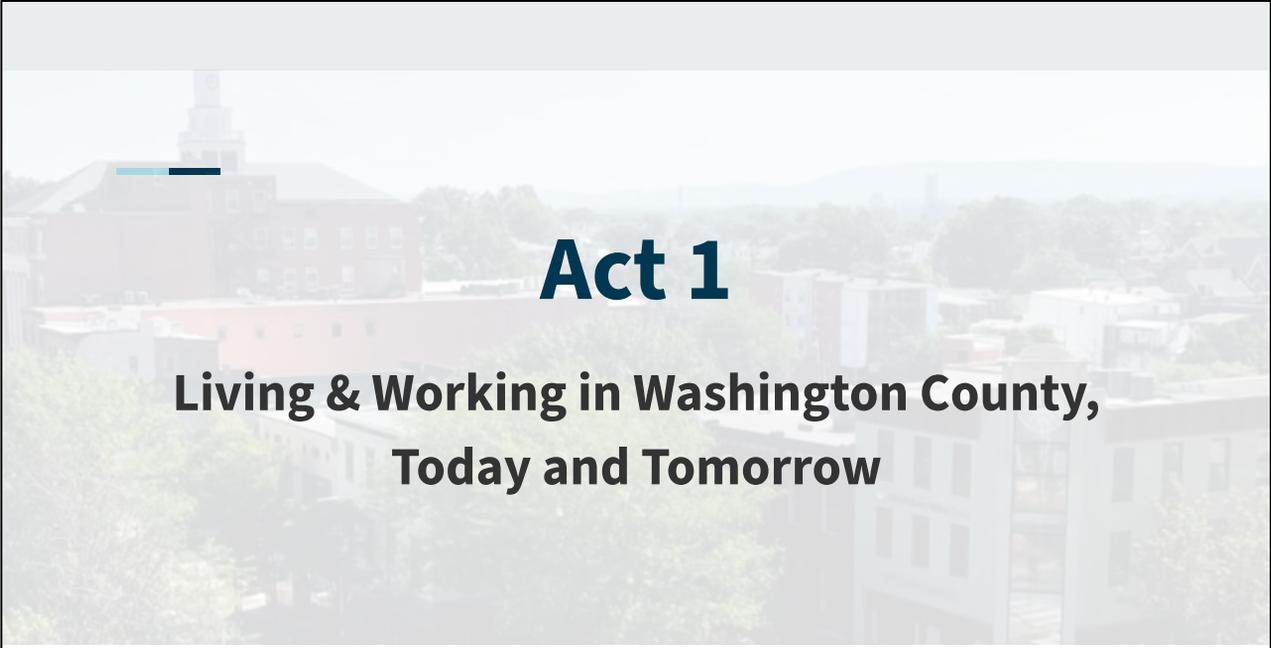
- Keep your organization hats on for this work today
- We want everyone to sing the same song - embrace the challenge in front of us
- We're painting the picture of our current state, and YOUR role is to figure out where your organization fit into the solution

Today's Agenda

- **Act 1:** Living and Working in Washington County, Today and Tomorrow
- **Act 2:** Cradle-to-Career Progress & Opportunities
- **Act 3:** Breakout Sessions

Review the Acts:

- **Act 1:** We'll paint a data-driven picture of what it looks like to live and work in Washington county today AND discuss what the future workforce holds for our residents
- **Act 2:** We'll show you what post-secondary attainment and career readiness looks like in Washington County now, highlighting successes and calling out areas of opportunity
- **Act 3:** We'll break into smaller groups to explore how our own work can support our vision of ensuring that every Washington County resident has access to a living wage



Act 1

Living & Working in Washington County, Today and Tomorrow

In this next section we're going to make the case that **post-secondary attainment must be the default expectation for all residents in Washington County** in order to ensure that everyone can earn a living wage.

We'll start by painting the picture of our current population & landscape and then connect the dots to what our future workforce will likely look like and require.

By the time we're done, you'll understand why post-secondary education will be critical for our residents to support themselves and their families.

Our Growing Population

Washington
County

157,228

Population Growth (2020 - 2024)



Washington County 4.4%

United States 4.1%

Maryland 3.7%



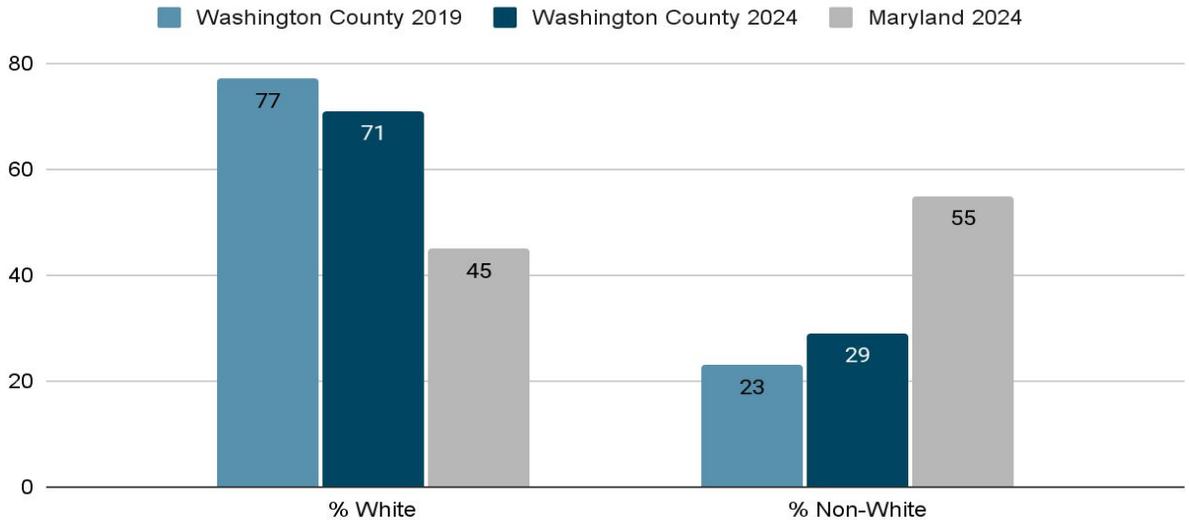
Let's start with a high-level overview

By national standards, we're considered a "small" county - meaning we have under 250,000 residents.

However, we're growing quickly. In fact, between 2020 to 2024, we grew faster than both the state and the nation.

Our growing population also presents opportunities for industry growth and innovation, particularly if we can increase our residents' skills and education.

