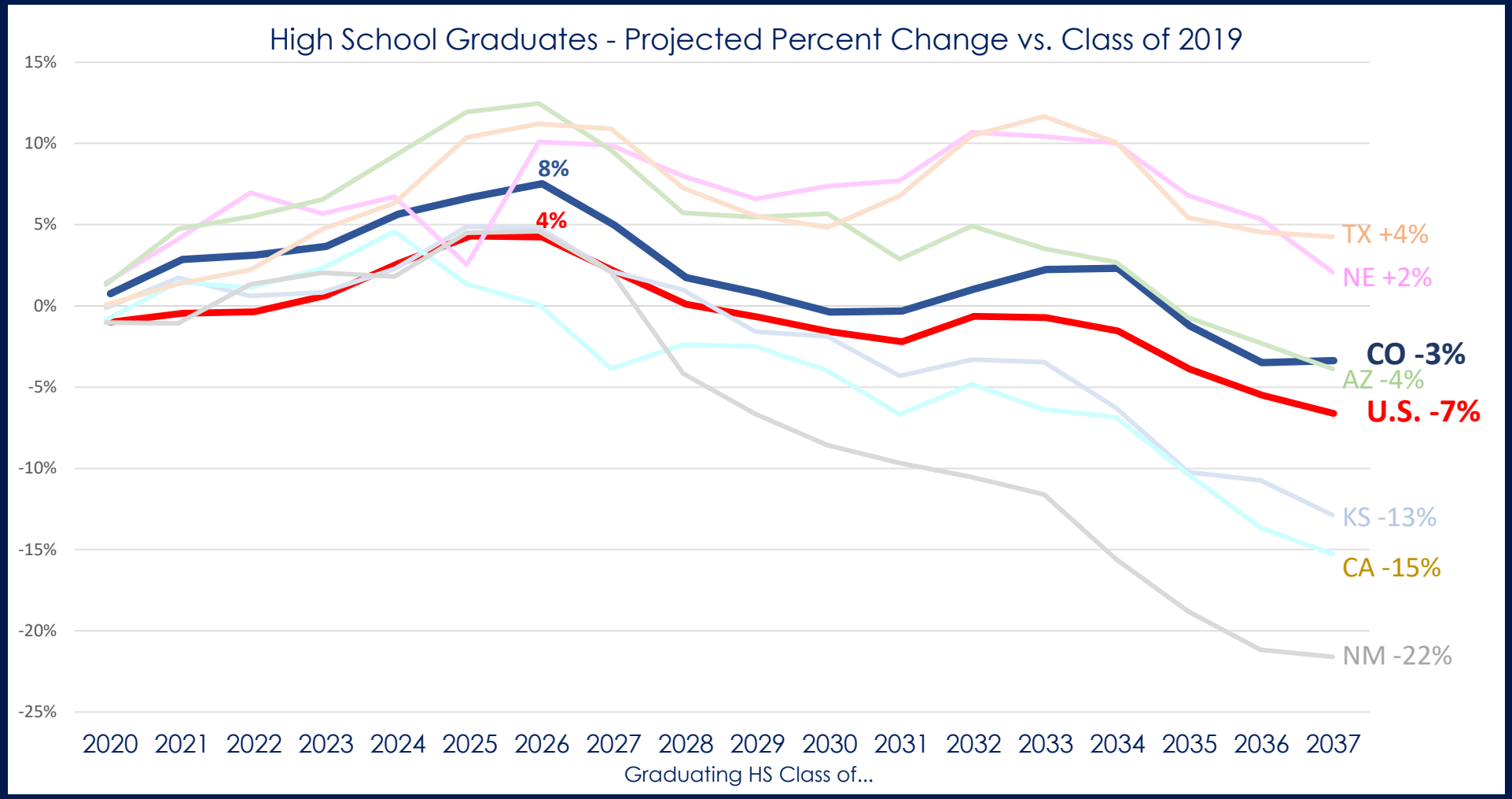
# Serving Colorado's "Some College, No Degree" Population

