

**Michigan's
Re-Enrollment Marketplace
Impact Report | March 2026**



PRESENTED BY:

ReUp Education

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Introduction

Michigan has been at the forefront in developing postsecondary programs and resources that engage adults in higher education with an eye toward reaching Michigan's Sixty by 30 goal. The state's economic future depends on building an educated and credentialed workforce that can meet the needs of a wide range of sectors and industries.

A key component to this effort is Michigan's new statewide re-enrollment marketplace, launched in partnership with ReUp, which brings together public institutions across the state to re-engage Michigan's 1.2 million adults who have some college credit but no credential (SCNC). These individuals are college-ready, already have credit, and can get credentialed to fill workforce gaps faster than any other group.

Over the past eight years, ReUp has expanded our work in Michigan from partnerships with individual institutions to a systemwide partnership with the Michigan Association of State Universities (MASU), and now to the new Re-enroll with Reconnect program funded by the Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential (MiLEAP). From our first institutional partnership in 2018 to the establishment of today's statewide marketplace encompassing 18 institutions, ReUp has supported the re-enrollment of more than 13,000 stopped-out Michiganders across the state. By centralizing outreach and providing personalized coaching, ReUp's marketplace model expands institutional capacity while broadening access to higher education and workforce opportunities for learners statewide.

This report highlights the momentum behind Michigan's statewide marketplace and its continued opportunity for growth. More than 200,000 Michigan residents now have access to ReUp's marketplace and coaching, and this re-enrollment effort—coupled with the state's successful scholarship and outreach programs—will continue to drive postsecondary and economic growth for the state in the coming years.

We are grateful for the leadership of Michigan's higher education and workforce partners and look forward to continuing this work in support of the state's ambitious postsecondary and workforce goals.



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Terah Crews".

Terah Crews
CEO at ReUp Education

A message from the CEO of MASU

The nation's 2025 high school graduating class was the largest in history. Moving forward, however, the demographic landscape throughout much of the country will be an enrollment cliff that will persist for years to come. The state of Michigan has been contending with its enrollment cliff since 2007—for almost a full two decades.

Currently two-thirds of the state's good-paying jobs go to workers with a bachelor's degree or higher and, further, approximately 84% of the state's high-demand, high-wage occupations through 2032 will minimally require a bachelor's degree or higher. Yet only 22% of adults between the ages of 25-64 have earned this credential. The ability for Michigan and its public universities to bridge these conflicting trends is core to the state's future prosperity. Bridging this divide is crucial to enhancing career opportunities and empowering the fulfillment of life ambitions for thousands of Michigan residents.

Despite headwinds associated with continued declining numbers of high school graduates, institutions of higher education can and must be innovative in strategies to advance enrollment goals and achieve higher levels of degree completion. Michigan's public universities, in partnership with state leaders, have been engaged in a variety of initiatives and investments that have steadied the ship, resulting in three consecutive years of enrollment increases within the state university sector.

A key component of this success has been our partnership with ReUp in re-enrolling stopped out students. In just the first three years of this collaboration involving six MASU institutions, more than 3,500 students have re-enrolled. This has already generated more than 1,000 graduates. In an era of challenging state and federal fiscal dynamics, the over \$27 million in recaptured tuition revenue was a welcome boost to the participating universities.

The partnership between the state universities of Michigan and ReUp has been an assurance that demography need not dictate destiny.



Daniel J. Hurley

Daniel J. Hurley

Chief Executive Officer

Michigan Association of State Universities (MASU)

Michigan's re-enrollment momentum

Michigan's statewide re-enrollment marketplace, powered by ReUp Education, unites public community colleges and universities across the state into a comprehensive statewide re-enrollment network. The marketplace enables institutions to reach stopped-out learners at scale, to close geographic and institutional gaps, and to ensure that every Michigander has access to the social and economic mobility that a postsecondary degree or credential provides.

As of 2026, 18 Michigan institutions are actively participating in ReUp's statewide marketplace. More than 200,000 Michigan residents now have access to ReUp's outreach, re-enrollment platform, and coaching services, with over 25,000 learners actively exploring a return to higher education and 13,900 re-enrollments to date through the marketplace. The more than 1,700 learners who have already graduated as part of these efforts represent renewed pathways to opportunity and proof that when re-enrollment is supported and scaled, education becomes a powerful engine of economic advancement.

In addition to the learners re-engaged, Michigan institutions partnering with ReUp have also realized a combined estimated \$57 million in recaptured tuition revenue, a figure projected to rise as re-enrolled learners complete their degrees.

OUTCOMES TO DATE¹



18

active institution
partners



Estimated

\$57m

recaptured tuition
for Michigan



25,000+
engaged learners



13,900+
enrolled



1,700+
graduates

¹ All participating institutions, except UM Dearborn

The statewide marketplace consists of three complementary partnership models that collectively expand ReUp’s re-engagement and re-enrollment efforts across Michigan.

Model 1

Established in 2024, the Re-enroll with Reconnect program, funded by the Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential (MiLEAP), supports ReUp Education in partnering with 12 Michigan community colleges to re-engage and re-enroll learners ages 21–24. Through targeted outreach and ongoing personalized coaching, the program strengthens institutional capacity to support young adults in returning to school, persisting in their studies, and completing degrees or certificates.

Model 2

A system partnership with the Michigan Association of State Universities (MASU), launched in 2022, focuses on re-engaging stopped-out learners and boosting enrollment across six of the state’s public universities amid the challenges of the national enrollment cliff.

Model 3

ReUp also partners with individual institutions outside of MiLEAP and MASU that directly support re-enrollment efforts, notably Kalamazoo Valley Community College and Henry Ford College, both participants in the Re-enroll with Reconnect program who have expanded their own re-enrollment efforts to include stopped-out learners under age 21 and above age 25.

Outside of current partnerships, ReUp supported Detroit Drives Degrees (DDD) from January 2023 through July 2025, a pilot initiative under the Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce, funded through the Amplify Grant. ReUp partnered with the Chamber to drive outreach and re-engagement efforts for students across three Detroit-area institutions: Henry Ford College, Oakland University, and University of Michigan–Dearborn.

Through this growing marketplace, ReUp continues to strengthen Michigan’s education-to-workforce ecosystem by reconnecting thousands of learners to opportunity, generating lasting economic returns for the state, and advancing Michigan’s Sixty by 30 postsecondary attainment goal.

THE MARKETPLACE

Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential (MiLEAP) Re-enroll with Reconnect program

- Established in 2024
- 12 community colleges supporting adult learners ages 21-24

Michigan Association of State Universities (MASU) partnership

- Established in 2022
- 6 public universities

Institution-led partnerships

- First partner launched in 2018
- Institutions participating in MiLEAP’s program are working directly with ReUp to support learners under age 21 and over the age of 25

ReUp partner institutions



The adult learner landscape

More than 1.2 million adults in Michigan have earned college credits but have not yet completed a degree, and an additional 38,000 students stop out of college each year.² This ongoing attrition represents an estimated \$380 million in annual sunk costs through lost appropriations supporting learners who do not complete. At the same time, approximately 42,000 Michigan residents are enrolled online at out-of-state institutions, redirecting an estimated \$400 million in annual tuition revenue beyond the state's borders.³ Together, these trends present a substantial financial and economic challenge for Michigan's higher education system and talent pipeline.

