



# COOPERATIVE INNOVATIVE HIGH SCHOOLS

*Issue Brief*

**2019**



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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## 01 BACKGROUND

## 02 NORTH CAROLINA'S COOPERATIVE INNOVATIVE HIGH SCHOOL MODEL

Funding

Graduation Outcomes

## 03 POSTSECONDARY ATTAINMENT AND COOPERATIVE INNOVATIVE HIGH SCHOOLS

National Landscape: Postsecondary Attainment Goals

myFutureNC

Postsecondary Attainment of Cooperative Innovative  
High School Students

## 04 QUESTIONS FOR POLICYMAKERS TO CONSIDER

## 05 RESOURCES



# COOPERATIVE INNOVATIVE HIGH SCHOOLS

## Issue Brief

### BACKGROUND

Nationally, 47 states utilize innovative dual enrollment models that allow students to earn college credit while in high school.<sup>i</sup> These programs aim to increase students' college and career readiness and rates of postsecondary degree attainment. By having access to college-level coursework while still in high school, students are better prepared for postsecondary education and more likely to enroll in college. Dual enrollment programs are also generally tuition-free, which can reduce the overall cost of a college education for students.<sup>ii</sup>

Since most jobs in North Carolina continue to require that candidates have some type of high-quality degree or credential, innovative high schools that offer structured dual enrollment programs are a unique opportunity to give low-income and first-generation college students a head start on learning the skills they need to succeed in the workforce.

### NORTH CAROLINA'S COOPERATIVE INNOVATIVE HIGH SCHOOL MODEL

In North Carolina, schools that are intentionally structured to give students dual enrollment opportunities are known as Cooperative Innovative High Schools (CIHS). CIHS were established in 2004 through a partnership between the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, the North Carolina Community College System, the University of North Carolina (UNC) System, and the North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities in response to legislation passed by the General Assembly.<sup>iii</sup>

CIHS partner with institutions of higher education – either a local community college, UNC campus, or private institution – and offer students the opportunity to complete tuition-free college coursework while getting their high school diploma.<sup>iv</sup> Per statute, CIHS primarily serve students who would be the first in their families to graduate from college (i.e., first-generation students), students who are at risk of dropping out of high school, and students who would benefit from accelerated academic opportunities – including students who are historically underrepresented in higher education.<sup>v</sup>

CIHS include a number of different models, including:

- **Early College High Schools:** Small schools located on a college campus that enable students to earn both their high school diploma and an associate degree concurrently.<sup>vi, vii</sup>
- **Middle College High Schools:** Small schools located on a college campus that allow students to take college courses, but not necessarily with the goal of achieving a college degree or certificate.<sup>viii, ix</sup>
- **STEM High Schools:** Schools with a focus on science, technology, engineering and/or mathematics that partner with a local postsecondary institution to provide dual enrollment opportunities.
- **Career Academies:** Small schools that offer a thematic-based approach where students take courses to receive specialized training in a specific career pathway.<sup>x</sup>





Of the 133 current CIHS in North Carolina, 113 are partnered with community colleges, 12 are partnered with UNC campuses, and eight are partnered with private institutions.

