

Background

- In Kansas there are just over 228,000 adults without a GED or high school diploma, and over 900,000 working-age adults with no meaningful postsecondary credentials.
- Employers continue to report the need for a skilled workforce: to increase the state’s economic standing and the quality of its workforce, Kansas is committed to increasing the number of Kansas adults who have a certificate, associate or bachelor’s degree to 60 percent by 2020.
- **Accelerating Opportunity: Kansas (AO-K)** transforms the delivery system for adult education in Kansas delivering career and technical education at the same time as adult basic skills instruction within a career pathways framework.

Quick Facts

- AO-K is a partnership between the Kansas Board of Regents and Kansas Department of Commerce.
- The Kansas Department for Children and Families supports AO-K with Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds to provide tuition scholarships for TANF-eligible students who enroll in AO-K programs.
- Short-term certificate programs are aligned with labor market needs, leading to industry endorsed credentials and immediate jobs with family-sustaining wages.
- AO-K is part of the national Accelerating Opportunity initiative managed by Jobs for the Future, and funded by six philanthropies: Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Joyce Foundation, Kellogg Foundation, Kresge Foundation, Open Society Foundation, and University of Phoenix Foundation.

AO-K Successes

- Legislative support: Beginning July 1, 2014, the AO-K Proviso and GED Accelerator [2014 HB 2506] provide tuition assistance and college incentives for students co-enrolled in career technical education and adult education career pathway programs.
- Major areas for industry recognized credentials aligned with the Kansas economy: Healthcare (3,059); Welding (601); Aerostructures (462); Manufacturing/Machining (354); all other (1,108).
- Kansas is the national leader among states in the Accelerating Opportunity initiative, and has produced dramatic results after three full years of implementation:

| AO-K | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 To-Date** | Cumulative* |
|---|--------|--------|--------|------------------|-------------|
| Enrollments | 1,069 | 994 | 1,173 | 477 | 3,569 |
| College Credentials | 184 | 456 | 710 | 206 | 1,556 |
| Industry Recognized Credentials Awarded | 1,191 | 1,086 | 1,514 | 272 | 4,063 |
| Individuals Completing a 12-Credit Hour Pathway | 341 | 450 | 325 | 36 | 1,152 |
| Number Employed | 366 | 247 | 229 | 68 | 910 |

* Enrollment headcount is unduplicated

** Reporting period not complete until 9-31-2015