COLORADO
Department of Higher Education

# Demographic headwinds

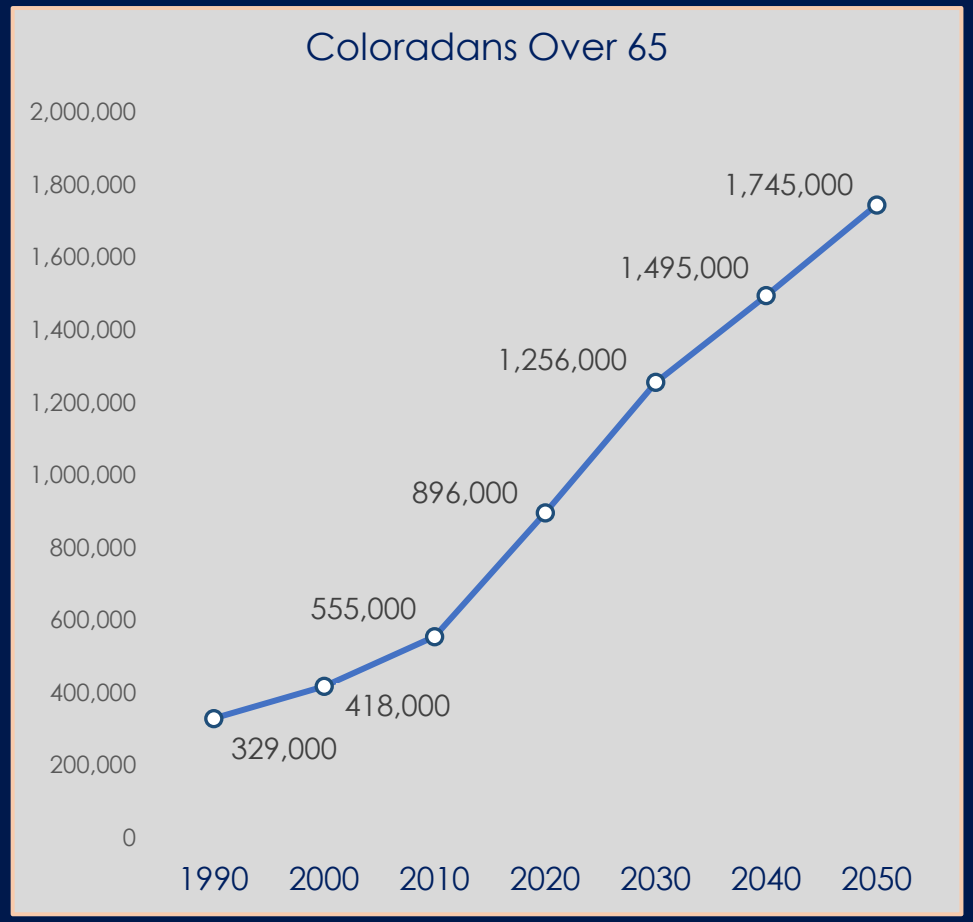
## *the "enrollment cliff"*




Source: WICHE, Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates, 2020, www.knocking.wiche.edu

# Demographic headwinds

## *Colorado's rapidly aging population*




- ***retirement = drop in income, expenditures, and taxes paid***
- ***increased demand on public services (healthcare, income support)***

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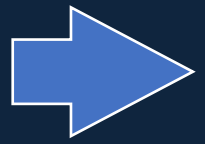
***Smaller share of public resources spent on higher education and K-12***

Source: Colorado Demography Office
https://www.bellpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Demographics-Guide-to-Economic-Mobility.pdf

# Colorado can't reach it's attainment goals without expanding beyond "traditional" student populations

Current number of credential holders:

1,914,284 (60.5%)



Number of additional credential recipients needed to reach 66%:

+174,000

Total number of Colorado high school graduates* in 2023: **63,000**

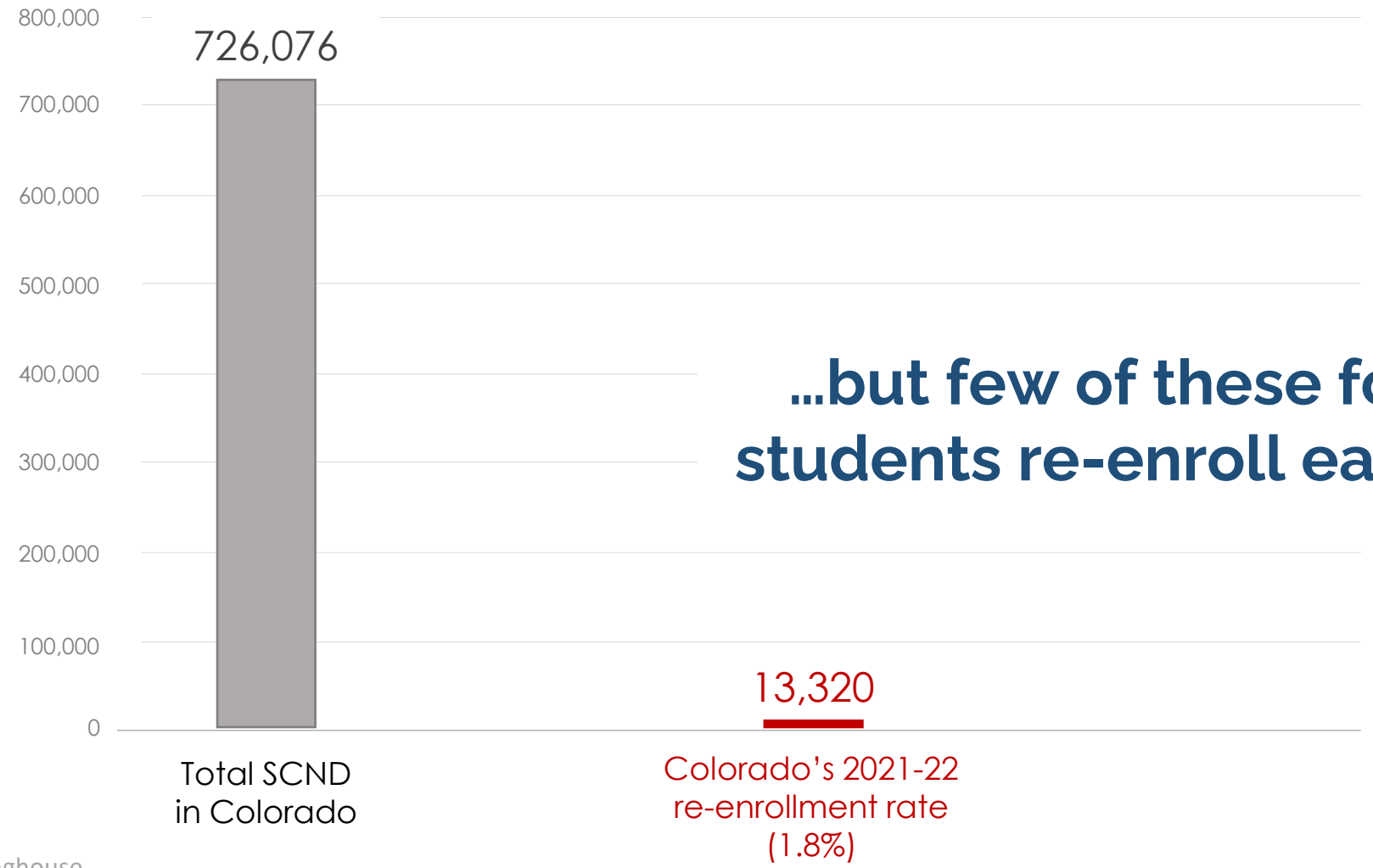
Total undergraduate enrollment (AY 2021-22): **261,000**