Our Growing Diversity



As you can see here, we're growing both in size **and** diversity, driven largely by "in-migration" - meaning people moving into Washington County from more expensive surrounding regions.

Cheaper housing tends to attract younger families and first-time home-buyers from largely working-class and middle-income families.

Many new residents are relocating *from more diverse regions*

Primary Jobs & Industries

- **Healthcare**
- **Education**
- **Transportation/Logistics**
- **Government**
- **Manufacturing**

Top 5 Employers

Meritus Health
Washington County Public Schools
FedEx Ground
State of Maryland
Volvo Group



Now we'll take a look at our current workforce landscape. We should be thinking about **how we support students to prepare both for current jobs (& largest employers) as well as for potential future jobs (& largest growing industries).**

- The main industries in our region are **healthcare, education, transportation & logistic, government, and manufacturing**, and the fastest growing of these are the first 3.
 - For example - Meritus now employs over 4500 people which makes them the largest employer in the **region** - not just our county

We can't just think about the jobs and industries we know exist today - we must also consider jobs and careers that will be invented over the next decade.

- Research suggests they will be created largely in **tech, healthcare, and green energy.**
- Healthcare is already a staple of the Washington County economy, but we can anticipate growth in tech and green energy as well.

As Jim shared before, we're projecting that over 85% of jobs will require some level of post-secondary training or education by 2031

- with $\frac{1}{3}$ labeled as "middle-skill" jobs that will require more than a HS diploma but less than a 4-year degree.

We should be thinking about preparing them for careers in these sectors with **growth potential - not just entry-level positions.**

What is a Living Wage in Washington County?



Living Wage

Minimum income required to cover basic living expenses without public assistance

We've talked about what types of jobs are and will likely be available in our region, so now let's circle back to a key phrase we've used numerous times already today - a "living wage."

If our ultimate goal is for every Washington County resident to have access to a career that pays a living wage, what does that actually mean in terms of salary?

In simple terms, the living wage is the **minimum income required for a family or individual to cover basic living expenses**

- like food, housing, transportation, and childcare
- **without public assistance** like SNAP or other subsidies.

What is a Living Wage in Washington County?



Household Size	Living Wage	
	Hourly Minimum Wage = \$15	Yearly
1 Adult	0 Children	\$20.41 / \$42,453
	1 Child	\$36.49 / \$75,899
	2 Children	\$45.51 / \$94,661
	3 Children	\$58.27 / \$121,202
2 Adults (both working)	0 Children	\$14.52 / \$60,505
	1 Child	\$20.70 / \$85,496
	2 Children	\$25.27 / \$105,053
	3 Children	\$30.60 / \$127,238

What's critical to know is that the living wage in our region does not match the minimum wage!

- in fact, it far exceeds the \$15.00 minimum hourly wage mandated by the State

Currently- for a single adult the Living Wage hourly rate for Washington County is over \$20/hr. Not \$15! And it goes up from there with dependents.

What is a Living Wage in Washington County?



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	2 Children	\$25.27	\$105,053
	3 Children	\$30.60	\$127,238

As we translate this to annual salaries - for a single adult with no children, the living wage is just over **\$42,000**.

In Washington County, the average **household size is 2 adults + a kid**

- This suggests that the living wage for most residents is more **\$85K**

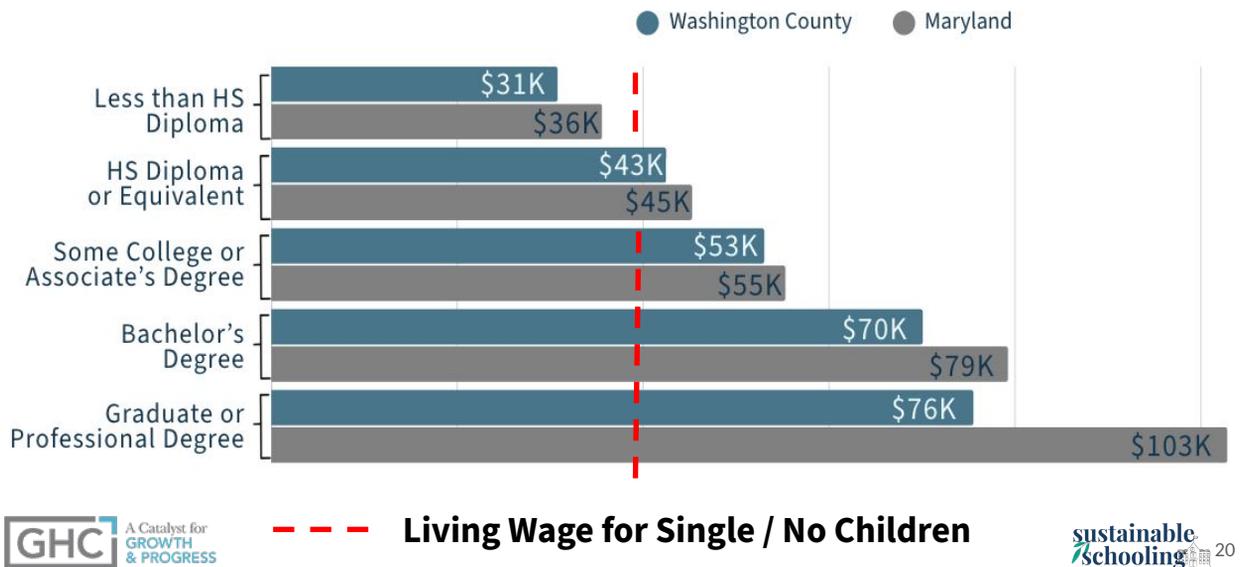
Yet - right now the median family income in Washington County hovers around **\$74K**.

If our goal is to ensure that all residents have access to a living wage, we must increase our residents' earning potential.

And how do we do that?

- By increasing their educational attainment....

Yearly Earnings by Educational Attainment (*average*)



Here we see that income increases with education level.

To drive home the point that post-secondary education is critical to earning a living wage – the only households able to earn a living wage with just a HS diploma is not having children.