Michigan also faces a projected 20% decline in high school graduates by 2041, shrinking freshman college classes, and intensifying competition for traditional students.⁴ Since 2020, college enrollment has already dropped 10%.⁵ These trends pose serious challenges to the state's economic mobility and workforce readiness. Michigan needs more engineers, nurses, computer scientists, educators, analysts, and health-care professionals.⁶ Currently, only 51.8% of Michigan adults hold a postsecondary credential, while 80% of Michigan's most in-demand jobs require a college degree.⁷

As fewer traditional students enter the system, the need to re-engage adults who have stopped out of college becomes increasingly urgent. The impact of bringing these learners back goes beyond personal success, driving growth and opportunity across Michigan's economy. For each additional post-secondary graduate, the annual GDP of Michigan will increase by an estimated \$122,047. Over the course of a lifetime, that contribution grows to nearly \$1.3 million per learner, fueling growth that benefits Michigan communities and the broader state economy.⁸

Many adults in Michigan aspire to return to higher education but encounter significant barriers such as cost, limited time, and unclear pathways to completion. Given Michigan's stopout population and the economic impact it drives, solutions that re-engage, support, and re-enroll these learners are essential. ReUp's student-centered approach—designed to meet adult learners where they are, remove barriers to progress, and guide them toward completion—directly addresses this urgent need. By providing the personalized outreach and sustained support required for successful re-enrollment, ReUp helps Michigan recover lost potential, strengthen its workforce, and realize the economic gains tied to adult degree completion.



The annual GDP of Michigan will increase by an estimated **\$122,047** per graduate



Over the course of a lifetime that contribution grows to nearly **\$1.3M** per learner

² [Some College, No Credential Student Outcomes](#), NSC, June 2025

³ [Data Dashboards](#), NC SARA, 2024

⁴ [High School Graduate Projections by State, Regional, and National Levels](#), WICHE, December 2024

⁵ [Opinion: Michigan could become a top 10 state for college access](#), Crain's Detroit Business, December 2025

⁶ [Opinion: Michigan can't grow without fixing funding for universities](#), Crain's Detroit Business, December 2025

⁷ [Educational Attainment in Michigan](#), Lumina, 2023
[Opinion: Michigan could become a top 10 state for college access](#), Crain's Detroit Business

⁸ [The Effects of Post-Secondary Educational Attainment in Michigan](#), National College Attainment Network, October 2023

Driving economic and educational mobility

Enhancing the skills and credentials of Michigan residents through postsecondary education and training is vital to fostering a resilient and competitive economy. Recognizing this imperative, the State of Michigan established an ambitious goal: to ensure that 60% of the working-age population holds a postsecondary credential by 2030.

The state has taken steps to strengthen its workforce and expand opportunity through higher education. Statewide initiatives such as Michigan Reconnect and Futures for Frontliners reflect a deep commitment to ensuring that education serves as an engine of economic and social mobility for residents across the state. These programs have opened doors for thousands of Michiganders to pursue credentials that lead to stable, high-demand careers, reinforcing the state's vision of economic growth driven by postsecondary education attainment.

Complementing this work, Michigan institutions began identifying innovative approaches to re-engaging adults with some college but no credential.

2018

Kalamazoo Valley Community College

ReUp's work in Michigan began in 2018 through a partnership with Kalamazoo Valley Community College (KVCC). This early collaboration demonstrated the effectiveness of intentional re-enrollment strategies, helping over 4,300 learners return to college and laying the groundwork for future partners.

2019

Eastern Michigan University

Building on KVCC's success, ReUp partnered with Eastern Michigan University (EMU) beginning in 2019 to expand re-enrollment efforts to the state's four-year institutions. EMU's collaboration with ReUp has since helped re-enroll over 1,200 learners and served as a proof point that led to broader adoption of ReUp's services across Michigan's public universities.

2023

Detroit Drives Degrees

ReUp's Michigan footprint expanded further through a Detroit-based initiative funded by Detroit Drives Degrees (DDD). With philanthropic backing, the program brought together Henry Ford College, Oakland University, and the University of Michigan–Dearborn in a coordinated regional effort. In the first year, the initiative saw more than 150 learners re-enroll.

Henry Ford College continued its partnership with ReUp through both a direct engagement and the MiLEAP Re-enroll with Reconnect program. To date, ReUp's work with Henry Ford College has resulted in outreach to more than 10,000 learners, with over 1,300 individuals actively exploring a return to higher education and more than 600 learners successfully re-enrolled.

MASU expansion

With the proven success of Eastern Michigan University's work with ReUp, MASU partnered with ReUp in 2023 to bring on board Ferris State University, Grand Valley State University, Lake Superior State University, Saginaw Valley State University, and Western Michigan University.

2024

MiLEAP partnership

As Michigan's re-enrollment ecosystem grew, MiLEAP played a pivotal role in advancing Michigan's postsecondary attainment goals through expanded re-enrollment efforts. In response to the COVID-19 public health emergency and its adverse effects on college enrollment and student progress, MiLEAP introduced the Reconnect Age Expansion program, targeting learners aged 21 to 24. This initiative provides financial assistance and coaching support to help young adults re-enroll and complete their education, building upon the proven success of the Michigan Reconnect scholarship, which offers adults aged 25 and older free or substantially-reduced tuition at community colleges.

In support of these efforts, MiLEAP awarded ReUp grant funding in 2024, which enabled ReUp to bring on board 12 community colleges under the Re-enroll with Reconnect program. The initiative rapidly expanded re-enrollment efforts statewide for 21-24 year-old learners, strengthening colleges' capacity to support learners' return, persistence, and credential completion.

Statewide marketplace launches

ReUp's success in Michigan led to the launch of the statewide re-enrollment marketplace, funded by the Michigan legislature. The marketplace expands access to transfer opportunities for all participating Michigan institutions and now provides more than 200,000 stopout learners with access to ReUp's Learner App, marking a significant step toward a fully connected, statewide re-enrollment infrastructure.

Michigan learner spotlight:

Working towards a new career

Jason began working with his ReUp Success Coach at Grand Rapids Community College in Spring 2025, seeking support as he balanced school with demanding work responsibilities. As he shared, "My biggest challenge was really balancing work and schoolwork."

Across 11 meetings, ReUp's personalized coaching provided the accountability he needed to stay on track. "I really just need somebody to push me to do it sometimes," he explained, noting that earning certificates would help him build experience for a stronger career.

