Prosperity for Ohio: Mapping Credentials to Success

Results Report

Introduction

Prosperity for Ohio is a statewide initiative led by **Achieving the Dream (ATD)**, in partnership with the **Ohio Association of Community Colleges (OACC)** and the **National Student Clearinghouse (NSC)**, to strengthen connections between higher education and workforce outcomes.

Launched on **July 1, 2023**, and funded through the **Coleridge Initiative**'s **Democratizing Our Data Challenge** with support from **Ascendium Education Group**, the project aims to help Ohio's community colleges understand how academic programs translate into employment, earnings, and upward mobility.

To do this, the initiative used the **Administrative Data Research Facility (ADRF)** to securely link postsecondary and workforce data and prototype dashboards that visualize postcollege outcomes. Two colleges — **Lorain County Community College** and **Marion Technical College** — served as pilot institutions. The broader goals included developing a dashboard model that could be scaled across Ohio, building colleges' capacity to use workforce data for student success and program improvement and offering a prototype that other states could adapt.

Dashboard Development

Through the Prosperity for Ohio project, ATD and its partners developed a prototype dashboard linking education and workforce outcomes. The design incorporated extensive stakeholder input and was guided by a leadership team representing each partner organization.

In the process, partners deepened their understanding of current workforce outcomes data — its limitations, lack of standardized definitions, data repository constraints, and the complexity of building comprehensive longitudinal views. As a result, the final product differs somewhat from the initial concept, driven largely by data accessibility challenges and suppression rules.

The prototype dashboard reports:

- **Employment outcomes** at one, three, and five years after completion
- **Median earnings** at each interval

- **Percentages of graduates earning at or above a living wage** and earning more than the average Ohio high school graduate

- **Disaggregated data** to support equity-centered analysis

Users can filter results by **institution; institution size; enrollment intensity; enrollment type; gender; age; race/ethnicity; Pell status; graduation cohort group; program cluster;** and **2- or 4-digit CIP code**.

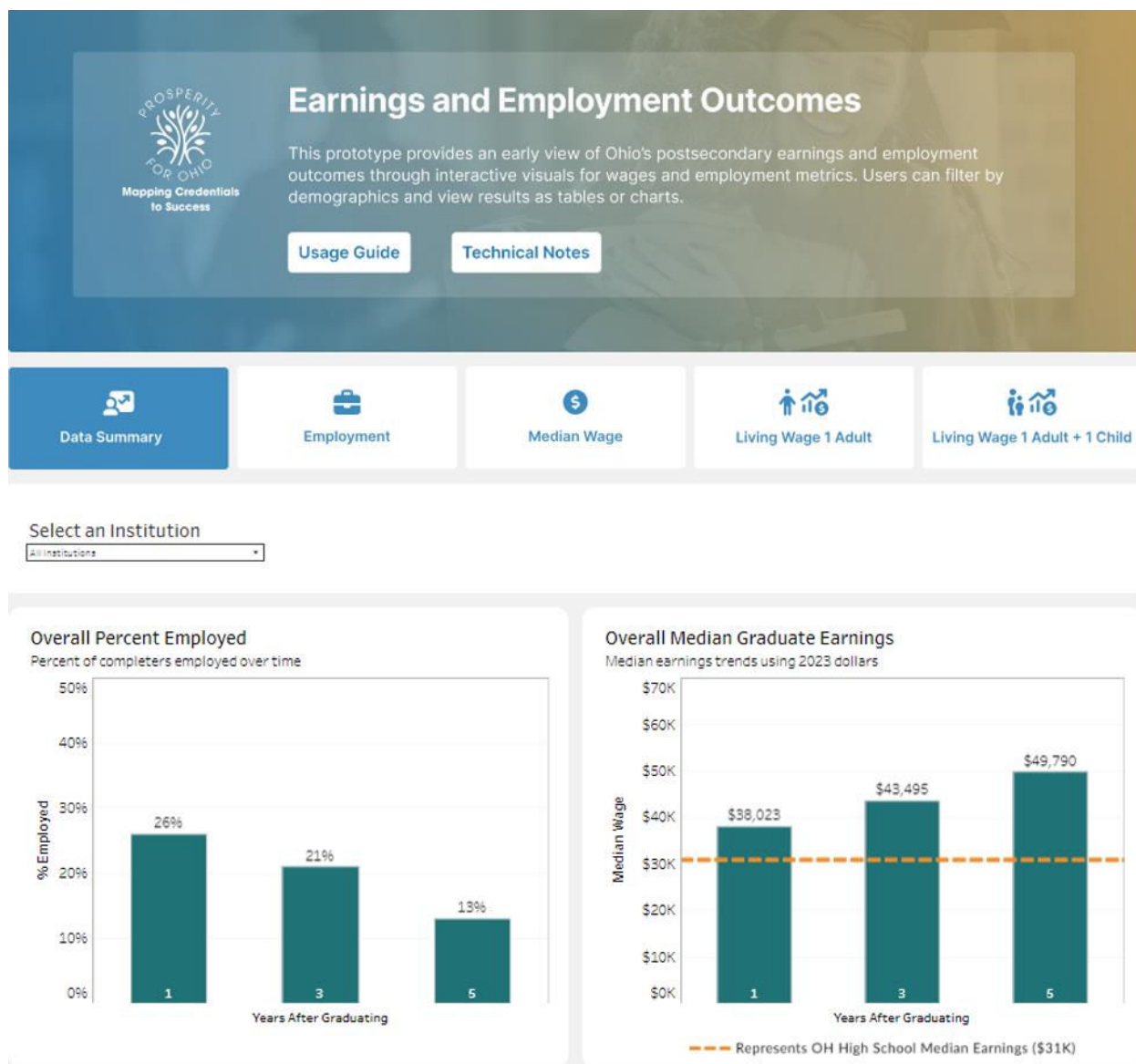A sample dashboard view is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Excerpt from dashboard.