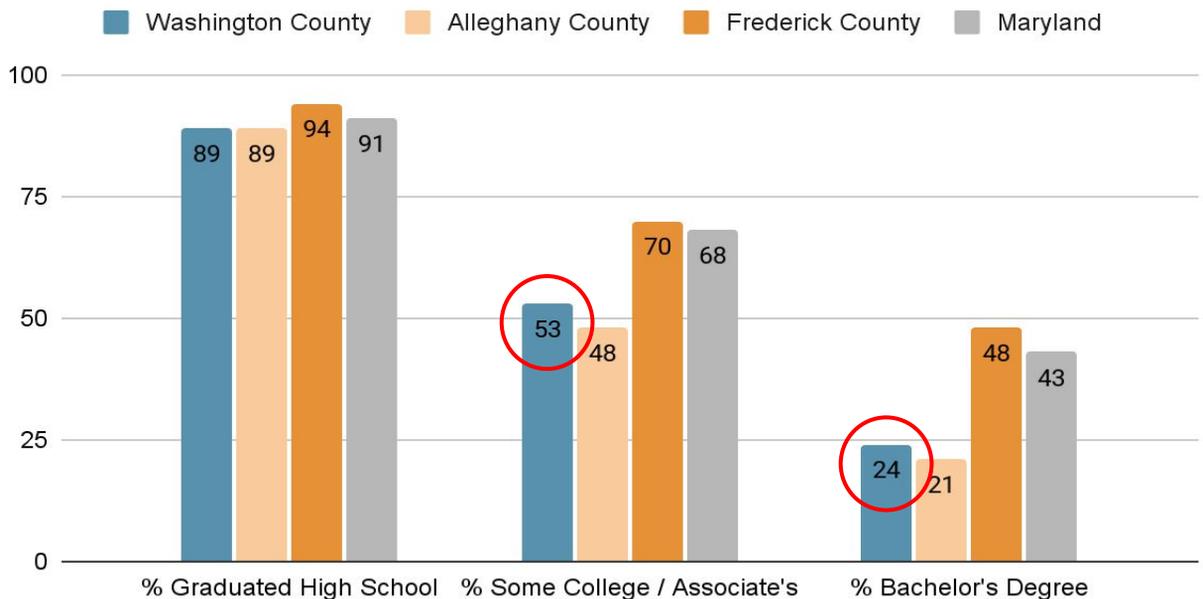
Again, a living wage is the bare minimum required to live without public assistance - not saving for retirement, not saving for a child's college. Just subsisting.

Connecting back to what Jim shared at the beginning - remember that 5 years from now, **over 85% of jobs will require more than a high school diploma just to get hired.**

- Not only is post-secondary education virtually a prerequisite for earning a living wage today, it will be even more critical in the years to come.

So on average, how educated are our residents?

Current Education Levels



In 2025, just 53% of all Washington County residents had earned some college credit or an associates degree or higher, while only 24% of our population holds a Bachelor's or professional degree.

We lag behind both the State and Frederick County in post-secondary attainment, particularly in the % of residents holding Bachelor's degrees.

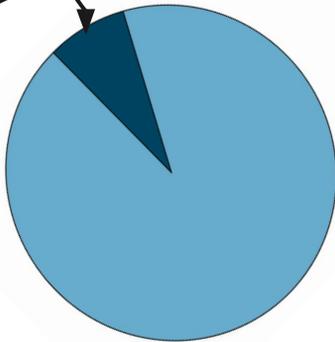
The question we must answer is **WHY** our attainment is comparatively lower - why are fewer Washington County residents achieving post-secondary education or training?

Our theories on why this is the case are the foundation of the framework for action we'll discuss next.

- But before we get to that framework, we have one more community metric to share - youth disconnection.

Youth Disconnection

8% of young adults aged 16-24 in Washington County
do not attend school or hold a job



**Cost to Washington
County Taxpayers**

=

\$9 million per year

Now that we understand more about both the demographic and workforce landscapes here in Washington County, I want to shift gears to talk about youth disconnection. Youth disconnection is a metric that's getting a lot of attention in the education literature these days.

Youth disconnection describes the **proportion of young adults who have fallen off the path to a successful career and stable life.**

- Specifically, the % of young people ages 16-24 who do not attend school or hold a job.

Right now, 8% of youth in Washington County are considered disconnected - that's over 600 young adults across the county!

Being disconnected doesn't just hurt the individual - disconnection brings a societal cost as well.

- Each year, one disconnected youth costs taxpayers over **\$14,000** in lost tax revenue, higher social service use, criminal justice costs, and other public support payments.
- Given these numbers, we conservatively estimate that youth

- disconnection costs Washington County taxpayers nearly **\$9 million per year.**

Youth disconnection is a metric we didn't talk about in our prior reports, but we feel it describes a demographic group we may be able to target in our work to help every resident achieve a living wage.

- If we want to increase postsecondary attainment, one strategy could be to focus on re-engaging this specific group of young adults.

Again, keep this metric in mind today - these youth could become a target population for collaborative work in our community.

Our Vision

Every Washington County resident
has a clear, attainable path to a
living-wage career

Now that we more clearly understand the current state of working and living in Washington County, both today and in the future, I'd like to revisit our vision - that every Washington County resident should have a clear, attainable path to a living-wage career.

We should all now be feeling the urgency around attaining our vision of **a living wage for all, and we hope you agree that increasing post-secondary attainment is the key strategy.**

The GHC Education Forum, and specifically the Advisory Committee, has spent significant time and energy brainstorming how best to achieve this goal, and through our conversations we've developed a framework for action we'd like to share with you today.