With consistent check-ins, Jason completed Summer 2025, finished his academic eligibility in Fall 2025, and registered for Spring 2026. A major confidence boost came when he earned his tech certificate.

Seeing his own progress reinforced what he could achieve next. As he put it, "If I am able to do this... I am able to achieve anything I put my mind to."

How Michigan's marketplace advances state, institutional, and learner success

Michigan's statewide marketplace creates a coordinated, high-impact approach to re-engaging adult learners that strengthens outcomes across the entire ecosystem.

By aligning state workforce and economic priorities with institutional enrollment goals and learner-centered support, the marketplace helps more Michiganders return to college, complete credentials, and advance into meaningful career pathways.

Ultimately, it builds a scalable infrastructure that delivers measurable results for the state, participating institutions, and the learners they serve.



Impact of Michigan's Marketplace



FOR THE STATE:

- **Workforce and talent development:**
Expands the pipeline of skilled workers to close statewide skills gaps.
- **Economic competitiveness:**
Reduces tuition lost annually from stopout learners and recaptures tuition dollars that currently leave the state through out-of-state or online enrollment.
- **Access and opportunity at scale:**
Creates a coordinated, statewide infrastructure that ensures underserved learners, including those from underrepresented backgrounds, have pathways to return and complete their education.



FOR INSTITUTIONS:

- **Targeted enrollment growth:**
Gain access to a large pool of qualified adult learners, increasing enrollments sustainably in the face of declining traditional pipelines.
- **Actionable insights:**
Leverage data analytics and re-engagement reports to understand and serve adult learners more effectively.
- **Institutional innovation:**
Receive tailored recommendations to update policies, financial aid rules, and degree pathways that better meet the needs of adult learners.
- **Shared infrastructure:**
Benefit from a centralized marketplace and statewide marketing reach, lowering the individual cost and effort of outreach, which many schools aren't resourced to pursue on their own, amplifying collective impact.



FOR LEARNERS:

- **Personalized support:**
Gain access to one-on-one success coaching, multi-channel outreach, and customized re-enrollment pathways designed to fit life circumstances.
- **Flexible options:**
Explore programs across participating institutions through ReUp's learner facing platform, with the ability to compare options side-by-side and find the best fit.
- **Barrier reduction:**
Receive guidance on overcoming financial and time constraints, including access to scholarships, debt review, and time-management strategies.
- **Career mobility:**
Achieves credentials of value that directly connect to better jobs, higher earning potential, and greater long-term stability.

Proven impact: Michigan results

Michigan’s higher education efforts are increasingly focused on re-engaging adults who have some college experience but no credential. Central to this work is a statewide marketplace built on three complementary partnership models that collectively expand ReUp’s re-engagement and re-enrollment efforts across Michigan.

This coordinated approach brings together both two-year and four-year institutions, expanding access to re-enrollment opportunities while streamlining transfer pathways. Returning adults can move more easily between institutions, including beginning at a community college and continuing on toward a bachelor’s degree without losing credits or momentum. By prioritizing continuity and coordination, Michigan is improving efficiency, strengthening student outcomes, and supporting long-term success for adult learners across the state.

MiLEAP institutions:

- Alpena Community College
- Delta College
- Grand Rapids Community College
- Henry Ford College
- Jackson College
- Kalamazoo Valley Community College
- Kellogg Community College
- Lansing Community College
- Mid Michigan College
- Mott Community College
- Oakland Community College
- St. Clair County Community College

MASU institutions:

- Eastern Michigan University
- Ferris State University
- Grand Valley State University
- Lake Superior State University
- Saginaw Valley State University
- Western Michigan University

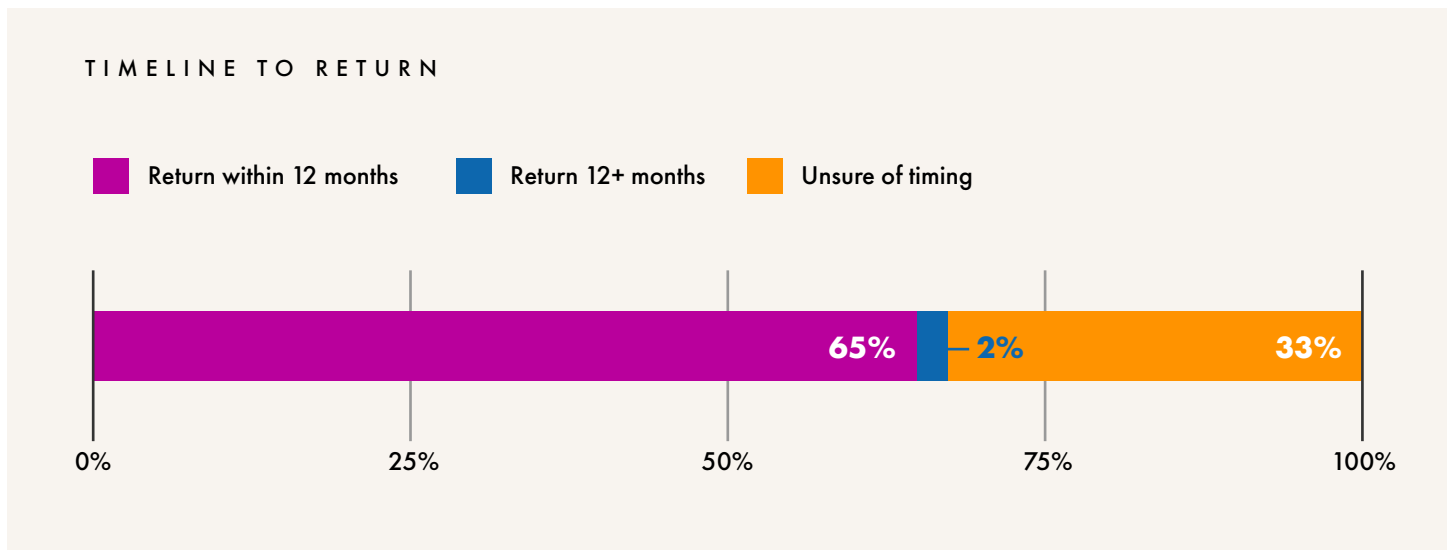
Institution-led partnerships:

Two institutions work with ReUp to support learners outside of the 21–24-year-old population served by the MiLEAP program.