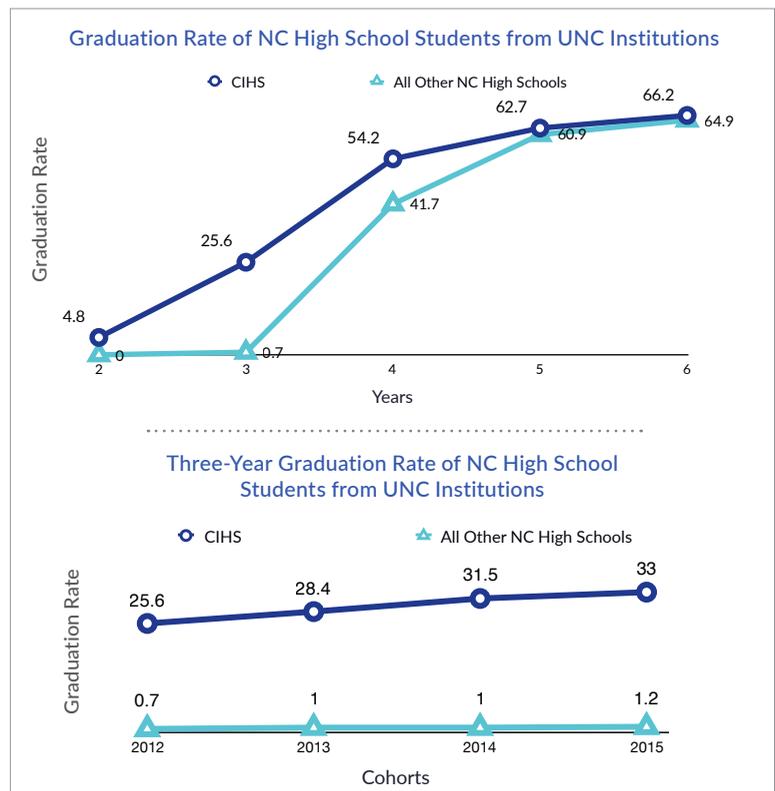


**Funding**

Like other public schools in North Carolina, CIHS receive funding based on student Average Daily Membership (ADM). Most CIHS receive supplemental funding as well, which is aligned with the economic tier designation for the region where the school is located.<sup>xi</sup> Supplemental funding ranges from \$180,000 to \$310,000 per school.<sup>xii</sup> As of 2012, college courses offered to students attending a CIHS are covered under the umbrella of the *College and Career Promise Program*, which aims to provide qualified high school students with tuition-free dual enrollment opportunities.<sup>xiii</sup> Higher education institutions are reimbursed for tuition.<sup>xiv</sup>

**Graduation Outcomes**

Students at CIHS are able to graduate with up to 66 hours of college credit. As a result, a significant percent of CIHS students are able to graduate with a bachelor’s degree in less than four years. The number of CIHS graduates who are able to complete a four-year degree in three years continues to grow and is likely impacted by improved articulation agreements between the CIHS and universities, as well as improvements in course advising made by CIHS. With the cost of tuition, fees, room, and board at a public, four-year institution averaging to \$21,370 per year, graduating in three years amounts to a significant cost savings.<sup>xv</sup>





## POSTSECONDARY ATTAINMENT AND COOPERATIVE INNOVATIVE HIGH SCHOOLS

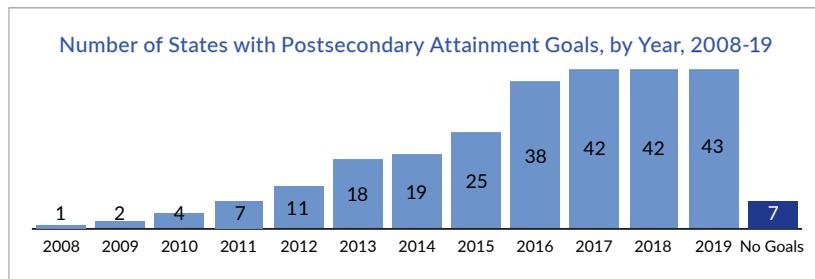
### National Landscape: Postsecondary Attainment Goals

With the increased importance of so-called “middle-skill” jobs in the modern economy, many sustainable career pathways now require some form of education beyond high school. Notably, 99 percent of jobs added between December 2007 and January 2016 were filled by workers with at least some postsecondary education.<sup>xvi</sup> These economic developments have made higher education more important than ever.

In response to disappointing results on national and international assessments of student learning and a decline in the United States’ standing in international education attainment rankings, both President Obama and the Lumina Foundation announced ambitious national postsecondary attainment goals in 2009. The purpose of these goals was to raise awareness of the need to bolster economic competitiveness by increasing the number of Americans earning some form of credential beyond a high school diploma.