*public + private schools

# The **SCND population is frequently discussed as a possible solution to these enrollment declines:**

1. There are large number of SCND individuals in Colorado.
2. The individuals in this group have already enrolled and been successful in completing anywhere from a few credits to 3 or more academic year's worth of postsecondary coursework.
    - They see the value of higher education (or at least did see it at some point in the past)
    - They are academically capable.
    - The majority previously attended a Colorado IHE – showing some affinity for an institution in the state.

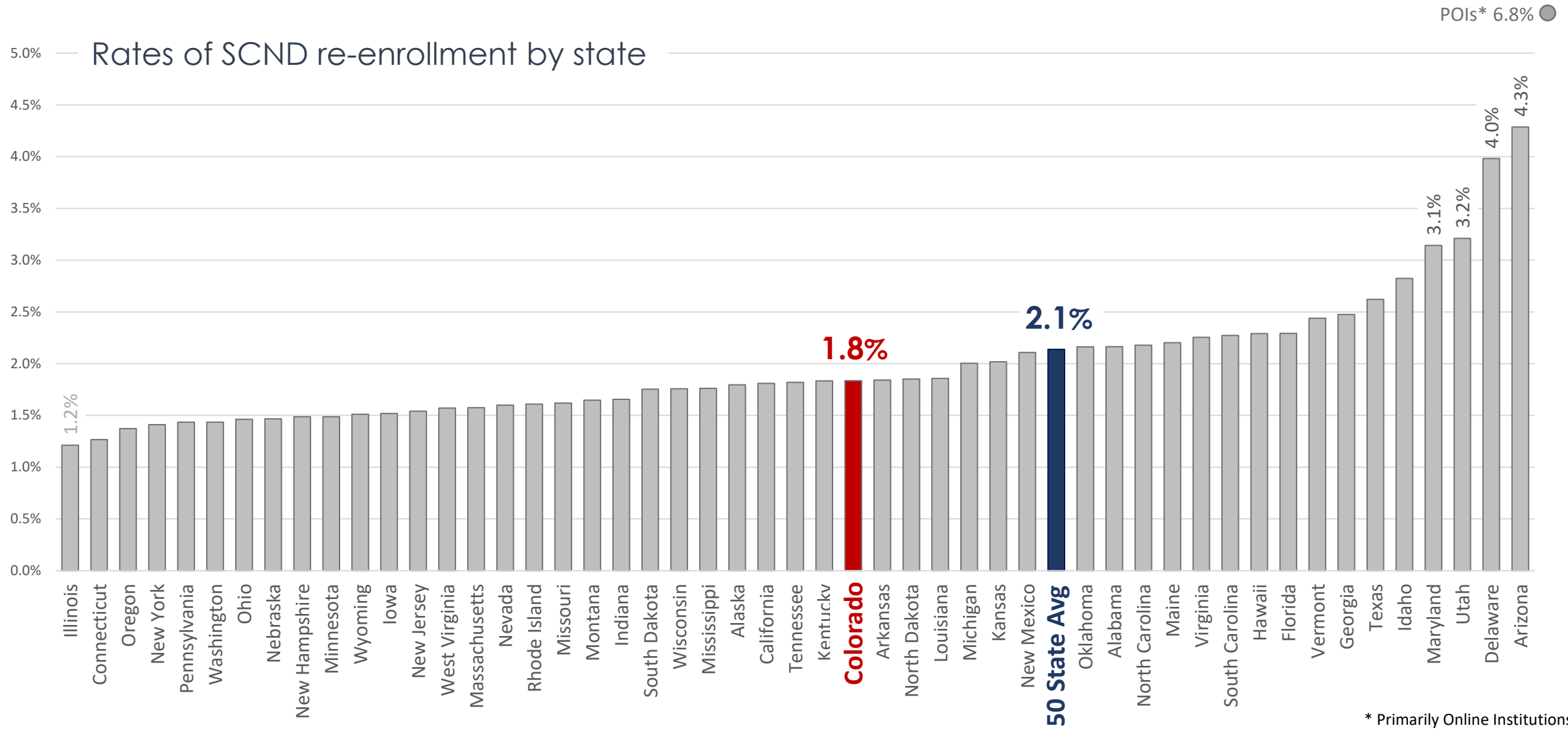
# Over 725,000 Coloradans currently have some college but no degree…




