



APPENDIX A

HOW THE COMMISSION DEVELOPED THIS REPORT

COMPOSITION OF THE COMMISSION

Formed in late 2017, the myFutureNC Commission is a statewide commission focused on educational attainment that brings together North Carolina's thought leaders in education, business, philanthropy, the faith-based and nonprofit communities, and *ex officio* representatives from the North Carolina House of Representatives, Senate, and Governor's office.

COMMISSION CHARGE

The Commission's primary goal is to create a statewide education plan for early childhood through postsecondary education that recommends a clear attainment goal, identifies key benchmarks for measuring progress toward reaching that goal, and proposes priority areas to guide the future of education in North Carolina. This report is the final product of Phase I of that work.

PROCESS OVERVIEW

Between November 2017 and December 2018, the full Commission convened five times in different locations across the state. Over the same period, subject matter experts in P-12 education, postsecondary education, and workforce, along with many other myFutureNC partners, produced multiple policy

briefs and fact sheets, conducted nine listening sessions across the state, commissioned a statewide Gallup survey, and created a webinar series, all with the goal of building a comprehensive attainment plan that serves all North Carolinians. The Priorities in the main section of this report evolved from the discussions held during all Commission and Committee meetings to date, technical papers commissioned and distributed by myFutureNC, and feedback and information derived from myFutureNC's statewide Listening Tour.

The work of the Commission was facilitated by several partner organizations, including ECONorthwest, EducationNC (EdNC), Education Strategy Group (ESG), Gallup, the Hunt Institute, MDC, the myFutureNC staff (myFutureNC), ncIMPACT at the School of Government at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill (ncIMPACT), and the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation at North Carolina State University (Friday Institute).

PROCESS DETAILS

The Commission's work took place across several phases.

IDEA GENERATION

(NOV 2017-AUG 2018)

Leads: ECONorthwest, EdNC, ESG, Gallup, MDC, myFutureNC, ncIMPACT & Friday Institute

The Commission met in November 2017, February 2018, and June 2018 to hear from experts about demographic trends across North Carolina, as well as about employment projections. The June meeting included a presentation from ECONorthwest about setting postsecondary attainment goals. The Commission meetings also provided opportunities for the Commission's committees—P-12 Education, Postsecondary Education, and Workforce Development—to discuss in greater detail the education and workforce preparation issues raised in the general meetings and in myFutureNC-commissioned policy briefs.

- **P-12 Education Committee.** The P-12 committee framed the attainment challenge as a problem of *opportunities*: for a quality education for all students; for access to human, social, and material supports; and for stakeholder involvement. The committee highlighted current strengths in P-12 education and examined *areas in need of the most attention*, from better coordination across sectors, to strengthening

non-instructional support systems, to changes to teacher training that support cross-sector student preparation. The committee refined its focus to seven areas: 1. *universal access to pre-K*; 2. *improved teacher recruitment and retention strategies*; 3. *a unified student data and tracking system*; 4. *increased student and parent engagement*; 5. *soft skills training for students*; 6. *alignment of curriculum and professional development throughout P-12*; and 7. *broader articulation agreements across secondary and postsecondary institutions*.

- Postsecondary Education Committee.** The Postsecondary committee framed the attainment challenge as a problem of *supports*: supports for students and their families, supports for the education sectors that prepare students for postsecondary work, and also supports for postsecondary institutions as they work to understand the needs of all of the populations they want to serve. The committee identified *transfers* as a major area of focus for facilitating student advancement along pathways that meet projected workforce education needs. The committee also discussed *structural barriers* to attainment and proposed key benchmarks for measuring progress. The committee identified *student ambition gaps*, *student information gaps*, *a client-driven focus*, and *finance reform* as the most promising focus areas for improving postsecondary attainment.
- Workforce Development Committee.** The Workforce committee framed the attainment challenge as a problem of *gaps*: between each segment of the education sector, between the education and business and industry sectors, and between both sectors and public perceptions. The committee focused on ways to *re-define education pathways* by identifying existing best practices, building flexible education frameworks, and broadening the definition of attainment, with a key goal of expanding *access*. The committee noted that progress toward statewide goals and a shared attainment target might mask problems at the *regional*, *sector*, and *subgroup* levels, as well as at *intermediate stages*. The committee agreed that tracking progress on the *demand side* is as important as tracking progress on the supply side, that *feasibility* is an important criterion for longer-term solutions, and that it will be important to *scale up existing successful approaches and programs* in the interim.