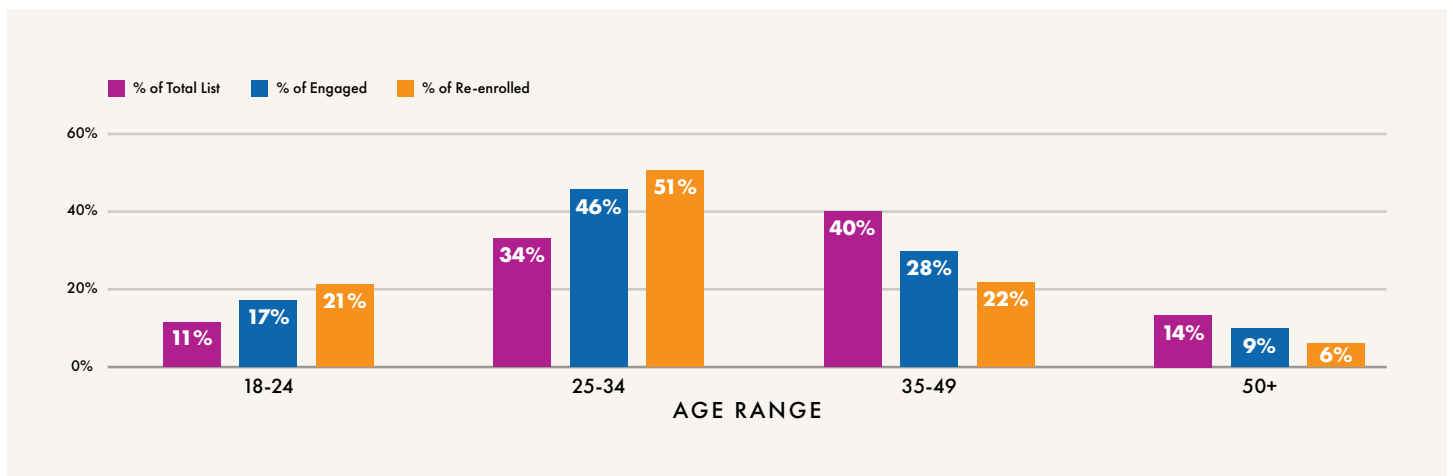
- Henry Ford College
- Kalamazoo Valley Community College

ReUp has identified trends and insights from stopout lists and learner surveys across Michigan institutions. ReUp’s statewide marketplace provides centralized analysis and reporting on stopped-out learner motivations, barriers, and goals. These findings strengthen institutional support and create a statewide baseline of adult learner perspectives, early indicators of intent and engagement, and a mechanism to track how re-enrollments relate to learner characteristics and outcomes over time. This information helps Michigan turn data into decisions that support education and workforce needs.

Michigan learners show strong intent to continue their education, with 65% planning to re-enroll within 12 months. On average, learners require 27 touchpoints—via text, email, or coaching sessions—with ReUp before re-enrolling. Sustained, flexible engagement ensures learners receive the right guidance and support as they plan their return.



Adult learners ages 25–34 show strong interest in returning to school, which may reflect this life stage, as learners in this age group often face fewer life challenges, have more recently stopped out, or are more focused on career advancement.⁹ Learners across all adult age groups express interest in returning, but many require additional support to balance school with caregiving, work, and financial responsibilities. Overall, the type and level of support needed are closely tied to a stopout learner’s life stage.



⁹ This data does not include MiLEAP learners as the program is designed for those 21-24 only.

Adult learners’ return pathways demonstrate how the marketplace aligns high-demand programs with personalized re-enrollment support. According to Michigan’s Hot 50 Job Outlook through 2032, Nurse Practitioner roles are projected to grow by 41.2%, with additional growth in tech, business, and education roles—including Computer and Information Systems Managers (12.4%), Market Research Analysts (12.2%), and Speech-Language Pathologists (16%).¹⁰

Re-enrollment Programs of Study

TOP RE-ENROLLMENT PROGRAMS OF STUDY	
MiLEAP	MASU
Liberal Arts and General Studies	Liberal Arts and General Studies
Health Professions	Business
Business	Health Professions
Computer and Information Science	Psychology
Education	Education

For those who have graduated, the most common pathways span a diverse mix of interdisciplinary, public service, and career-aligned fields. Multi- and Interdisciplinary Studies and Liberal Arts and Sciences remain leading pathways, reflecting learners’ interest in flexible degree options that support degree completion. There is strong representation in business, health professions, computer and information sciences, and education, which highlights alignment with high-demand workforce sectors and opportunities for career advancement.

Graduate Pathways

TOP 10 GRADUATE PATHWAYS ¹¹	
Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies	Public Administration and Social Services Professions
Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services	Homeland Security, Law Enforcement, Firefighting, and Related Protective Services
Health Professions and Related Programs	Psychology
Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities	Computer and Information Sciences and Support Services
Education	Communication, Journalism, and Related Programs

¹⁰ Michigan’s Hot 50 Job Outlook Through 2032, Michigan Center for Data and Analytics

¹¹ Pathways are derived from CIP codes



51% of Michigan learners are motivated by career advancement and creating a better life.

Learners most frequently cited financial constraints and time limitations as barriers to returning to school.



Across race and ethnicity, stopout learners move through engagement and re-enrollment at generally similar rates.



65%
of stopped-out learners had GPAs above 2.0

The majority of stopped-out learners left their institutions in good academic standing. With 65% of learners having GPAs above 2.0, this suggests that academic performance may not be the primary barrier to re-enrollment for most stopped-out learners. Addressing non-academic and external barriers may therefore be critical to supporting learner re-enrollment and persistence.

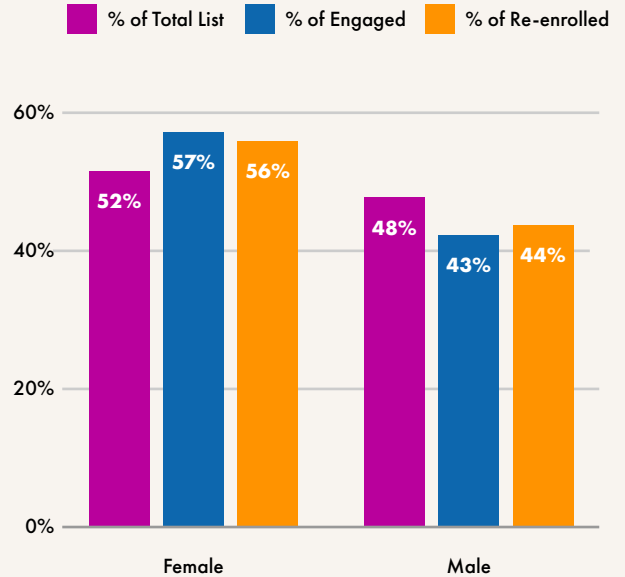


66%
of Michigan learners stopped out with fewer than 30 credits

This pattern is more prevalent at community colleges (81% of learners) than at four-year institutions (58% of learners), and given standard program requirements—60 credits for associate degrees and 120 credits for bachelor's degrees—learners with approximately 30 credits at two-year institutions may be nearing mid-program completion.

Notably for those who are re-enrolling, 62% had fewer than 30 credits at the time of stopout, demonstrating that learners with limited prior credit accumulation are highly responsive to targeted outreach, adequate resources, and proactive coaching.

Women make up 52% of the Michigan stopout population, but 56% of re-enrollments.