**…but few of these former students re-enroll each year**

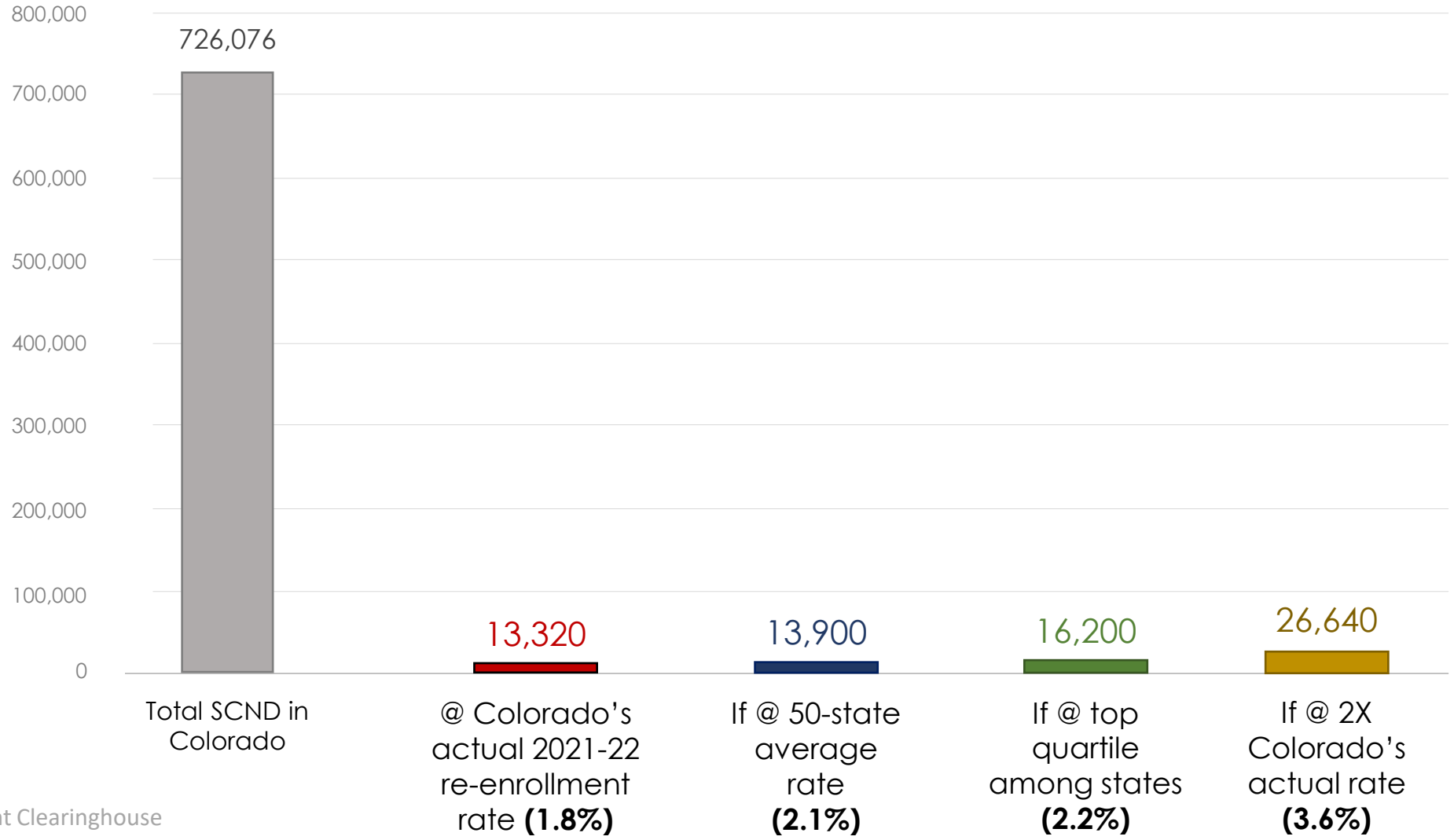
Source: National Student Clearinghouse

# Colorado's re-engagement rate is slightly lower than the national average



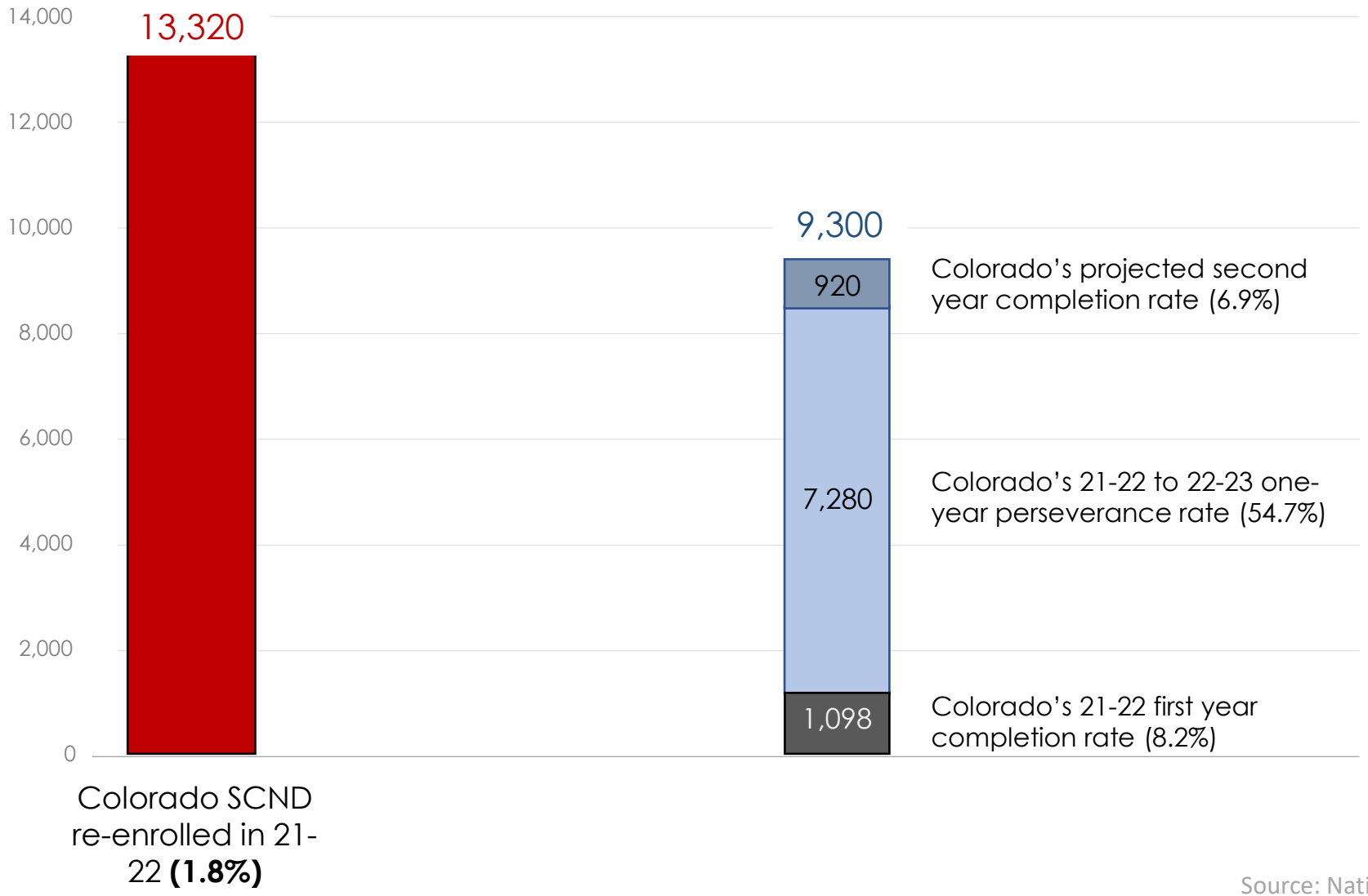

* Primarily Online Institutions

# Only a substantial increase in the re-enrollment rate would produce the needed