A Framework for Action

**Awareness and
Aspiration**



**Access and Navigation
Support**

**Ability to
Persist**



**Credential-to-Career
Connections**

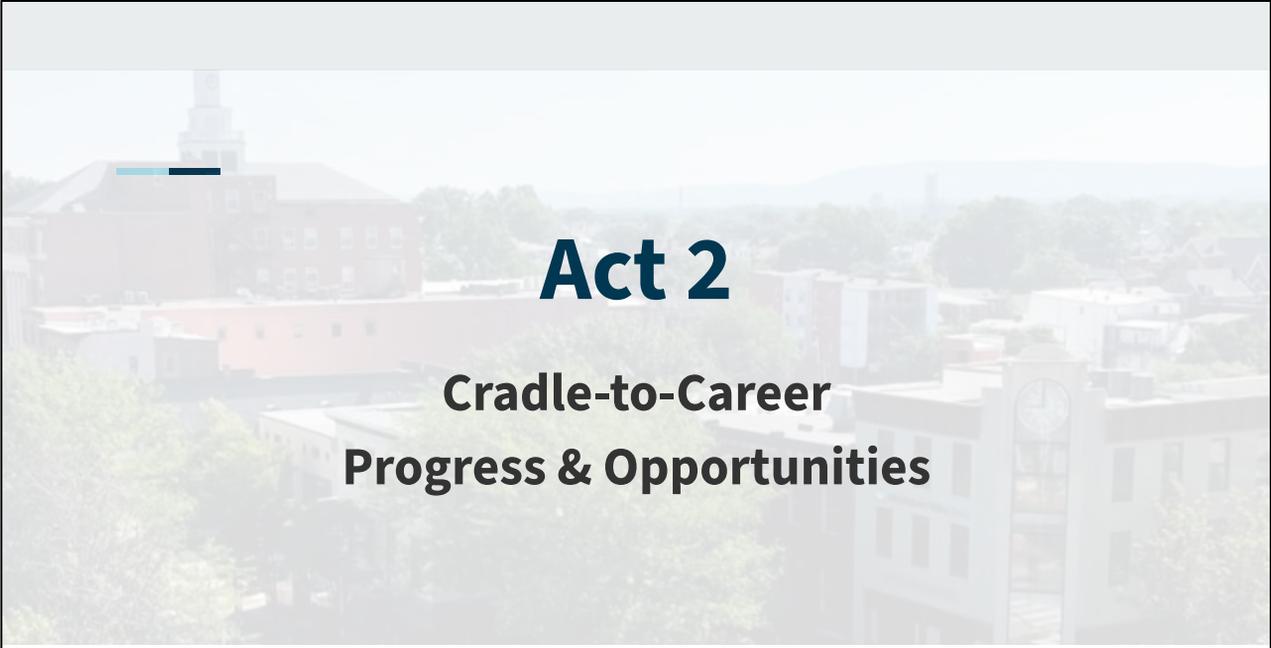
**Readiness and
Foundational Skills**



**Financing and
Affordability**

- In thinking about how to tackle this complex problem, we started by defining six levers that we think will impact our residents along every stage of the cradle to career pathway.
- I'll explain these levers briefly right now, but you'll be digging into these in much more details once we break for Act 3.
- In short, we believe we can increase post-secondary attainment across the county if we bolster:
 - Awareness and Aspiration
 - People know what good-paying careers exist here, understand the steps to get there, and believe those paths are worth pursuing.
 - Access and Navigation Support
 - Students don't have to figure it out alone — they have clear guidance and real help navigating their path to a living-wage career.

- Ability to Persist
 - When things inevitably get tough, students have the support they need to stay engaged, push through challenges, and simply keep going.
- Credential-to-Career Connections
 - Our education and training programs are tightly connected to the jobs that actually pay a living wage here.
- Readiness and Foundational Skills
 - Students build the academic and life skills they need to succeed in postsecondary education and the workforce.
- Financing and Affordability
 - Cost isn't the reason someone stops short of their goal — our residents have real financial support and real guidance on how to use it to afford the credentials they need.
- The key takeaway here is this: **We strongly believe that if we align our community efforts using these six levers to frame our work, we can make a more significant impact on post-secondary attainment than if we work in isolation.**



Act 2

Cradle-to-Career Progress & Opportunities

- This framework brings us to Act 2. Our hope is that Act 1 has painted a clear picture of what's to come and convinced you of the importance of post-secondary education.
- Now we're ready to answer the logical follow-on question - **are we ready for this future workforce?**
- In Act 2 we'll explore some key community indicators of career readiness that span the full cradle-to-career spectrum. Starting with early childhood going all the way through our current post-secondary offerings, we'll share our recent successes, highlight some ongoing challenges, and call out where we see the greatest opportunities for growth in our community.
 - You'll hear from **Dr. Gary Willow**, Associate Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction here at WCPS as he shares about the exciting growth we're seeing in K12 achievement.
 - We'll also hear from **Dr. James Klauber**, President of Hagerstown Community College, as he shares what

- post-secondary offerings look like across the county.
- But first, I want to do two things - #1, get a glimpse of our future workforce, meaning our current K12 students, and second, take us back to the last OnTrack report so we can explore the progress we've made since 2019.

Our Future Workforce: WCPS

Total Enrollment: 22,722 students

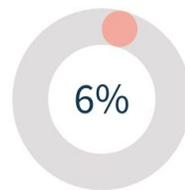
ECONOMICALLY
DISADVANTAGED



STUDENTS WITH
DISABILITIES

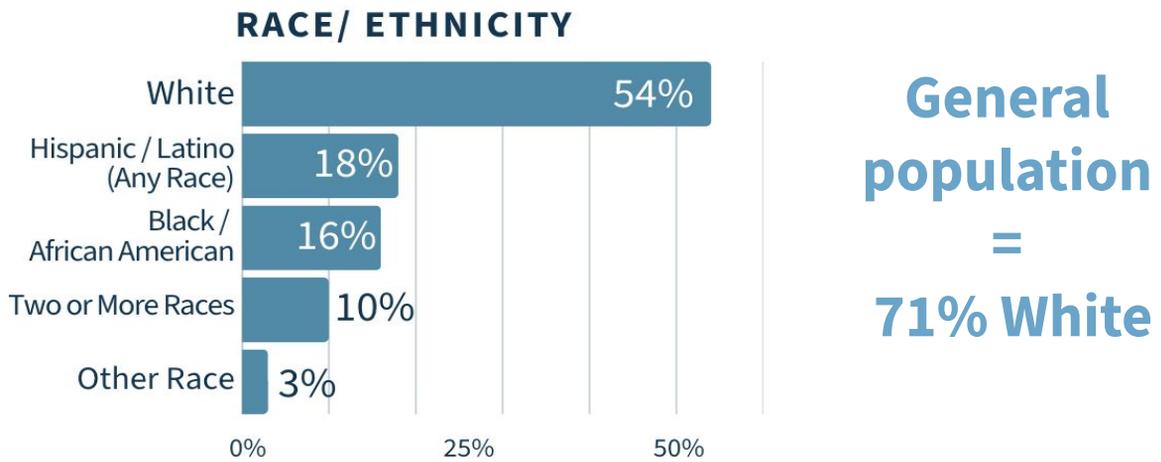


MULTILINGUAL
LEARNERS



- So who will make up our future workforce? In large part, it'll be the students currently in our WCPS system.
- Right now WCPS serves almost 23K students. Over half of these students are considered economically disadvantaged, which is a **20% increase since 2021.**

K-12 Demographics



- And our students are diverse - in fact, more diverse than the general population.
- So we can predict that the diversity of our future workforce will continue to increase over time.