Trends:

- Financial barriers are a leading obstacle to re-enrollment for both men and women, however, balancing time ranks a closer second for men than for women.
- Once re-enrolled, men and women graduate within a similar timeline, but women have a higher overall graduation rate.
- Men most often stop out from *business, tech, undeclared programs*, while women most often stop out from *nursing, education, and business*.



See the appendix for a detailed analysis broken down by the MiLEAP and MASU partnerships.

Institutional success stories

Strong institutional partnerships remain central to ReUp’s mission of re-engaging and supporting returning adult learners. When colleges and universities adopt a proactive and collaborative approach, they can transform systems, reshape outreach, and shift mindsets across campuses.

Lasting change requires dedicated collaboration, and institutions recognize that they need an outside partner with the tools, capacity, and data insights to effectively reach learners who have paused their education, sometimes for years or even decades. With ReUp’s support, these challenges are being met with innovation and commitment, and institutions are reimagining how they reach and serve learners of all ages.

The following stories from ReUp’s institutional partners across Michigan highlight some of these efforts:



Grand Rapids Community College:

Sharing best practices through auto graduation policy

In February 2025, Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC) took an innovative step to remove barriers to completion by implementing an automatic graduation policy for learners who had completed more than 61 units. This initiative ensures that eligible students receive the credentials they’ve earned, recognizing their hard work and accelerating their paths to opportunity. As part of its ongoing partnership, ReUp’s team reviews each institution’s list of stopped-out learners to identify individuals who may already meet graduation requirements. These findings are discussed during monthly strategy calls with ReUp, where institutions examine existing policies and explore GRCC’s auto-graduation model as a proven example of innovation in student success. Inspired by this model, additional partner institutions are now applying the best practices shared by ReUp and GRCC to expand their own policies for eligible learners—adapting the approach to fit their campuses and further advancing Michigan’s commitment to student completion.



Saginaw Valley State University:

Expanding opportunity through grade forgiveness

Saginaw Valley State University sought a meaningful way to reconnect with learners who had previously struggled academically and left the institution. With more than 6,000 students on their stopout list holding GPAs of 2.0 or below, the university recognized that many of these individuals had the desire to return but lacked a clear path forward. In partnership with ReUp, the university explored strategies to welcome these learners back. Together, the partners examined best practices for re-engagement and identified policy changes that could remove long-standing barriers to returning. This work led to the launch of SVSU’s new Grade Forgiveness Policy, offering eligible learners a renewed academic start. To strengthen this effort, the university also enhanced its free tutoring and academic support services, with additional resources planned for the year ahead. The results are promising: more than 230 learners have qualified for forgiveness, 64 have re-enrolled, and two have graduated. SVSU’s approach highlights how thoughtful policy updates, paired with student-centered support, can open meaningful pathways back to completion.

Spotlight:



Kalamazoo Valley Community College (KVCC) *Building a blueprint for re-enrollment*

KVCC partnered with ReUp Education in 2018, becoming ReUp's first institutional partner in the state of Michigan. This early collaboration set a statewide example to approaching re-enrollment by demonstrating how coordinated outreach and personalized coaching could effectively re-engage stopped-out learners and support their return to higher education. In 2024, building on the success of this partnership, MiLEAP began funding services for KVCC learners ages 21–24 through the Re-enroll with Reconnect program, supporting the college's efforts to help young adults persist and complete their credentials.

Impact at-a-glance:




One KVCC student said:

"I can't thank you enough for your warmth, kindness, and compassion towards my situation. I really appreciate that you're my success coach and feel I'm going to be able to stay on track during these hardships, knowing that I have great support like you."

Partnership achievements:

- **Actionable student insights**
ReUp has provided KVCC with strategic insights into adult learner motivators and barriers, helping inform and strengthen the college's marketing and outreach campaigns.
- **Thought leadership collaboration**
ReUp and KVCC co-presented at the 2025 AACRAO conference, sharing insights on building truly adult-friendly institutions, highlighting strategies to reduce barriers and better support adult learners. The work was spotlighted in ReUp resources and communications sent to all partners.¹²
- **Persistence best practices**
KVCC has been highlighted in ReUp's persistence best practices playbook, with persistence emerging as a key theme across MiLEAP partner community colleges.
- **Innovation leadership**
KVCC continues to serve as a pioneer in data evolution, partnering with ReUp to explore innovative, future-focused approaches to learner re-engagement and success.

¹² [Building Adult-Friendly Colleges Amid Shifting Demographics and Workforce Needs](#), ReUp Education



“I have dreams and goals and aspirations I never thought I had the worth to achieve. I would like to prove to myself and my family that absolutely anything is possible if you can make the time to put the work in for it. Thank you for the chance to resurface the person I have the potential to become.”

- MICHIGAN STOPOUT LEARNER



Recognition and achievements

Michigan Press

'Bulldogs for life.' Ferris State connecting with former students, helping them finish degrees to advance in careers

[Ferris State University](#) • Sept. 3, 2024

Ferris State Helping Adult Learners Complete Degrees After Many Years [radio interview]

[The Great Voice](#) • Sept. 6, 2024

ReUp Education Helps Students Return to OCC to Finish Degrees

[Oakland Community College](#) • Nov. 21, 2024

LCC is partnering with ReUp to recruit stop-out students

[Lansing Community College](#) • Nov. 27, 2024

SC4 Supports Returning Students Through Partnership with ReUp Education

[St. Clair County Community College](#) • Dec. 4, 2024

States want adults to return to college. Many roadblocks stand in the way.

[Hechinger report](#) • Dec. 25, 2024

State partnership expands efforts to re-enroll college stopouts

[Crain's Detroit Business](#) • Apr. 30, 2025

Michigan expands partnership to help adults return to college

[Public News Service](#) • May 19, 2025

Feature story:

Apr. 29, 2025: "Michigan Expands Statewide Initiative to Support Adults Returning to College, Increase Number of Accessible Pathways to Credential Attainment"

[DBusiness](#)

ReUp Education on the ground in 2025

American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) Annual Meeting

Mar. 30 - Apr. 2

In collaboration with KVCC, ReUp presented the [ReUp's Adult Friendliness Maturity Model: Evaluating the Adult-Friendliness of Higher Education Institutions.](#)

Michigan Community College Association (MCCA) Conference

Jul. 30 - Aug. 1

Michigan College Access Network (MCAN) Conference

Nov. 4-5

ReUp joined a discussion with statewide postsecondary leaders during the Michigan Adult Learner Leadership Roundtable.

In addition to conference engagement, the ReUp team conducted approximately 20 on-site visits with Michigan partner institutions to discuss partnership insights, share best practices for supporting returning adult learners, and raise awareness of re-enrollment strategies. These visits helped build institutional buy-in and foster strong, trust-based relationships with campus stakeholders.