gains in state-wide enrollment



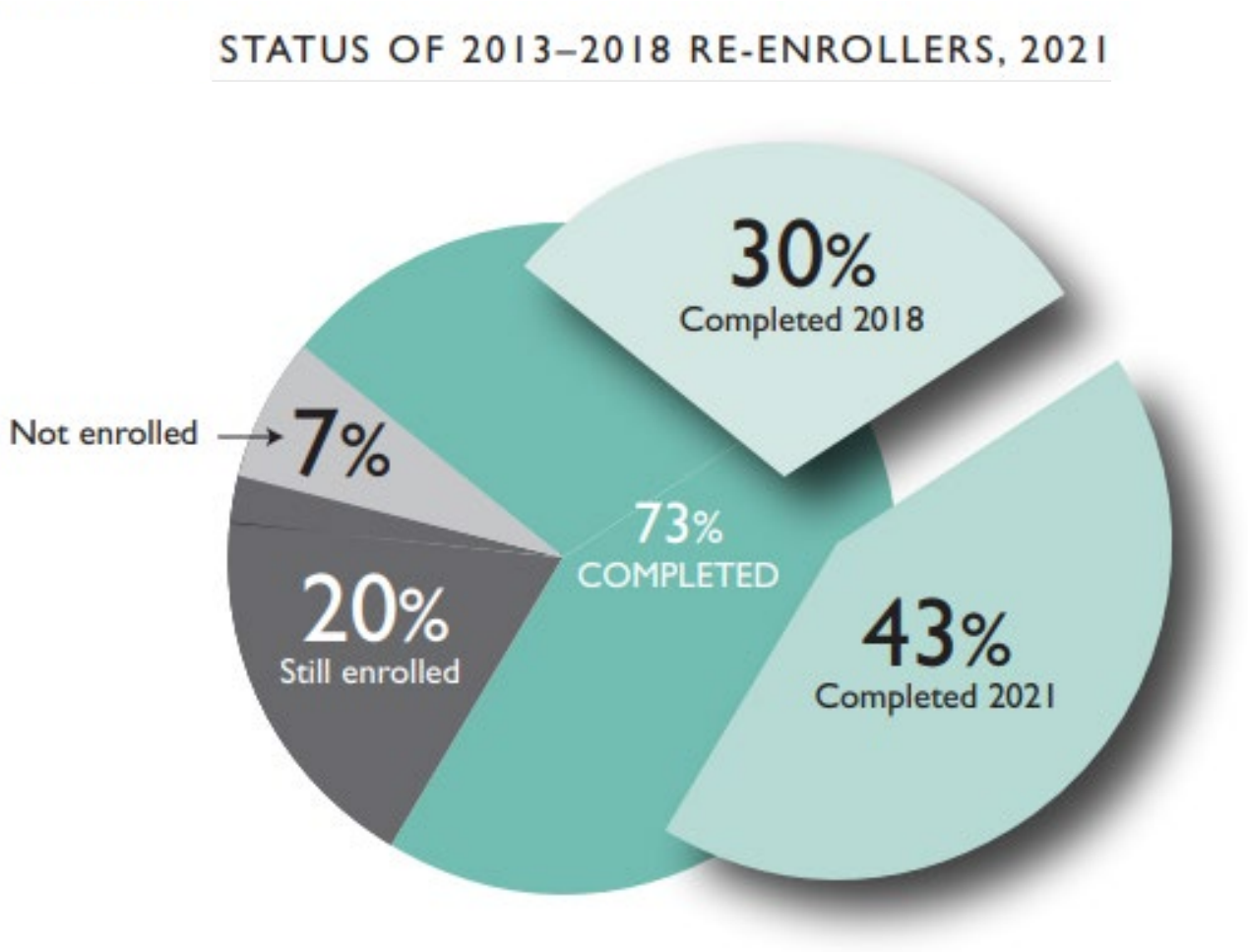

Source: National Student Clearinghouse

# Positive outcomes for those who re-enroll




Source: National Student Clearinghouse

# Other research on re-enrollees nationally over a longer timeframe showed similarly positive




Source: Persevering to Completion: Understanding the Experiences of Adults