

# DC's Compact

2043



# THE DC STORY



Washington, D.C. has long been a national leader in K-12 education, boasting a robust system of traditional public and public charter schools. The District remains the fastest-improving urban school system in the country, driven by strategic investments in educators, literacy, math, high-impact tutoring, and tailored supports for students with the greatest needs.

## COMPACT 2043: THE VISION

Compact 2043 is a citywide commitment to **strengthen and expand post-secondary pathways for DC students**. It is a guarantee that all children born today will graduate from high school prepared for success in higher education and ready to excel in high-paying jobs.

This commitment from government, education and training providers, employers, and nonprofit partners will endow DC employers with a **strong local talent pool** to fill good jobs in high-growth, high-value sectors. As the **nation's talent capital**, DC will build a more diversified, inclusive, and prosperous economy for all residents.



# DC IS STARTING FROM A POSITION OF STRENGTH

## Compact 2043 builds on foundational investments and substantial progress

### Foundational Investments

### Substantial Progress

- **DC has made deep, strategic investments in public education**, increasing student-based public-school funding by 80% over the past decade. Per student funding in DC is among the **top three in the nation**.
- **DC offers families a system of robust public school options across the DCPS and charter sectors**, accessed through our best-in-class, unified school lottery system, My School DC.
- **DC is a pioneer in early childhood education**, offering free, universal, full-day Pre-K for 3- and 4-year-olds. DC also offers childcare subsidies and pays early childhood educators at similarly high rates to K-12 educators.
- **DC is significantly expanding after school access for families**, reaching 17,000+ students through community-based providers, accessible through a unified portal, My Out of School Time DC (MOST-DC).

- **DC leads urban school districts in academic progress.** Since 2011, DCPS has led urban school districts in student achievement gains in 4th and 8th grade reading and math, as measured by NAEP. Moreover, DC students have exceeded 2019 pre-pandemic proficiency levels in literacy on DC CAPE.
- **Graduation rates have increased by nearly 15 percentage points since 2015.**
- **DC has record high and growing enrollment** at a time when school districts across the country are experiencing declining populations; enrollment is up 40% since 2007.
- **DC's nationally competitive teacher pay succeeds in attracting, rewarding, and retaining top talent.** On average, DCPS educators earn \$109,000, 22% more than their peers nationwide, with comparable rates for charter teachers. Teacher retention rates are close to 80% and growing.



# DC'S EDUCATION PROGRESS OVER TIME



	2007-08	2014-15	2021-22	Today	Progress since 2008	Progress since 2015	Progress since 2022
Local school funding	\$1.12B	\$1.38B	\$2.02B	\$2.71B	+143%	+97%	+34%
Per-student foundation	\$8,322	\$9,492	\$11,730	\$14,668	+76%	+55%	+25%
Graduation rate	70%	64%	73%	77%	+10%	+20.3%	+5.5%
NAEP proficiency							
-Reading (4th)	14%	27%	26%	30%	+114%	+11.1%	+15.4%
-Reading (8 <sup>th</sup> )	12%	19%	22%	25%	+108%	+31.6%	+13.6%
-Math (4 <sup>th</sup> )	14%	31%	24%	33%	+136%	+6.5%	+37.5%
-Math (8 <sup>th</sup> )	8%	19%	16%	20%	+150%	+5.3%	+25%
Enrollment	71,444	85,403	93,807	99,555	+39%	+16.6%	+6%
Teacher retention	n/a	n/a	74%	76%	n/a	n/a	+2.7%
Pre-K enrollment	4,343	12,612	12,310	12,007	+176%	-4.8%	-2.5%
Pre-K coverage	n/a	77%	76%	82% (3yos) 95% (4yos)	n/a	n/a	+8% +19%

# WHY DOES DC NEED COMPACT 2043?

## Building on progress, Compact 2043 aims to close opportunity gaps and expand access to college, careers, and economic mobility