A shared vision for Michigan's future

Michigan stands at a pivotal moment in its journey toward educational opportunity and economic growth. The state's strategic investment in a re-enrollment marketplace has significantly advanced Michigan's college attainment and workforce readiness goals. The year ahead offers an important opportunity not only to sustain this progress but also to strategically expand its reach and impact, positioning Michigan as a national leader in re-enrollment.

Michigan's success in re-enrollment has demonstrated what works: data-informed outreach, personalized coaching, and coordinated institutional partnerships. These proven strategies have shown measurable impact in helping adults return to and complete their education. The next step is to scale these strategies statewide by strengthening the existing framework into a sustainable model for driving re-enrollment and economic opportunity.

Recommendations for accelerating Michigan's success:

- **Maintain growth**

To sustain Michigan's progress in re-enrollment, it is essential to continue identifying and engaging stopped-out learners while securing the resources needed to support their return. Establishing sustainable resource models will preserve the state's momentum, ensuring that proven re-enrollment strategies remain active and effective.

- **Broaden institutional participation and coverage**

Currently, only a subset of Michigan's universities and community colleges are actively engaged in re-enrollment work with ReUp. Expanding institutional participation, particularly through MASU and underrepresented community colleges, will close geographic coverage gaps and ensure that re-enrollment opportunities are available to learners and communities in every region of the state.

- **Expand impact**

Michigan has the opportunity to broaden its impact by ensuring that every adult learner, regardless of age, has a clear and supported pathway back to higher education. By expanding program eligibility, thousands more Michiganders can access the workforce opportunities that postsecondary education provides.

Together, these recommendations chart a path for Michigan to transform re-enrollment from a series of successful initiatives into a sustainable, statewide system. By maintaining growth, expanding institutional participation, and widening opportunity for learners of all ages, Michigan can ensure that every adult has the chance to return and complete their education. With sustained commitment and strategic coordination, the state can not only meet its talent and workforce goals but also lead the nation in creating a more responsive and effective higher education ecosystem.

About ReUp Education

ReUp's mission isn't just about degree completion—it's about unlocking economic opportunity.

By partnering with institutions and state governments, ReUp makes statewide collaboration possible. Our scalable solutions allow more adults to overcome barriers, find their footing in higher education, and ultimately unlock better job opportunities.

The opportunity for growth is enormous. With millions of SCNC learners ready to re-engage, states have the chance to lead bold, impactful initiatives. When adults return to college, they gain more than credentials—they gain pathways to better jobs, higher earning potential, and increased confidence. For states, the payoff extends far beyond boosted enrollment numbers. It's an investment in the workforce of the future and the health of their local economies.

Today, ReUp partners with more than 150 colleges and universities across 33 states to re-enroll learners who never completed college. Since its founding 11 years ago, ReUp has re-enrolled more than 70,000 adult learners—including 50,000 in just the past three years—generating an additional \$350 million in revenue for our partner institutions. More than 2 million stopout learners nationwide now have access to ReUp's re-enrollment services and real live coaches.

Our results help close the gap on college attainment goals and improve statewide efforts to increase the talent pipeline of residents with the skills and credentials to meet workforce needs across all sectors of the economy.

To learn more about ReUp's education and workforce efforts, visit reupeducation.com.

This project is being supported, in whole or in part, by federal award number SLFRP0127 awarded to The State of Michigan by the U.S. Department of the Treasury.



Appendix A:

MiLEAP Re-enroll with Reconnect program

Established in 2024, the Re-enroll with Reconnect (RWR) program is a collaboration between ReUp Education and the Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential (MiLEAP). Through MiLEAP grant funding, ReUp partners with 12 Michigan community colleges to re-engage and re-enroll learners ages 21–24 who stopped out of college. As part of the state’s Sixty by 30 goal, the MiLEAP RWR program expands community college capacity to re-engage adults through targeted outreach and personalized coaching, supporting their return and persistence to completion.

Participating institutions:

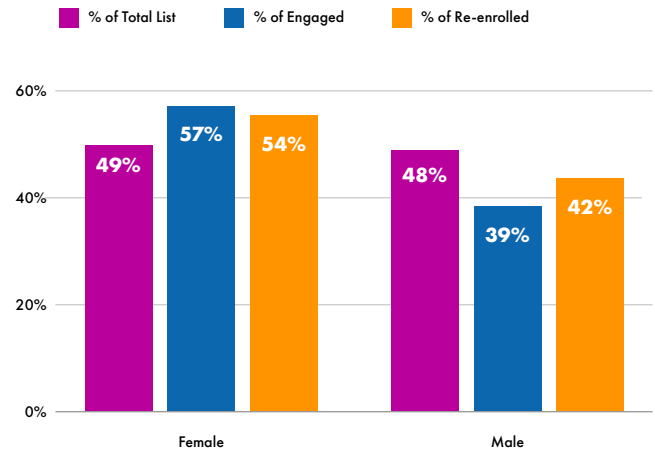
- Alpena Community College
- Delta College
- Grand Rapids Community College
- Henry Ford College
- Jackson College
- Kalamazoo Valley Community College¹³
- Kellogg Community College
- Lansing Community College
- Mid Michigan College
- Mott Community College
- Oakland Community College
- St. Clair County Community College

Achievements:

- **Outreached:** 50,656
- **Engaged:** 7,458
- **Enrolled:** 5,357
- **Graduated:** 82
- **\$13.7 million estimated tuition recaptured**

Learner insights from MiLEAP’s Re-enroll with Reconnect program:

Gender



Across the RWR program, women represent a slightly larger share of the overall stopout population and continue to comprise the majority of learners who have expressed interest in re-enrolling and those who ultimately re-enroll.

While men comprise a comparable share of the total stopout population, they are less likely to engage in outreach or progress to enrollment. However, there are strong signals that once men do engage, they are more likely to re-enroll—suggesting that engagement is the critical lever. The opportunity is to meet men where they are and remove barriers to initial engagement.

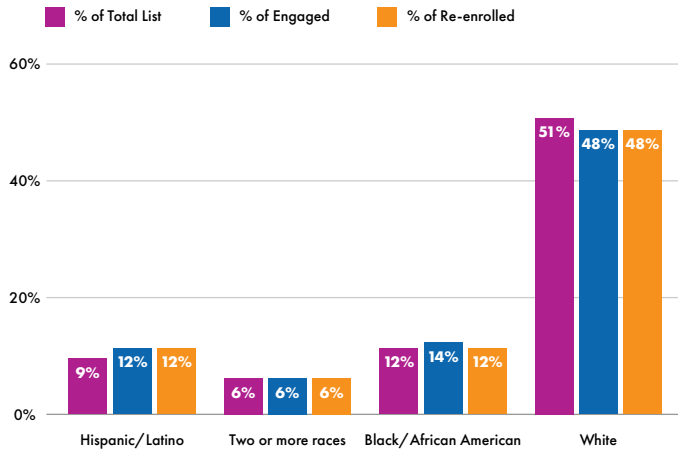
Overall, these results indicate that women respond strongly to outreach efforts and successfully progress through the re-enrollment pipeline, highlighting the effectiveness of current engagement strategies. At the same time, patterns in male engagement point to an opportunity to refine approaches that can better support and engage men earlier in the re-enrollment process.