Alignment With Ohio's Funding Model

During the project, the State of Ohio introduced a new performance-based funding component using **Post-Secondary Employment Outcomes (PSEO)** data. The team updated the prototype to align key elements with PSEO definitions to support colleges in interpreting and using both tools.

The prototype dashboard also offers two key advantages over PSEO:

1. **Newer data**, including results for 2023 graduates
2. **Intersectional disaggregation**, enabling analysis by program cluster and demographic characteristics

Pilot College Feedback

Pilot colleges reported that the dashboard was intuitive and effective in bringing multiple data points into a single tool. They identified high-value uses including:

- Student recruitment

- Career advising

- Academic program review and improvement

- Communications with legislators, community partners, and accreditors

Colleges also noted desired enhancements, such as improved visual design, additional features, and expanded documentation. Detailed feedback can be found in the Prototype Dashboard Feedback Summary and the two participating colleges' case studies:

- **Pilot Feedback Summary**

- **Lorain County Community College Case Study**

- **Marion Technical College Case Study**

Next Phase

Prosperity for Ohio has now entered a second phase focused on scaling the dashboard from two pilot colleges to **12–15 additional community colleges** across Ohio. ATD and partner organizations are seeking funding to support this expansion and further enhance dashboard functionality and usability.

Recommendations for Other States

For states pursuing similar workforce outcomes tools — whether via the **ADRF** or other secure data environments — the Prosperity for Ohio team recommends the following actions:

- Ensure a sufficiently large pilot population to reduce data suppression.

- Dedicate time to defining and aligning data elements early.

- Ask frequent questions about data alignment, repository functionality, and protection protocols.

- Secure data access before launching dashboard design.

- Maintain a comprehensive data dictionary. (See Prosperity for Ohio's version.)

- Engage a technology team familiar with the ADRF or a comparable system.

- Understand repository structures, export requirements, and approval timelines before setting project timelines.

- Approach the work iteratively and embrace group learning.

Acknowledgments

We thank the **Coleridge Initiative** and **Ascendium Education Group** for their support, and we appreciate the collaboration of our partners — the **Ohio Association of Community Colleges**, the **National Student Clearinghouse**, the **Ohio Department of Job and Family Services**, and **Vantage Point Consulting** — as well as the pilot colleges whose engagement made this work possible.

ATD is pleased to share these results and looks forward to advancing the next phase of Prosperity for Ohio. Further updates will be shared as the work continues.