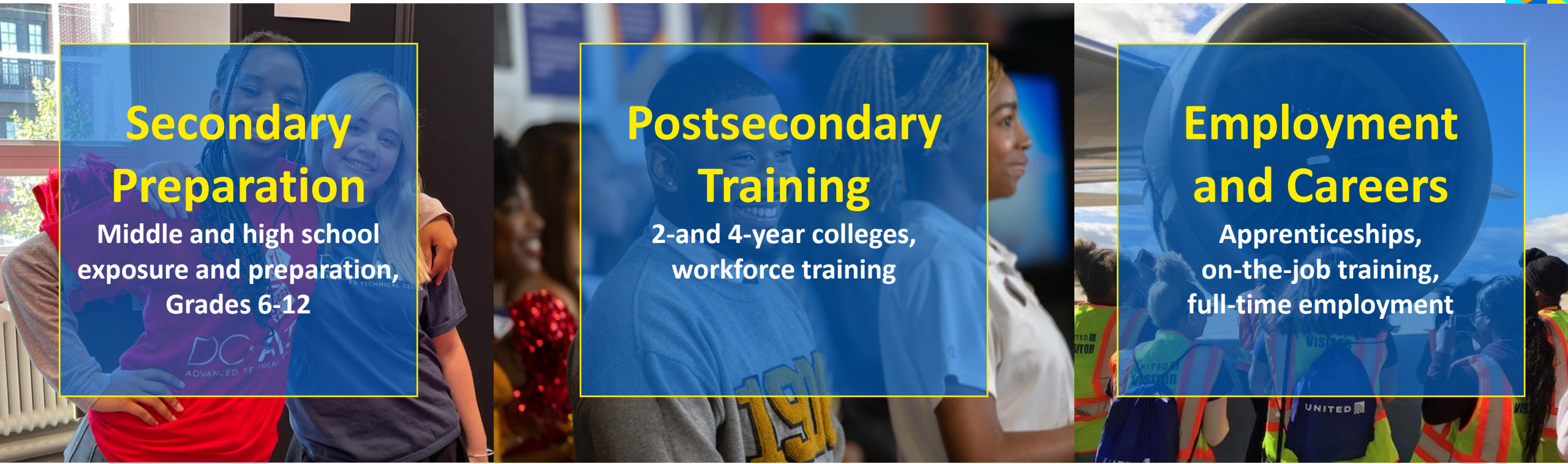
### The Need

- **High school graduation rates** (77%) are improving but remain below the national average.
- Just half of traditional public and public charter school graduates **enroll in college**.
- The majority (60%) of graduates of public schools in DC who enroll in college **don't earn a degree**.
- Of the 10 most commonly held jobs for youth born in DC, only 4 are considered **"good jobs."**
- Large **income and racial wealth** gaps persist.
- The percentage of students meeting math expectations still **trails 2019 pre-pandemic levels**, and **attendance** has not fully rebounded.

### Current District Investments

- **CTE enrollment** has expanded by 90% since 2019, providing pathways to career success for pandemic-affected students.
- DC has expanded **dual enrollment and early college high school** seats. The percentage of economically disadvantaged students in dual enrollment exceeds pre-pandemic levels.
- DC offers **paid internships** through OSSE and DOES, including paid, for-credit internships through OSSE.
- The **Advanced Technical Center** has expanded CTE and dual enrollment in high-growth, high-wage industries for over 300 students.
- The **Education through Employment Data System** tracks students' education and career outcomes.

# Our vision for the system includes work along the school-to-career pipeline



**Secondary Preparation**  
Middle and high school exposure and preparation, Grades 6-12

**Postsecondary Training**  
2-and 4-year colleges, workforce training

**Employment and Careers**  
Apprenticeships, on-the-job training, full-time employment

What new **conditions** will exist in the system?

What **policy and programmatic levers** will we have to pull to achieve the conditions?

# Conditions

## Secondary Preparation

- **Guaranteed opportunities to access to high-quality pathways** (e.g., advanced courses, dual enrollment, CTE) offering **credentials of value**
- Exposure to **diverse pathways after high school**, including 2- and 4-year colleges, military, apprenticeships, workforce training, and direct employment
- Expanded access to **high quality internships, pre-apprenticeships, and apprenticeships**
- Comprehensive **advising and support** around course choice and postsecondary planning, starting in middle school
- Stronger **academic foundations** in reading and math and other core subjects beginning in elementary and middle school

## Postsecondary Training

- Access to **low- or no-debt, industry-aligned training opportunities** that lead to degrees and credentials
- Expand **supported scholarships** through strengthened government and philanthropic partnerships
- Strengthen **UDC** with clear, articulated pathways from public schools in DC to and through UDC, as well as with regional partner institutions with strong industry partnerships
- Comprehensive **navigation tools** and targeted **wraparound supports**

## Employment and Careers

- Expanded **apprenticeships** in high-demand industries
- Ensure employers co-develop talent with government/education through **industry-led sector partnerships**; integrate anchor employers, K-12 institutions, training providers, and higher education to train talent and ensure advising and classroom instruction is industry reflective
- **Expanded hiring of DC residents** in high-growth, high-value sectors (e.g., tech, health) adjusted to the economic realities of the moment

# Policy and programmatic levers?

## Secondary Preparation

- **Graduation requirements** to facilitate and incentivize time in high-quality academic and career-connected learning experiences
- **Sustainable funding** for pathways starting in middle school
- College and career **advising and postsecondary planning** to support student transitions, beginning in middle school
- **Insights from Education through Employment Data System** to track the impact of K-12 education programs on employment outcomes