Who Successfully Returned to College. Higher Ed Insight, January 2022

"Adults with some college, no degree are no more likely than those who never went to college to say that they need additional education.

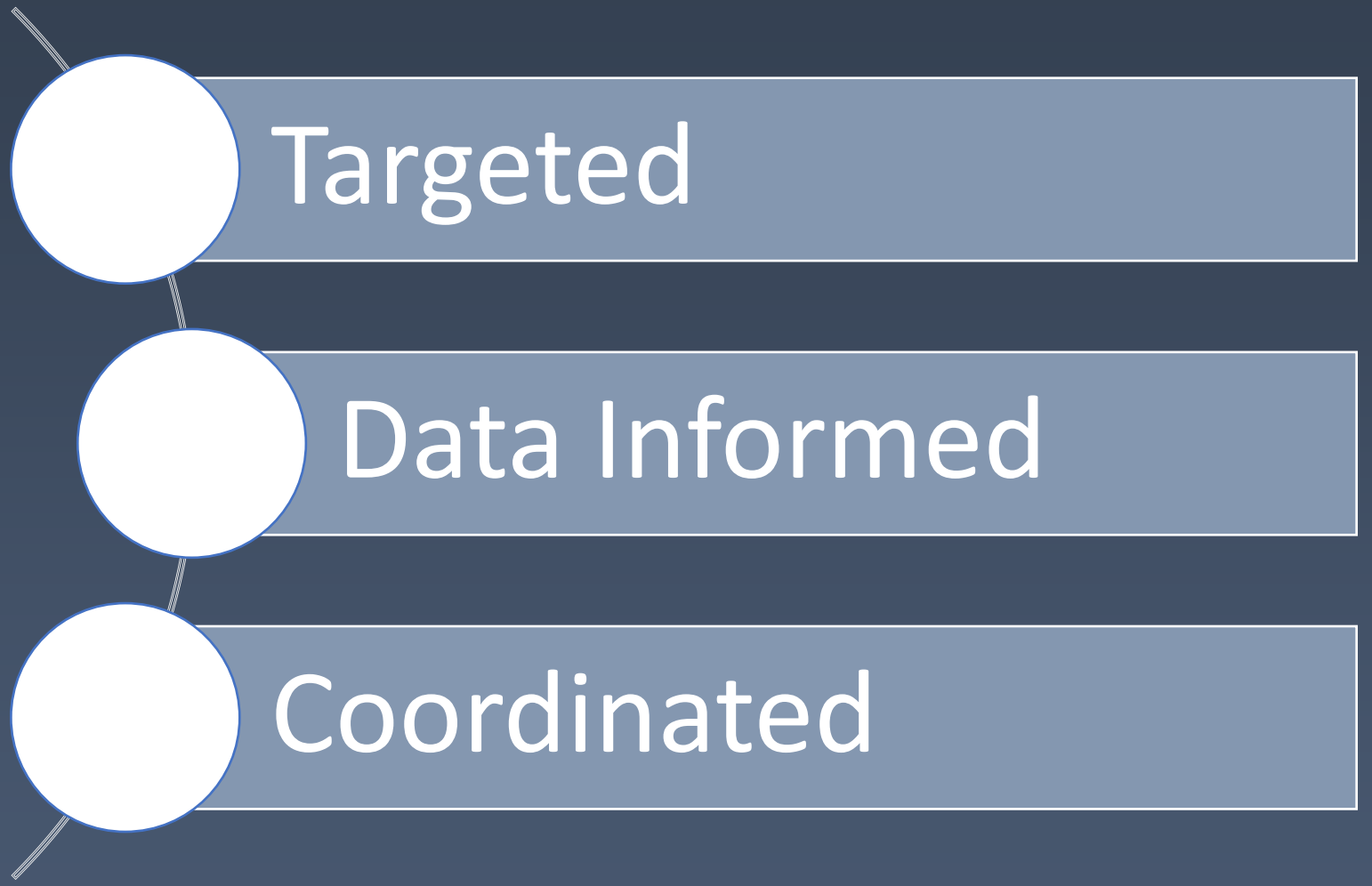
They are only marginally more likely … to say they plan to enroll in postsecondary education within the next five years."