Age

Eligibility for MiLEAP’s Re-enroll with Reconnect program is limited to learners ages 21–24; therefore, an age-based analysis is not included.

¹³ KVCC is excluded from the Learner Insights Analysis sections. KVCC data is included in all other applicable sections of the report.

Race and ethnicity

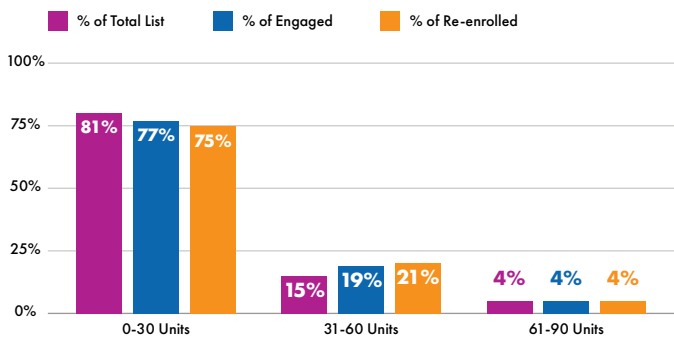


*Note: Race data not reported for ~18,000 learners. May not equal 100% because learners could select more than one option

The racial and ethnic makeup of stopped-out learners ages 21–24 from participating institutions remains largely consistent through engagement and re-enrollment. Although the overall population is mostly White, Black, Hispanic, and multiracial learners show consistent signs of returning to school and re-enrolling relative to their share of the population.

For learners with known race data, those who identify as White comprise just over half of the total the stopped-out population, and their representation remains relatively consistent across engagement and enrollment. Similarly, Black or African American learners represent 12% of the total stopped-out population, and demonstrate a generally consistent pattern through the pipeline. Learners who identify as Hispanic/Latino (9% of the stopped-out population) engage with ReUp and ultimately enroll at slightly higher rates than their overall representation.

Units

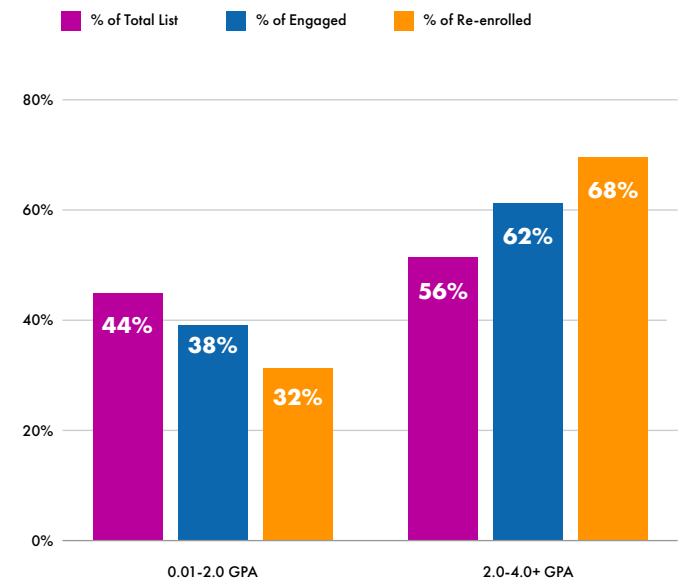


Across the community college MiLEAP population, the majority of learners stopped out with fewer than 30 earned credits, representing 81% of the total student list. This group remains the largest share of both engaged and enrolled

learners, indicating strong engagement and re-enrollment among early-credit students. Learners with 31–60 credits represent a smaller portion of the overall population (15%) but show promising indicators of interest in returning to school and re-enrollment.

Learners with 61–90 credits represent a small and stable share at each stage (4%), indicating consistent but limited participation. These learners are often eligible for institutional auto-graduation policies. Each term, ReUp reviews individuals who may already meet graduation requirements and shares a list with institutions to support next steps.

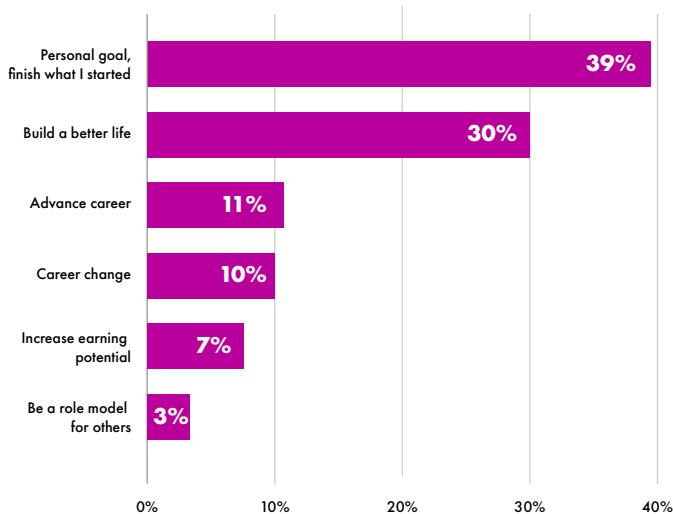
GPA



Over half of learners were in good academic standing at the time they stopped out, with 56% having left college with a GPA above 2.0. This group goes on to represent an even larger share of those who engage with ReUp and ultimately re-enroll, suggesting that learners who stop out in good standing are both more reachable and more likely to return, making them a particularly strong segment for re-engagement efforts.

Learners who stopped out with GPAs below 2.0 comprise 44% of the population and, although they engage and re-enroll at lower rates, still represent a substantial share of learners interested in returning to and re-enrolling in school. Lower engagement among this group may reflect academic eligibility hurdles, reduced confidence or readiness, or institution-specific requirements, pointing to the need for tailored support strategies rather than exclusion.

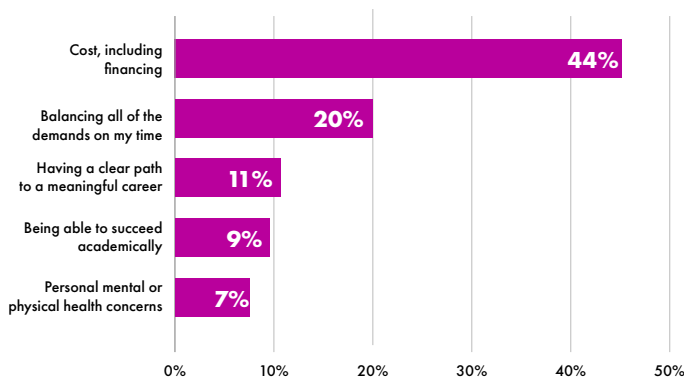
Top motivations



Learners who engage with ReUp are encouraged to share their motivations for returning to higher education. Among those who responded, 39% indicated that returning to school is a deeply personal goal—a chance to finish what they started. Additionally, 67% pointed to career-focused motivations, such as building a better life, career advancement, career change, or increasing their earning potential.