## Postsecondary Training

- **Coaching and career navigation** to support student success
- **Articulation and transfer agreements** with UDC and regional institutions of higher education (IHEs)
- **Employer-aligned workforce training**, with focus on employment outcomes
- **Insights from Education through Employment Data System** to track the impact of higher education and workforce programs on employment outcomes

## Employment and Careers

- **Employer-led sector partnerships** aligned to DCs labor market
- Clear, **coordinated industry engagement** from District government
- Strong **employer incentives** for engagement and hiring
- **Support** collaborative retention strategies (e.g., mentorship, career coaching, upskilling) to support DC residents in early career advancement
- **Education through Employment Data System** to track employment outcomes and workforce impact

# Measuring Success: 3 Goals of the Compact

## Goal 1

**DC students graduate high school prepared to enter college and careers.**

By 2043, all graduating public school students in DC will complete at least one OSSE-approved pathway; DC's graduation rate will be at least 90%; 100% of graduates will have a postsecondary plan.

## Goal 2

**DC high school graduates earn postsecondary degrees and credentials that give access to the good jobs of today and tomorrow.**

80% of 2043 DC public school graduates will complete a postsecondary degree or credential of value within six years.

## Goal 3

**DC's education and workforce system drives economic mobility and prosperity for residents and the local economy.**

80% of employed 2043 DC public school graduates will earn a living wage within five years of graduation and 95% will do so within ten years.

# ACTION PLAN – GOAL 1

(SECONDARY PREPARATION)



## DC students graduate high school prepared to enter college and careers.

Workstreams	2043 Goal
Revise <b>graduation requirements</b> to incentivize CTE, dual enrollment, advanced courses, and high-quality work-based learning, including through increased scheduling and credit flexibility	At least <b>90%</b> high school graduation rate and <b>100%</b> of graduates complete a postsecondary plan
Expand <b>CTE hubs</b> in priority sectors (such as ATCs and school-based programs)	<b>Offer CTE hubs to students citywide</b> in all priority sectors, with strong employer engagement and sustainable funding
Expand access to <b>dual enrollment and advanced coursework</b>	Increase dual enrollment participation to at least <b>50%</b> of high school students, with course passage rates exceeding national averages for all subgroups
Expand <b>school-based CTE</b> engagement	Increase CTE enrollment to at least <b>60%</b> of high school students
Expand access to high quality, paid and credit-bearing <b>internships and apprenticeships</b>	All high school students have access to a <b>paid internship aligned to an in-demand, high-wage field of study</b>
Strengthen <b>advising and career exposure</b> starting in middle grades to prepare students for a variety of post-high school pathways (e.g., college, military, apprenticeship, employment)	<b>100%</b> of graduating students complete postsecondary plans



# Action Plan – Goal 2

(POSTSECONDARY TRAINING)



DC high school graduates earn post-secondary degrees and credentials of value that give access to the good jobs of today and tomorrow.



Workstreams	2043 Goal
Expand <b>articulation agreements</b> and credit transfer	Increase college completion in line with DC-CAP's <b>80% moonshot goal</b> by 2050
Expand <b>college scholarships</b> and success programs	Increase college completion in line with DC-CAP's <b>80% moonshot goal</b> by 2050
<b>Reimagine UDC</b> as a workforce-aligned institution that drives economic growth and mobility	UDC becomes a <b>first-choice destination for DC's public-school graduates</b> ; institutional graduation rates (including for DC's public-school alumni) at or above those of regional peers and the national average
Increase quality and industry-responsiveness in <b>workforce training</b>	Every workforce training program has an employer partner guiding the program and hiring graduates; <b>95% transition to employment rate within 6 months</b>

# Action Plan – Goal

## 3

### (Employment and Careers)



DC’s education and workforce system drives economic mobility and prosperity for residents and the local economy.

Workstreams	2043 Goal
Expand apprenticeship opportunities	Every priority sector has an <b>industry-led apprenticeship program</b> ; all CTE graduates can pursue apprenticeship opportunities in <b>high-growth, high-value fields</b>
Establish employer-led industry workforce hubs	All high-growth, high-value industries are organized by <b>industry sector partnerships</b> , either locally or regionally, which engage with coordinated government programs (“one door”)  Increase DC resident hiring in priority sectors
Build Education-to-Employment Data System	Produce regularly <b>updated public-facing dashboards</b> that help residents make informed academic and career decisions
Expand hiring and training incentives	Achieve broad employer participation and <b>significant increases in employment of DC residents</b> in priority sectors  <b>80%</b> of employed 2043 DC public school graduates will earn a living wage within five years of graduation and <b>95%</b> will do so within ten years



# Compact 2043 Is a Collaborative Effort (list in formation)

## Agency Partners



## Employer and Nonprofit Partners