**Source: Strada Education Network survey** of 42,190 adults ages 25-64 with some college, but no degree and who are not currently enrolled. Survey conducted June 2016 through April 2019

“Many state policies are focused on re-enrolling adults with some college, no degree, but these policies are often broadly stated and could improve their impact with additional understanding of this population.”

*- Strada Education Foundation*

Source: Strada Center for Education Consumer Insights. Back to School? https://cci.stradaeducation.org/report/back-to-school/

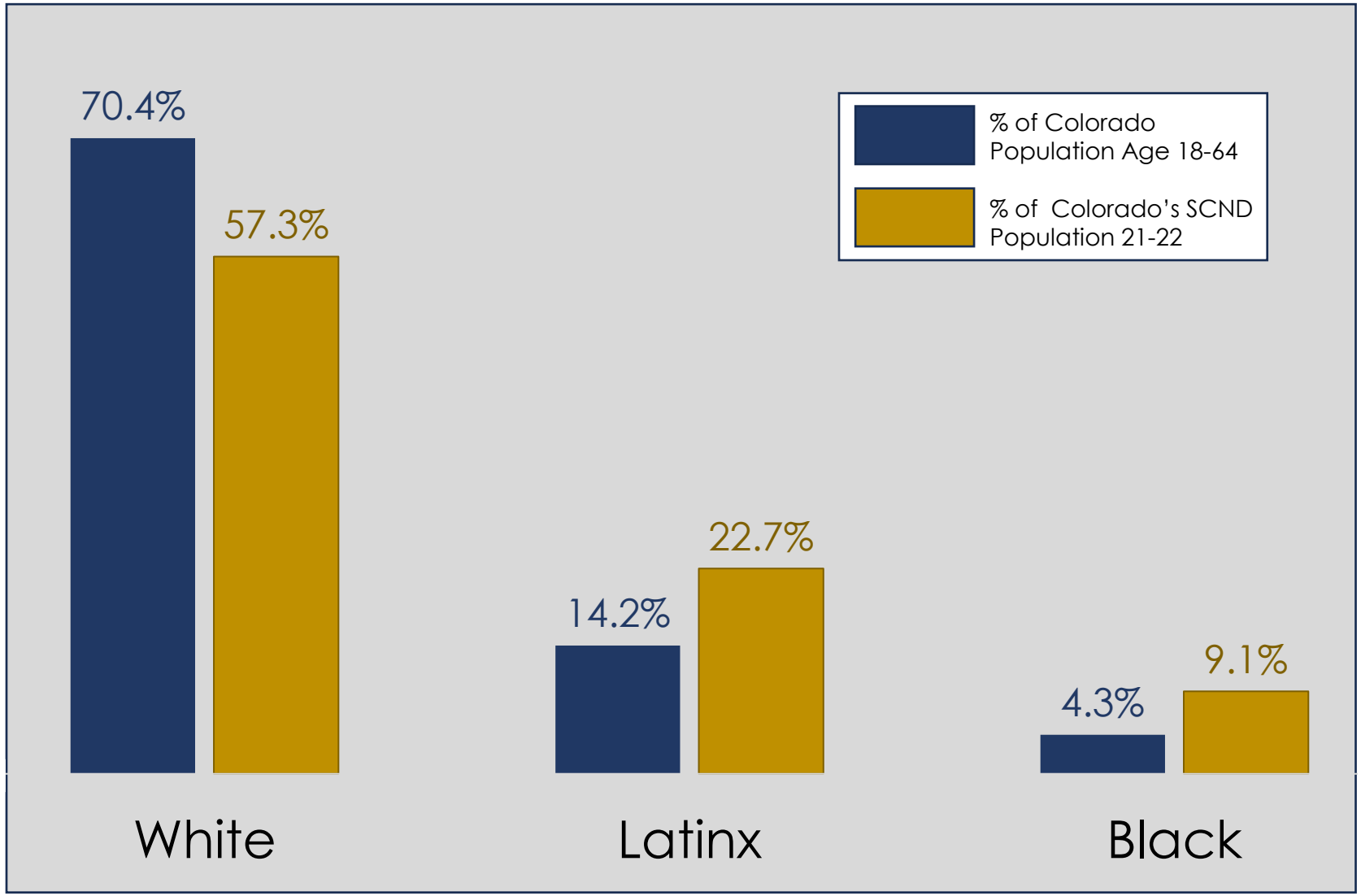

Targeted
Data Informed
Coordinated

# Profile of Colorado's SCND population

- Time since last stop out
- Credits earned
- Age
- Race/ethnicity
- Gender
- School type/sector attended
- Number of prior enrollments
- Employment status and income level

# An issue of equity

## SCND & Race/ Ethnicity




Sources: Pct. of SCND Population - National Student Clearinghouse 2021-22
Pct. of Colorado Population Age 18-64 – US Census

# Key supports for re-enrollment

1. Money
2. Time
3. Credit for prior learning / experience

# Key supports for re-enrollment

4. Access to information

5. Tailored programs and services

6. Employer supports

# A partial list of existing degree completion and student re-enrollment programs in Colorado:

Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative (COSI)

Finish What You Started

Reverse Transfer

The Colorado Re-Engaged Initiative (CORE)

Stackable Credentials

Credit for Prior Learning

Guaranteed Transfer

# Promising Practices

**Targeted scholarships plus dedicated advisers** "whose job is to find students the clearest, shortest, most efficient path" to a degree.

**Focus on helping returning students gain credit for prior learning at the lowest price**:

- Faculty members evaluated free online courses offered through Saylor Academy. Finish Line students can take nine of them for University credit.
- **Credit for prior learning** by submitting portfolios for **evaluation under established state standards**.
- Re-enrolled students have earned an average of 11 credit hours at an average total cost of $1,800 (vs. $4,500 in tuition).