Progress Since 2019



- Literacy Proficiency
- CTE Program Completion
- Dual Enrollment
- Kindergarten Readiness

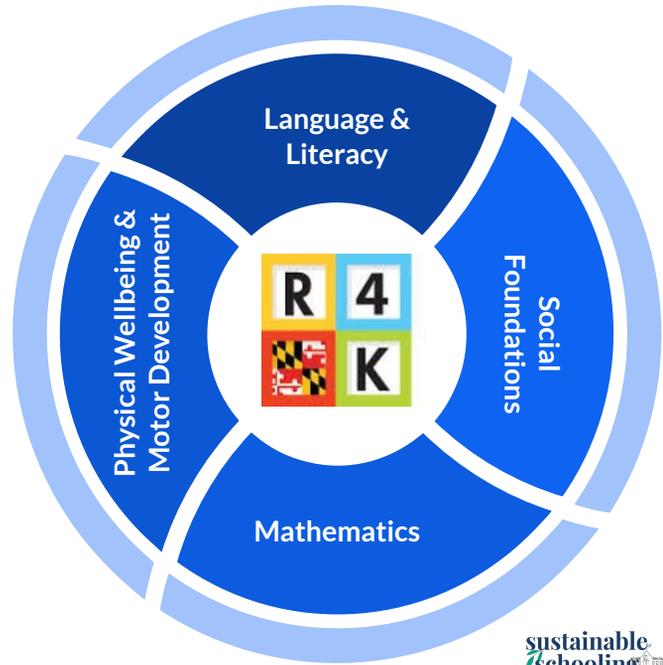


- Math Proficiency
- HS Graduation
- College Enrollment and Attainment

- When our previous report was published in 2019, we set goals around key career readiness indicators covering cradle to career. These included metrics like kindergarten readiness, MCAP proficiency scores, graduation rates, and college enrollment and attainment.
- You can see the full scope of these goals and metrics in the published report, so I'll share just a quick highlight reel here.
- Our goals were aspirational, and while we didn't achieve them all, we did meet the mark on three in particular - HS literacy proficiency, CTE (career and technical education) program completion, and dual enrollment. We also made significant progress on kindergarten readiness, which Dr. Willow will talk about shortly.
- However, this recent data also confirmed that we have work to do on math proficiency, HS graduation, and college enrollment and persistence (**meaning students not just starting but ultimately completing a college degree**).

ready for
KINDERGARTEN
MARYLAND

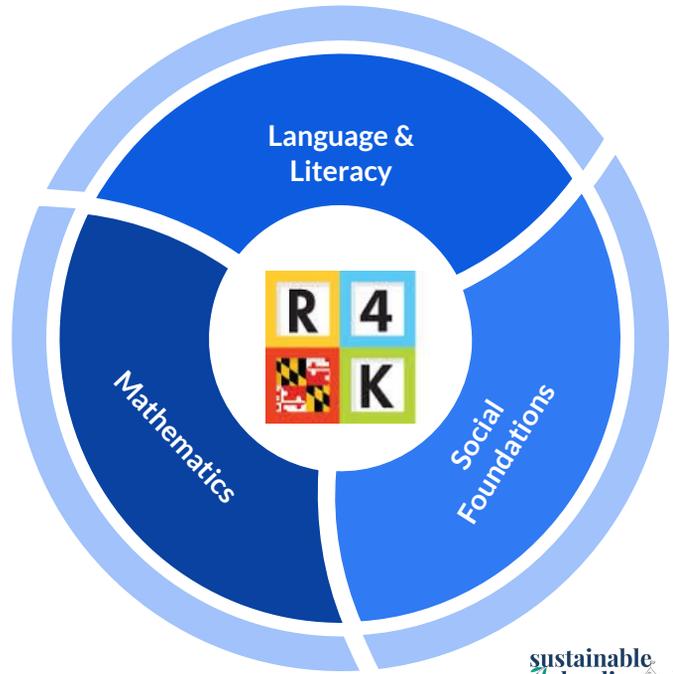
**What does it
mean to be
“ready” for
kindergarten?**
(Pre-2025)



- A key indicator of a student’s future academic success is a metric we call kindergarten readiness.
- Kindergarten readiness describes whether a student enters grade school ready to learn, and the tool we use to assess this looks at four domains:
 - Language and literacy
 - Mathematics
 - Social foundations
 - Physical well-being and motor development (has been removed as a domain for future results) **[click for 3 only]**
- And because every kindergartener in the state is assessed with this tool, we can compare how our kiddos perform compared to kiddos in other counties.

ready for
KINDERGARTEN
MARYLAND

**What does it
mean to be
“ready” for
kindergarten?**
(2025)



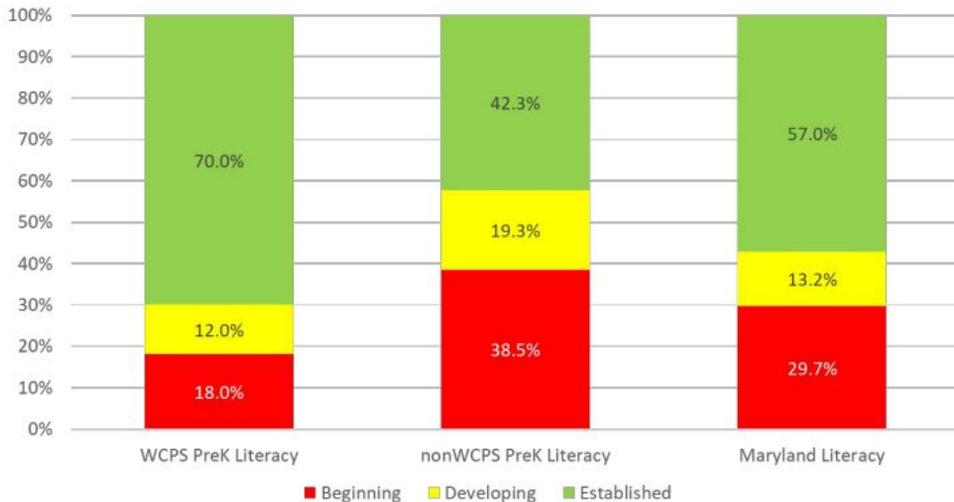
Early Childhood: Kindergarten Readiness

In just over five years, we jumped from **23rd** to **4th** in the state.