The federal initiative called on the country to increase the number of 25-year-olds to 34-year-olds with an associate or bachelor’s degree to 60 percent by 2020. The Lumina Foundation also set a 60 percent target, but it identified a broader range of ages (25-64) and credentials (including high-quality certificates) and set 2025 as the target year.<sup>xvii, xviii</sup> This push from the federal level, along with Lumina’s grant-making and advocacy, led to a flurry of state activity. Aside from Hawai’i, which first set its target in 2008, and South Carolina, which set its goal in 2009, state attainment goals were largely absent until 2010. Since that time, however, all but seven

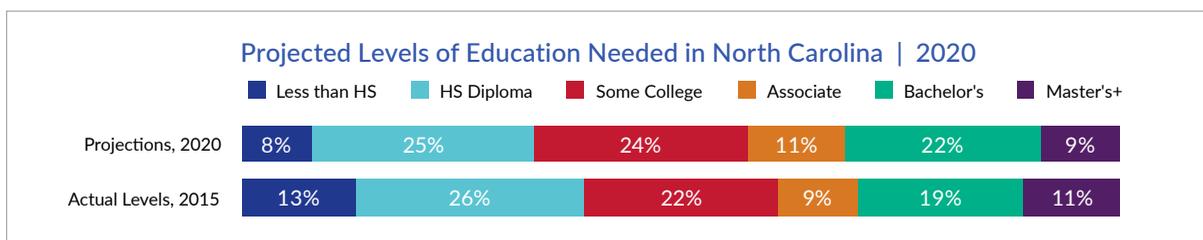
states — California, Delaware, Michigan, Mississippi, Nebraska, New York, and West Virginia — have set postsecondary attainment goals that have been formally adopted by a statewide leadership group. While most states used similar criteria in their goals, the 43 state-level attainment goals vary in a number of ways, including the definition of



postsecondary attainment, time frame, and ambition. Some states have chosen to focus on young people (e.g., 25- to 34-year-olds) and to focus only on associate and bachelor’s degrees; other states focus on working-age adults aged 25-64 and include high-quality certificates. On average, states are hoping to grow their attainment levels by roughly 18 percentage points over a period of 10 years. States have targeted anywhere from eight to 40 percentage points in growth.

### myFutureNC

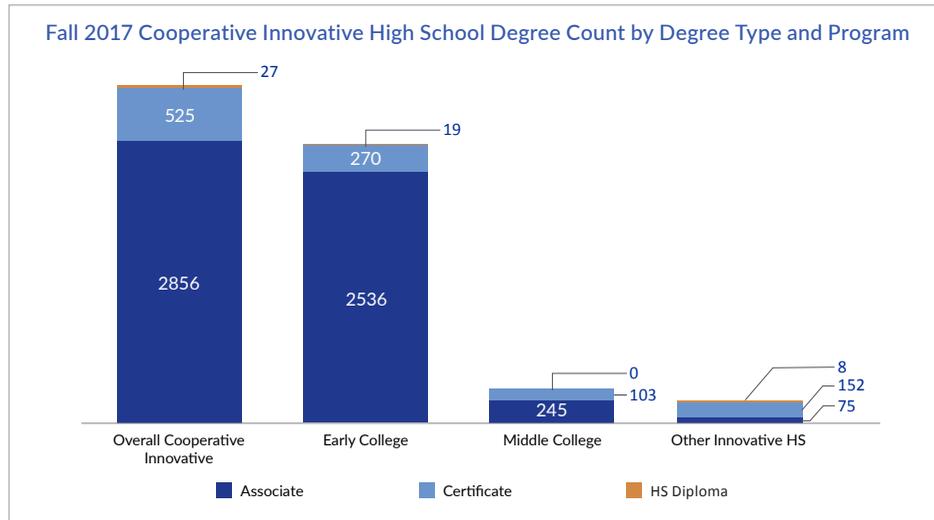
The myFutureNC Commission is a statewide effort that brings together North Carolina leaders in education, business, philanthropy, and faith-based and nonprofit communities to create a comprehensive, multi-year education plan to increase attainment across the state. The strategic plan created by the Commission recommends a clear and robust attainment goal: that 2 million 25- to 44-year-olds will receive a high-quality credential or college degree by 2030. The plan also identifies key benchmarks for educators and proposes promising reforms to guide the future of education in the state. These goals will help meet the projected levels of education needed to meet projected workforce demand.