- Faculty members have also evaluated corporate-training programs from local companies like FedEx and First Tennessee Bank. Students can earn up to 30 credits for completing such programs.

Academic Fresh Start option allows returning students to exclude prior F's or D's from their new GPA.

https://www.memphis.edu/cree/finishline/finishlineprogram.php

## Wayne State University

### Warrior Way Back

**Debt forgiveness to returning students with an outstanding balance of $4,000 or less** due to Wayne State University. Debt is forgiven over the course of four academically successful semesters.

https://wayne.edu/warriorwayback

## Bringham Young University

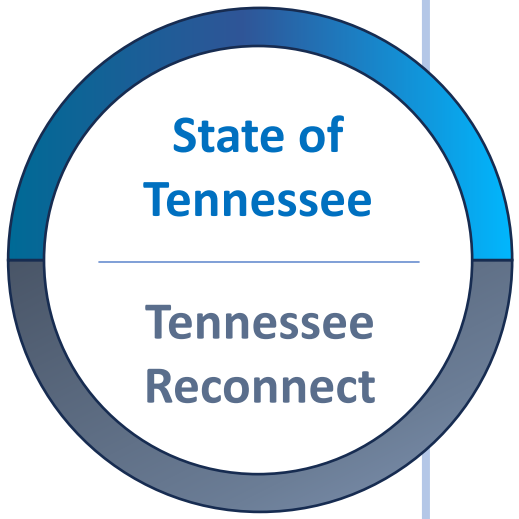
### Pathway Worldwide Program

**Earn three certificates and an associate degree on your way to a bachelor's degree.**

Certificates are typically made up of **five courses** and **can be completed in one year or less**. Every course builds directly into a degree.

Available in Business, Technology, Communication, Health, Family and Human Services, and Professional Studies.

www.byupathway.org/degrees/degree-options




Tennessee Reconnect provides **free tuition for adults at Tennessee's community and technical colleges**. **A change in the state funding formula also rewards institutions with extra money for the adult students** they enroll

A **network of Tennessee Reconnect Ambassadors helps advise adults on their college options.** The program is **modeled after the national Graduate! Network; Tennessee is the first to try this approach statewide**.

Each eligible college must establish a Reconnect Team, to train faculty and staff members and to **provide each student with a personalized Reconnect Success Plan** (parents, for example, will get information on child care nearby).

https://tnreconnect.gov/

A **collaboration of eight public colleges and universities in Northeast Ohio**. This debt forgiveness program is open to eligible students who previously attended any of the eight participating institutions and owe the institution $5,000 or less:

**Qualifying students can register for classes at any of these institutions.** As they make progress toward a degree or certificate, students can get up to $5,000 in debt owed to their former college or university forgiven.

https://www.uakron.edu/uaaf/ohio-college-comeback

# *In Summary...*