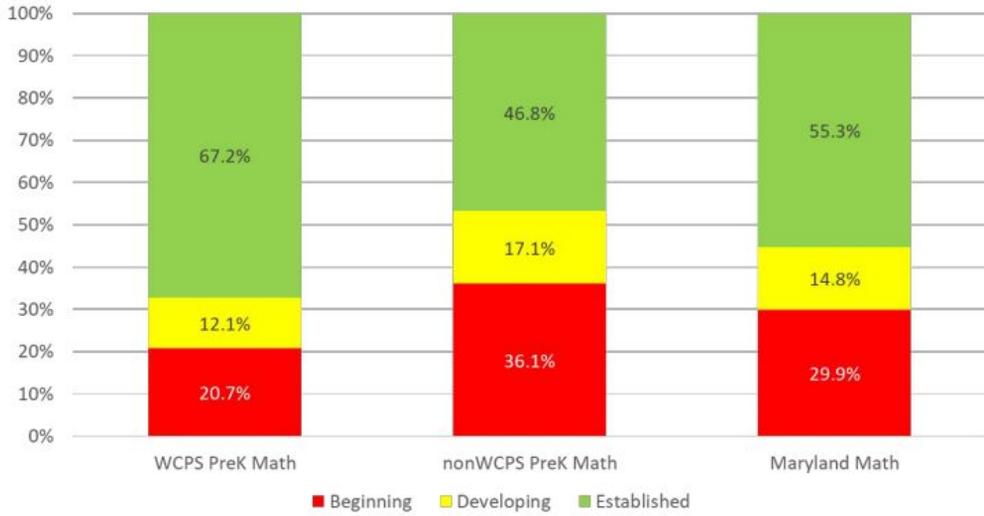
- So how do we compare? Well, from 2019 to 2024 we jumped from 23rd (of 24 counties) to 4th in the State, and we're currently outperforming the state average by over 10%.
- What did we do to improve kinder readiness? I would argue that three key factors drove our success.
 - **Focus:** We chose to prioritize kinder readiness by embedding it into our district strategic plan, meaning many people were now held accountable to these outcomes.
 - **Funding** : Leveraged state early childhood funding newly available under the Maryland Blueprint
 - **Access:** Expanded access to full-day pre-K spots, giving more students access to structured, high-quality early learning experiences prior to starting kindergarten

KRA STAR EARLY LITERACY



- Our current performance on this metric speaks to **the power of intentional effort and incremental progress**, but we're not there yet.
 - Despite our growth, our readiness rate in 2024 was still only 55% (the highest in the state was 78% - Worcester County) - this means that just under half of our students aren't fully prepared to succeed in kindergarten right away.
 - The state recently changed how KRA data is reported, most notably choosing not to report an overall score like we've seen in years past, but our most recent KRA data in math and literacy shows that we still exceed the state average on these measures.
 - However, a new insight emerging from this data is that **students who don't participate in our WCPS-run full day pre-K programs are more likely to start school at a disadvantage.**

KRA STAR MATH



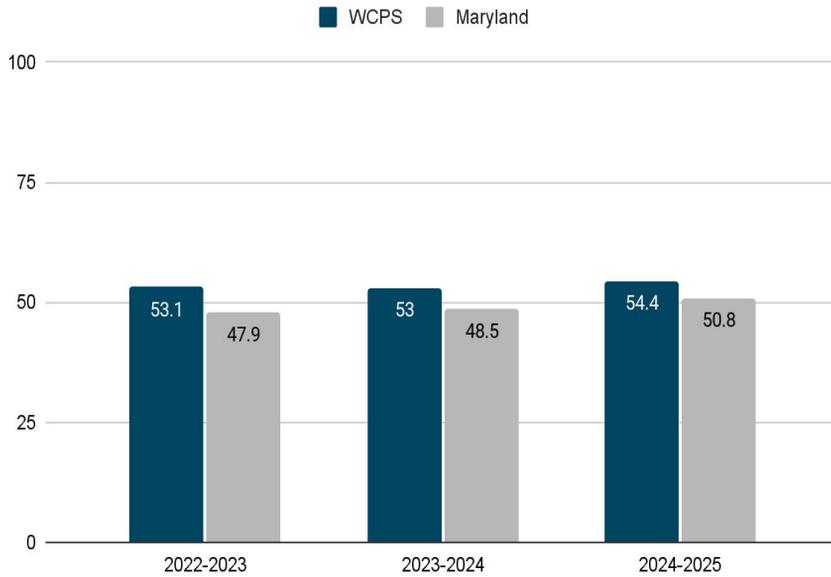
K-12 Highlights

- **Maryland Report Card**
- **Literacy “Bright Spot”**



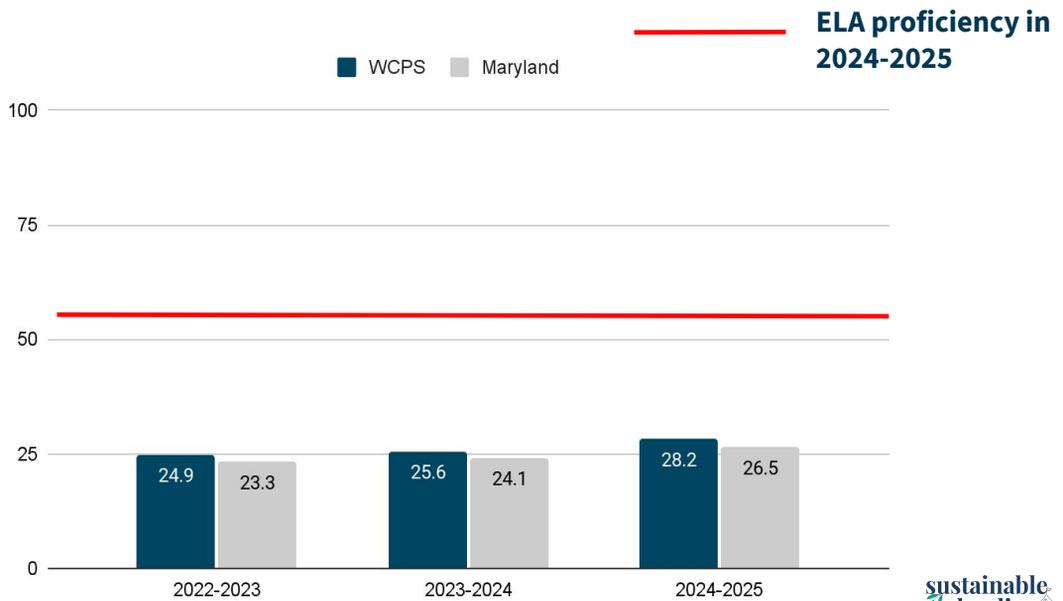
- **Maryland Report Card**
 - Washington County is now significantly outperforming the state average for schools earning a grade of 4 or 5 on the state report card.
- **Literacy “Bright Spot”**
 - Since implementing an intentional shift to a high-quality literacy curriculum district-wide, literacy rates have risen **over 4% per year** for the past three years. An article in the education publication *The 74* called us out recently, stating that we’ve emerged as a literacy “bright spot” in the nation - meaning that our literacy rates have risen over 4% over each of the past three years. Our approach to literacy has involved rigorous, mandated screening for reading difficulties in primary grades (K-3) and tailored, increasingly intensive interventions, adhering strictly to the Ready to Read Act.