- **Policy Briefs, Surveys, and Listening Tours.** During the spring and summer of 2018, myFutureNC released a series of 18 fact sheets and policy briefs related to the attainment goal-setting process, workforce preparation, the P-12 and postsecondary education sectors, and the transition points along the education-to-workforce continuum. Also during this phase, several myFutureNC partner organizations engaged North Carolina residents in the process through focus groups and surveys. Descriptions of each of these data sources are included in **Appendix E**; full results of the work are posted on the myFutureNC website³⁴; and summaries of the results are included in **Appendices F, G, and H**.

SYNTHESIS

(SEPT 2018)

Lead: Friday Institute

In September 2018, the Friday Institute began the process of reconciling the ideas generated during the previous phase. Eighty-one themes identified in Commission meeting discussions and in analyses of Listening Tour data (26 identified by MDC, 21 by ESG, and 34 by the Friday Institute) were combined into 12 Action Areas, and these Action Areas were grouped into five Challenges. The Action Areas and Challenges are listed below. In addition, 267 recommendations—94 from commissioners, 23 from policy briefs, 45 identified by ESG from other states, and 105 from the listening tour—were consolidated into 174 specific strategies.

- **Five Challenges:**
 - » Access to Opportunity
 - » Preparation
 - » Support
 - » Alignment
 - » Coordination
- **12 Action Areas:**
 - » Affordability
 - » Aspirations
 - » Responsiveness to Local Needs and Demographic Changes
 - » P20 Pipeline
 - » School-to-Workforce Continuum

34. <https://www.myfuturenc.org>



- » Comprehensive Support Systems
- » Lifelong Growth
- » Education-Community Alignment
- » Education Sectors Alignment
- » Education-Workforce Alignment
- » mFNC Strategy
- » Accountability & Measurement of Progress

CONSOLIDATION, PART I

(SEPT-OCT 2018)

Leads: ESG and Friday Institute

With input from committee leadership and subject matter experts, ESG and the Friday Institute reduced the 12 Action Areas and five Challenges to four Challenge Areas. The 174 strategies were further combined into a tighter list of 115, all of which were elevated into 18 high-level Recommendations distributed across the first four Challenge Areas:³⁵

- Access to Opportunity (3)
- Preparation (7)
- Support (5)
- System Alignment (3)

PLANNING FOR NEXT STEPS

(OCT-DEC 2018)

Lead: ESG

To begin the process of planning for the sustainability and longevity of the myFutureNC project, ESG began working with Commission members on the fifth Challenge Area (Building and Sustaining Momentum) and its four corresponding recommendations.

CONSOLIDATION, PART II AND RECONCILIATION

(OCT-NOV 2018)

Leads: ECONorthwest, MDC, myFutureNC committees, and Friday Institute

³⁵ The final set of specific strategies has been archived (Appendix I) for use during the next phase of myFutureNC's work.



In October 2018, the Commission convened to hear ECONorthwest's recommendations for a statewide attainment goal and related benchmark indicators (**Appendix B**), and the committees met to discuss the reconciled and consolidated recommendations. Feedback from the three committees' discussions were merged³⁶ to create a Call to Action with four Focus Areas to guide the state's work: Education and Workforce Alignment; Access to Lifelong Educational Opportunities; Preparation for Education, Career, and Life; and Comprehensive Support Systems. Sixteen cross-sector Priorities were identified for the Focus Areas, with each one addressing at least one of the following 10 criteria:

1. Implementation Feasibility
2. Political Feasibility
3. Cost Neutrality
4. Intensity and Breadth
5. Immediacy
6. Sequence
7. Scalability
8. Momentum
9. Leadership
10. Equity

REVIEW AND FINALIZATION

(NOV-DEC 2018)

Leads: myFutureNC and Friday Institute

The myFutureNC committee co-chairs, the heads of each North Carolina education system, and the myFutureNC Steering Committee reviewed and revised the Call to Action ahead of its release in its final form to the full myFutureNC Commission in December 2018. The Commission met in December and voted to approve the Focus Areas and Priorities.³⁷

36. For connections between each committee's recommendations and the final set of Focus Areas and Priorities, please see Appendix J.

37. Caveats and limitations of the Call to Action are detailed in Appendix K.