

BUILDING PATHWAYS TO CREDENTIALS, CAREERS, AND ECONOMIC MOBILITY

Ten Recommendations for
the Trump Administration



As the Trump Administration takes office, it will face a number of critical education, workforce development, and employment challenges:

- ▶ *Continued unemployment in many distressed communities across the country*
- ▶ *Lagging educational and skills attainment*
- ▶ *Need to invest in our educational pipeline and “upskilling” of our workforce*
- ▶ *Meeting the skills requirements of America’s high demand employers*
- ▶ *Economic mobility that is out of reach for far too many Americans*

Summary of Recommendations

The United States needs bold and scalable solutions to harness the enormous untapped talent and potential of all Americans. Economic development and job creation investments will be essential for helping distressed communities generate new employment opportunities. **Talent development will be equally critical to ensure economic opportunity and mobility, as Americans’ economic success is increasingly tied to their education and skill levels.**

JFF presents the Trump Administration with a blueprint for how federal policies can encourage state and regional efforts to provide all youth and adults, especially those who are struggling or who reside in distressed communities, with essential skills and credentials that are needed for success in the labor market.

I *Aligning Systems for College, Career, and Economic Success*

- 1. Match education and skills to regional economic demands** through Regional Rebuilding and Reskilling America Grants and funding flexibility to economically distressed regions to spur economic development, create jobs, and prepare workers.
- 2. Make credential completion a reality for all** through grants to states to encourage postsecondary system improvements and the scaling of evidence-based strategies that increase credential attainment and improved student outcomes.
- 3. Break down federal silos** by increasing coordination and providing funding flexibility in exchange for more comprehensive, systemic approaches to shared problems.

II. **Reforming Student Aid and Supports**

- 4. Make financial aid fit** through simplifying access to student aid, restoring and protecting aid for nontraditional students, and expanding innovative student aid strategies to better meet the complex needs of today's postsecondary students.
- 5. Provide supports for success** by refocusing existing college and career counseling programs on student outcomes, aligning services to leverage supports for students, and providing incentives for adoption of evidence-based counseling and support services.

III. **Creating Innovative Solutions for Postsecondary Programming and Student Success**

- 6. Accelerate to achieve** by using existing authorities to expand early college designs for high school students, co-enrollment models for low-skilled adults and out-of-school youth, and other acceleration strategies that dramatically improve transitions to and completion of postsecondary education.

- 7. Focus on learning that matters** in K-12, postsecondary, and learning experiences in workforce programs to teach the skills and competencies that will set students up to succeed in college and careers.
- 8. Encourage alternative routes to credentials** by supporting innovative education models that leverage technology and competency-based pathways, while ensuring quality and making credentials more streamlined and portable.

IV. **Connecting Education to Workforce Success**

- 9. Enable real data to inform real choices** by creating a data system that connects education and workforce outcomes and builds the capacity of counselors to help students make informed decisions about their best pathways to careers
- 10. Connect learning to work** by expanding work-based learning opportunities through the reform of existing federal programs, expansion of apprenticeship opportunities, and increased engagement with employers.

About Jobs for the Future (JFF). JFF is a national leader in bridging education and work to increase mobility and strengthen our economy. For over 30 years, we have led the effort to develop innovative career pathways, educational resources, and public policies that increase college readiness and career success for jobseekers and build a more highly skilled workforce.

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