MCAP ELA Proficiency



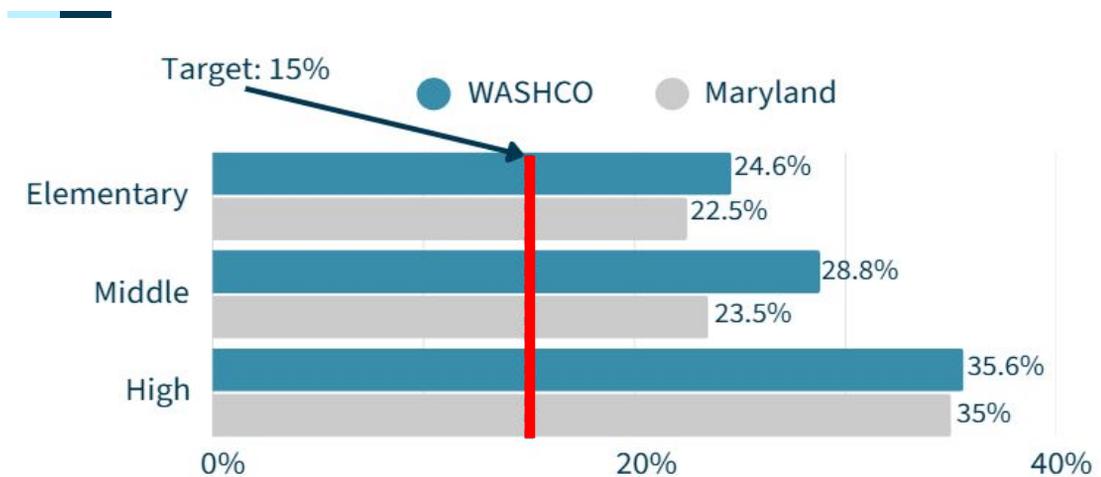
- We're outperforming the state right now!
- BUT we acknowledge that subgroups are underperforming in comparison - we're working to support these subgroups

MCAP Math Proficiency



- Our math results significantly trail our ELA performance and math is a focus area for the district.
- This is especially important in light of recent research showing a strong correlation between early math proficiency and career success
 - Students who develop strong math skills early are **more likely to pursue advanced training after high school** and enter careers that offer stability and growth.
 - Raising math scores by age 12 is associated with **significantly higher earnings at age 30, even more so than comparable gains in reading.**
 - Conversely, students who struggle with math are more likely to be tracked into lower-wage jobs.
- This research underscores the importance of investing in math instruction across all grade levels

Chronic Absenteeism



- Chronic absenteeism is a critical metric to track because **kids can't learn if they're not in school!**
- Chronic absenteeism skyrocketed across the country during the pandemic, and many districts - us included - are still working to return to pre-pandemic absenteeism levels
- Chronic absenteeism contributes to the challenges we're experiencing with math - when you are missing 10% of school year, you're less likely proficient in math.
- Chronic absenteeism starts in kindergarten. We've reviewed the data and can see that students who are chronically absent in kindergarten are far more likely to be chronically absent in high school.

High School Graduation Rate



- Another key metric affected by the pandemic is graduation rate - and it's intrinsically tied to our chronic absenteeism rates.
- The connection is logical - the less students attend school, the less likely they are to graduate. And so our best course of action to improve graduation rates is to improve our attendance.
- Graduation rates across the country dipped during the pandemic and recovery has been uneven - as you can see here, we're still trying to course-correct post-Covid.

Class of 2025



74%

Students **earning dual credit**

69

Students **completing an apprenticeship**

48

Students **earning an associate's degree**

- Thanks to the Maryland Blueprint legislation, we've been able to invest significantly in supporting dual enrollment at HCC - meaning our HS students earn college credit AND high school credit for taking classes at HCC.
- In some cases, students have also earned Associate's degrees while still in high school - 48 earned an AA this past year.
- We've also grown our apprenticeship offerings to support students in identifying a cost-effective, supported pathway to a career in the trades
- I also want to share a bit more about other post-secondary-focused opportunities we've grown recently aligned with the mission of this Summit
 - Changes to programming at Tech High and comprehensive schools to meet the needs of students and the community.
 - Diesel program at Tech
 - HVAC at North

Post-Secondary Options in Our Region



Key Message: we have a bevy of post-secondary options in our region, and some right here in Hagerstown! You can complete a BA degree without ever leaving your hometown

2. Our tracks go all over!
 1. Pittsburgh Institute of Aeronautics
 2. USMH
 3. Almost all colleges and universities, anywhere and everywhere!
 4. MSOM

Post-Secondary Options at HCC

Dual Enrollment

**Adult Basic Education
and ESL**

**Traditional
Undergraduate Courses
of Study**



Adult Learning

**Credit / Non-Credit
offerings**

**Barr Construction
Institute**



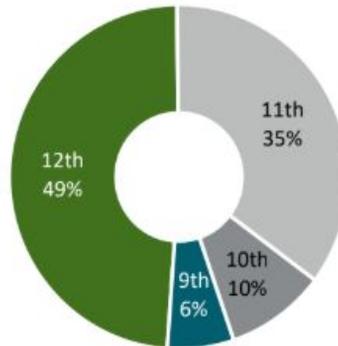
Key Message: HCC has expanded its post-secondary options tremendously in recent years and is a critical local resource in achieving our goal of increasing post-secondary attainment

1. HCC is the higher education train station in the Hub City!
 1. Adult Basic Education/ESL
 2. Dual Credit
 3. Traditional undergraduate
 4. Adult learner
 5. Credit/Noncredit
 6. Barr Construction Institute

Dual Enrollment / Dual Credit

2,290 WCPS students participated in Dual Credit during the 2024 - 2025 school year

Grade Level of Dual Credit Participants



Key Message: Dual Enrollment has grown tremendously BUT we're not converting this work into actual degrees or certificates

- Our success in increasing the popularity of dual enrollment for WCPS students is encouraging.
 - Students in all grades participate in dual enrollment
- HOWEVER, we're not seeing enough of these students continue down the road to post-secondary education or training. We'll talk more about this on the next slide.

