Washington is home to a diverse economy with a broad range of anchor industries, including agriculture, aerospace, health care, retail, technology, and more. Increasingly the jobs available in our state are being filled by workers who have completed a postsecondary credential—such as a degree, apprenticeship, or certificate. Right now, it’s estimated that just 41% of our high school students go on to earn a credential by age 26. Washington needs more students completing credentials in all categories.

Our goal: 70% credential attainment by the high school class of 2030.

Here’s one path to getting there.

To set a course to the 70% goal, Washington must begin by raising the high school graduation rate from 83% to 95%. That’s an increase of 12 points by the high school class of 2030 (or 0.9% per year on average).

Seventy-six percent of high school graduates from the class of 2006 enrolled in postsecondary programs. The estimate for the class of 2017 drops to 75%. To stay on track to the 70% goal, Washington must raise the postsecondary enrollment rate of its high school graduates to 88%, making a 13-point gain (or 1% per year on average).

Washington must reengage more students who fall out of the education pipeline and get them on track to a credential. The current reengagement rate is 3%. To hit the overall goal, that number must increase to 7% by the high school class of 2030 (an increase of 0.3% per year on average).

Sixty-one percent of high school graduates from the class of 2017 are projected to complete a credential by age 26. To stay on track to the 70% goal, Washington must raise that number to 75%, making a 14-point gain (or 1.1% per year on average).