### Postsecondary Attainment of Cooperative Innovative High School Students

CIHS are one of the strategies that show potential to help increase postsecondary attainment in North Carolina. Of the 5,581 students who graduated from CIHS in 2017-18, 51 percent graduated with an associate degree. Of the 3,408 degrees, diplomas, or certificates earned by CIHS students, 83 percent were earned by students at early college high schools.<sup>xix</sup>



Many CIHS students also go on to complete further postsecondary education by enrolling in a four-year institution within the UNC system. CIHS students had slightly higher acceptance and graduation rates and had similar persistence rates (i.e., percentage of students who are retained or who graduate) when compared to other North Carolina public school students.<sup>xx</sup>

### QUESTIONS FOR POLICYMAKERS TO CONSIDER

- 1 What programs currently exist in North Carolina that may help support progress towards a statewide attainment goal?
- 2 What subgroups of students most need support in completing a high-quality degree or credential?
- 3 Are there lessons to be learned from Cooperative Innovative High Schools that can be applied to traditional public schools?

### RESOURCES

<sup>i</sup> Education Commission of the States, “Dual Enrollment: Statewide Policy in Place. 50-State Comparison” <http://ecs.force.com/mbdata/MBQuestNB2?Rep=DE1501>

<sup>ii</sup> Barnett, Dr. Elisabeth & Stamm, Dr. Liesa. *Dual Enrollment: A Strategy for Educational Advancement for All Students.* (2010)

<sup>iii</sup> [North Carolina Statute 115C-238.50 “Cooperative Innovative High School Programs”](#)

<sup>iv</sup> [North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. North Carolina Cooperative Innovative High Schools Design and Implementation Guide](#)

<sup>v</sup> [North Carolina Statute 115C-238.50 “Cooperative Innovative High School Programs”](#)



## RESOURCES (CONT.)

- <sup>vi</sup> [Lieberman, Janet E. The Early College High School Concept: Requisites for Success. \(2004\)](#)
- <sup>vii</sup> ["Frequently Asked Questions" Middle College National Consortium, <http://mcnc.us/about/faq/#difference>](#)
- <sup>viii</sup> [Lieberman, Janet E. The Early College High School Concept: Requisites for Success. \(2004\)](#)
- <sup>ix</sup> ["Frequently Asked Questions" Middle College National Consortium](#)
- <sup>x</sup> [North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. Career Academies – Career and Technical Education](#)
- <sup>xi</sup> [North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. Cooperative Innovative High Schools \(CIHS\) Frequently Asked Questions Fall 2017](#)
- <sup>xii</sup> [North Carolina Session Law S.L. 2017-57, Section 7.22](#)
- <sup>xiii</sup> ["Career & College Promise." Career and College Promise Home, \[www.ncpublicschools.org/advancedlearning/ccp/\]\(http://www.ncpublicschools.org/advancedlearning/ccp/\)](#)
- <sup>xiv</sup> [North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. Cooperative Innovative High Schools \(CIHS\) Frequently Asked Questions Fall 2017](#)
- <sup>xv</sup> ["Trends in Higher Education; Tuition and Fees and Room and Board over Time." The College Board. <https://trends.collegeboard.org/college-pricing/figures-tables/tuition-fees-room-and-board-over-time>](#)
- <sup>xvi</sup> [Carnevale, A., Jayasundera, T., & Gulish, A. \(2016\). America's Divide Recovery: College Haves and Have-Nots. Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce.](#)
- <sup>xvii</sup> [Fry, Richard \(2017\). U.S. still has a long way to go in meeting Obama's goal of producing more college grads. Pew Research Center.](#)
- <sup>xviii</sup> [Lumina Foundation \(2019\). A Stronger Nation.](#)
- <sup>xix</sup> [Report to the North Carolina General Assembly. Career and College Promise SL 2017-57 \(SB 257, Budget Bill\), sec. 7.22 \(f\) GS 115D-5\(x\) Evaluation of Cooperative Innovative High School Programs SL 2012-142 \(HB 950, Budget Bill\), sec. 7.11\(g\) GS 115C-238.50-55 \(2019\)](#)
- <sup>xx</sup> [The UNC Data Dashboard \(Retrieved 5/2019\) \[https://ung4.ondemand.sas.com/SASVisualAnalyticsViewer/guest.jsp?appSwitcherDisabled=true&reportViewOnly=true&reportPath=/UNG/External%20Content/Reports&reportName=Freshman\\\_performance\]\(https://ung4.ondemand.sas.com/SASVisualAnalyticsViewer/guest.jsp?appSwitcherDisabled=true&reportViewOnly=true&reportPath=/UNG/External%20Content/Reports&reportName=Freshman\_performance\)](#)



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