Post-Secondary **Challenges** in Our Region

Persistence

Awareness

Alignment



- Persistence
 - While we've seen an encouraging increase in students participating in dual enrollment, this isn't yet translating to completion - meaning that many students, despite having earned college credit in high school, are not continuing to earn an AA or BA.
 - We've also seen students face challenges in transferring CC credits to four-year institutions, so there's work to do around streamlining and aligning transfer procedures.
- Awareness
 - We have so many offerings in our area!
 - However, we need to make sure students are not just *aware* of them but know what it takes to apply, be admitted, fund their study, and ultimately complete their education or training.
- Alignment
 - There is an opportunity to better align high school advising,

- community college pathways, employer needs, and transfer to other institutions
- Students often experience these as separate systems rather than a coherent pathway
- Without intentional alignment, we risk redundant coursework, wasted money, and delayed or aborted entry into living-wage careers

Turn to Jim for Q&A

Clarifying Question & Answer

- Ask your **clarifying questions** now
- Write down your **deeper questions** for a longer Q&A after breakout sessions





Act 3

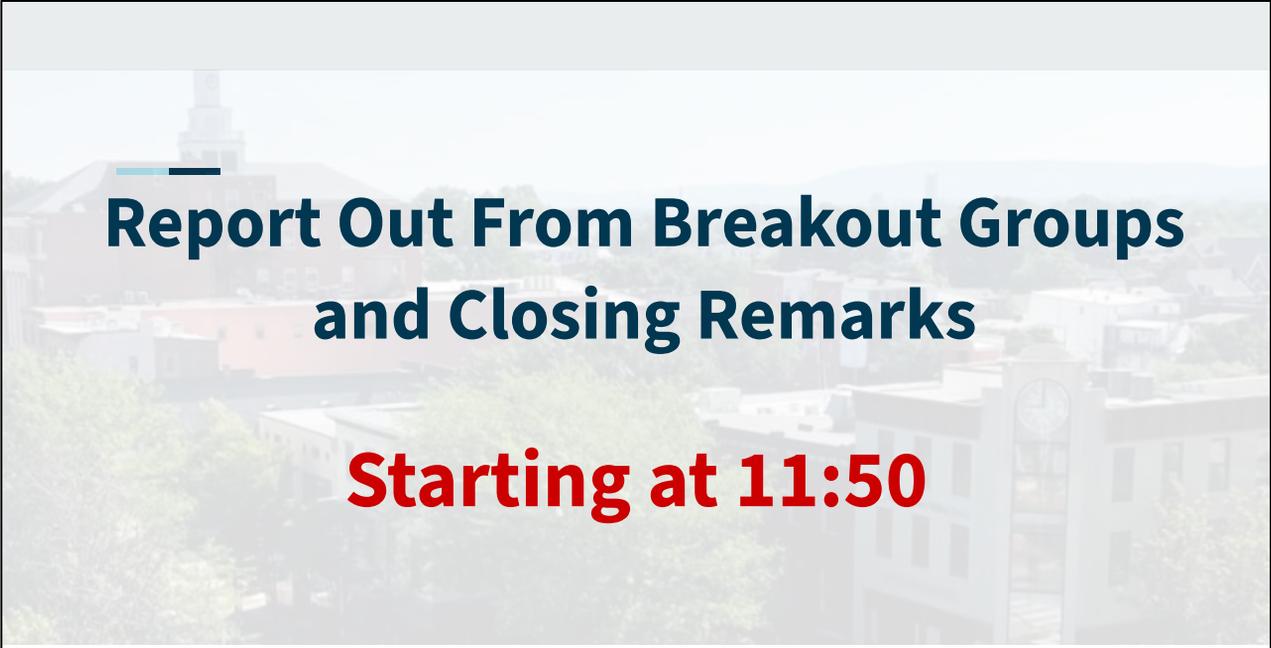
Breakout Sessions

- The purpose of this next section is to help us move from shared understanding to shared action.
- **This is not about designing new programs or solving everything in one sitting. Instead, it's about identifying where we can personally have impact, where alignment already exists, where partnerships are needed, and what realistic next steps could move this work forward.**
- By the end of our time together, the goal is that each of you leaves with:
 - A **clearer picture** of your lever in Washington County
 - A **better understanding** of where your organization fits, and
 - At least **one promising opportunity for collaboration** that we can continue to learn from together

Shared Norms

- Focus on **systems and experiences**, not individuals
- Speak from **evidence and lived experiences**, not assumptions
- Stay **future-focused and solutions-oriented**, not blame-oriented
- Monitor your **air time**

- Shared Norms/Ground Rules
 - Focus not on individuals but on **systems and the experiences of your organization**,
 - Speak from **evidence and lived experience**, not assumptions
 - Stay **future-focused** and **solutions-oriented within our locus of control**, not blame-oriented - thinking about concrete next steps your org can take after today
 - Monitor **air time** - step up or step back as needed



Report Out From Breakout Groups and Closing Remarks

Starting at 11:50

Reflecting on Breakouts

- Facilitators: Share your group's 2 focus areas



1 - Access and Navigation Support: **Kevin**

Comprehensive communication with aligned messaging

2 - Readiness and Foundational Skills: **Gary**

Chronic absenteeism

Pre-K 3 expansion

3 - Awareness and Aspiration: **Addie and Kim**

Coordinated messaging on the importance of post-secondary education

4 - Ability to Persist: **Matt and Jim**

Childcare

Chronic absenteeism

Post-secondary completion

Comprehensive messaging - one-stop hub

5 - Financing and Affordability: **Stacey**

Financial literacy for students and families

Community engagement/awareness of financing options

6 - *Credential-to-Career Connections: **Dr. Klauber***

Possible workforce summit to better engage business community

Q & A



Closing

*Tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare
for it today*



Thank You's

- Meritus Health (Amber) for hosting us in this beautiful space and providing the refreshments
- Wayles and Amy, Sustainable Schooling
- Erin
- Alan Mullendore and the GHC Education Forum Members
- OnTrack Washington County
- ALL OF YOU - you were a major part of our past successes and we look forward to your continued support to ensure that *"Every Washington County resident has a clear, attainable path to a living-wage career"*

Next Steps

- Preview post-summit report - coming mid March
- We plan to bring everyone back in 2027 for another Summit to review how we did. We may also look at a mid-point smaller event to touch base with everyone again.

Tomorrow belongs to the people

who prepare for it today