OKLAHOMA PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION

75% Higher Income

25% Higher Income

HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA   ASSOCIATE DEGREE   BACHELOR'S DEGREE
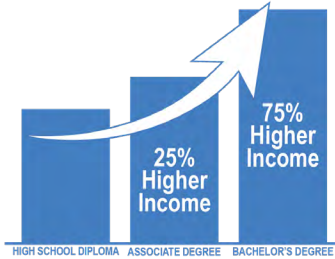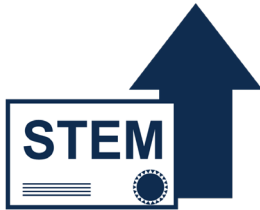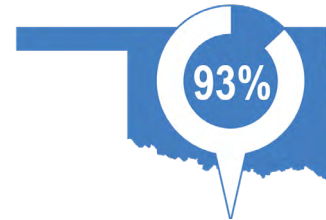
Associate and bachelor's degree holders earn a median income **25% and 75% higher**, respectively, than those with only a high school diploma.

Data from the National Center for Education Statistics show the cost of attendance at Oklahoma universities is **among the lowest in the nation**.

STEM

The number of engineering degrees and certificates conferred by state system institutions **increased 43.1%** over the last decade, and STEM degrees **increased 19.2%** at all levels.

93%

Our students learn here, earn here — **over 93%** of Oklahomans who graduate from a state system college or university remain and work in the state one year after graduation.

$9.40

For every $1 of state appropriations invested, the state system of higher education generates **$9.40** in economic return.

22 $

Of Oklahoma's 100 critical occupations, the **top 22** highest-paying jobs require an associate degree or higher, and **eight of the top 10** fastest-growing jobs require a college degree.

29%

Only **28.5%** of Oklahoma citizens hold a bachelor's degree or higher. The national average is nearly 36%, and of our surrounding states — including Arkansas, New Mexico, Missouri, Texas, Kansas and Colorado — only Arkansas has fewer citizens with a bachelor's degree or higher.

KEY OKLAHOMA HIGHER EDUCATION ATTAINMENT INITIATIVES

OKLAHOMA'S PROMISE

Oklahoma's Promise is recognized by many as America's best college access program and is considered a model that combines emphases on academic preparation and financial support for college. Since 1992, this transformational scholarship program has helped more than 100,000 students achieve the dream of a college education. An estimated 15,000 students will earn the scholarship in 2023-24.

CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT: GAINING A HEAD START ON COLLEGE

Concurrent enrollment allows eligible high school juniors and seniors to get a head start on college by taking courses for college credit while still in high school. Participating high school seniors and juniors may also be eligible to receive a tuition waiver for up to 18 credit hours and 9 credit hours per academic year, respectively. While only high school seniors and juniors are eligible to receive concurrent tuition waivers, State Regents' policy allows for exceptions to be made for younger, high-achieving high school students to participate in concurrent enrollment. Additionally, some state system colleges and universities currently offer "early college" pilot programs that allow eligible students the opportunity to earn an associate degree while in high school.

REACH HIGHER: OKLAHOMA'S ADULT DEGREE COMPLETION INITIATIVE

Over 400,000 Oklahomans currently have earned some college credit, but stopped out before earning a college degree. Targeting these students is a strategy to increase Oklahoma's overall educational attainment. Through Reach Higher, the state system adult degree completion program, 26 institutions offer specialized advising and support systems to help adult students return to college and complete degrees that lead to employment in Oklahoma's critical occupations. Reach Higher offers financial support through scholarships available to eligible adult students in Oklahoma. More than 11,000 degrees have been awarded through Reach Higher since 2007.

AWARDING COLLEGE CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING

The State Regents launched a dedicated website, ShowWhatYouKnowOK.org, to empower students to determine how previously earned college credit, licenses, certifications, military training, advanced standing scores, and knowledge gained through other learning experiences can be applied toward a degree program.

Through cooperative agreement programs at our public institutions, students may be able to obtain college credit for technical work completed at a technology center through contractual agreements, prior learning assessments, or course transfer. Higher education institutions have partnered with 29 technology centers across the state so that students may earn technical college credit in specific areas toward Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree requirements. The A.A.S degrees are "work-ready" degree programs offered by a state system college or university that lead directly to employment in technical fields.

The State Regents' Course Equivalency Project (CEP) facilitates student transfer within the state system of higher education. The CEP database contains faculty-generated course equivalency information for thousands of courses offered at public and private institutions, with courses organized by discipline. Equivalency groups within each discipline contain a collection of courses from sponsoring institutions; credit for a course listed in a CEP group can be transferred to any state system institution that sponsors a similar course in that group.

REVERSE TRANSFER

Reverse transfer is a unique process for awarding associate degrees to students who have transferred in pursuit of a bachelor's degree before completing the requirements for an associate degree at a two-year institution. Through reverse transfer policies and programs, students can combine credits they earned at two- and four-year institutions to be awarded an associate degree while also working to complete a bachelor's degree.

MICRO-CREDENTIALS

Through UpskillOK, the State Regents provide a statewide framework for the development of micro-credentials, alternative learning pathways directly aligned with high-demand skills requested by employers. Micro-credentials help individuals adapt and succeed, equipping both students pursuing a degree and current degree-holders with specific career skillsets, competencies, and knowledge that can be readily transferred to fill critical workforce needs. Colleges and universities across the state are participating in a system contract with Coursera, one of the largest online learning platforms in the world, to provide students, faculty and staff, and employers access to Coursera's comprehensive catalog of thousands of job-relevant courses across business, technology and data science, among other fields.