These findings show that for many learners, the decision to return to higher education is both personal and purpose-driven, grounded in aspirations for growth, fulfillment, and improved opportunities. The ReUp coaching model supports this journey by providing tailored guidance and encouragement that empowers learners to pursue and achieve their goals.

Top barriers



ReUp surveyed engaged learners to identify their top barriers to returning to school. Among respondents, 44% cited finances as the primary obstacle—more than double any other factor.

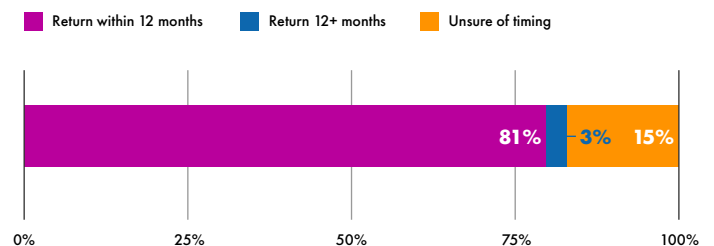
National research from Inside Higher Ed reinforces these findings, showing that nontraditional, first-generation, and working learners are disproportionately affected by financial stress, which directly impacts academic focus and persistence.

In fact, 73% of college learners experience financial distress, underscoring the strong connection between financial stability and academic success.¹⁴

Time management was the second most cited barrier at 20%, reflecting the complex realities adult learners face as they may be balancing full-time work, caregiving, and academic pursuits. As 21-24 year olds, MiLEAP learners practice juggling priorities while navigating their early careers.

Providing financial aid support in tandem with success coaching could meaningfully reduce these barriers and improve re-enrollment and retention among returning learners.

Timeline to return



*Note: May not equal 100% because learners could select more than one option

Among learners who shared their re-enrollment plans, 81% indicated that they intend to return within the next 12 months, representing a strong group of high-intent learners. Another 15% reported being unsure about when they will return, indicating that they may benefit from additional guidance and clarity as they evaluate personal, academic, or financial factors before committing to re-enrollment. Just 3% indicated they wanted to return in a year or more.

Learners in the MiLEAP RWR program have an average of 22 touchpoints (text, email, or meetings) with ReUp before re-enrolling. This underscores the importance of a sustained, flexible engagement strategy that supports learners over time and meets them when they are most prepared to return.

Conclusion:

These insights reveal clear patterns in who is returning, who is engaging, and which barriers continue to shape adult learners' pathways back to higher education. Although the experiences and needs of these learners differ, the themes that emerge highlight consistent opportunities for institutions and statewide partners to better support them.

¹⁴ [Inside Higher Education](#)

Appendix B:

Michigan Association of State Universities (MASU) partnership

Complementing the efforts of the MiLEAP Re-enroll with Reconnect program, ReUp's partnership with MASU has created a tailored re-enrollment initiative for Michigan's public universities. Through close collaboration with institutional leaders, this work identifies the unique needs and goals of each campus, aligning re-engagement strategies with broader enrollment and completion objectives across the state.

Participating institutions:

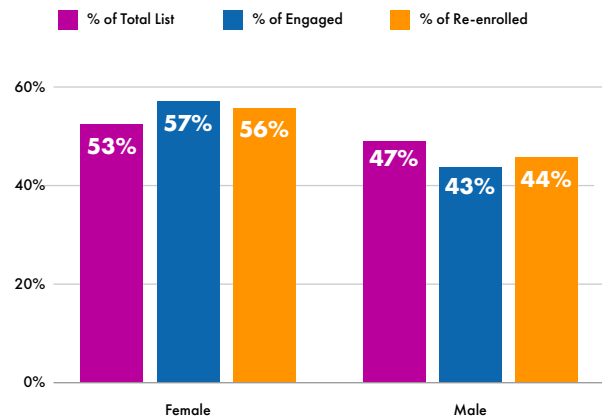
- Eastern Michigan University
- Ferris State University
- Grand Valley State University
- Lake Superior State University
- Saginaw Valley State University
- Western Michigan University

Achievements:

- **Outreached:** 35,026
- **Engaged:** 9,883
- **Enrolled:** 3,746
- **Graduated:** 1,050
- **\$27.8 million estimated tuition recaptured**

Learner insights from the MASU partnership:

Gender

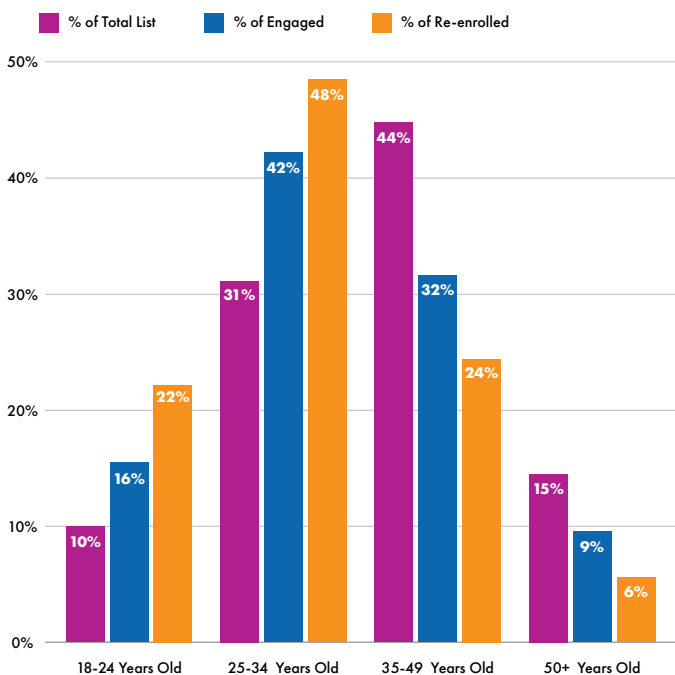


Among stopped-out learners from universities participating in the partnership, women make up just over half of all learners and are more likely to express interest in returning to school, and more likely to re-enroll. Men are less likely to engage or show interest, but once engaged, they show promising signs of re-enrolling.

These findings align with broader trends identified by Bridge Michigan, which report that women in the state enroll in college at significantly higher rates than men within one year of high school graduation, at 69% compared to 56%. This gender imbalance continues at Michigan's public universities, where women account for 54.6% of total enrollment.¹⁵ These disparities carry workforce implications, as men who do not pursue postsecondary education are far less likely to secure stable, higher paying employment.

¹⁵ [Bridge Michigan](#)

Age



Younger adult learners, who often face fewer life challenges or have more recently stopped out, are showing strong interest in returning to school. Adult learners across older age groups also express interest but often need additional support to balance returning to school with responsibilities such as caregiving, work, and financial obligations. The support needed to return to school is closely tied to a stopped-out learner's life stage.

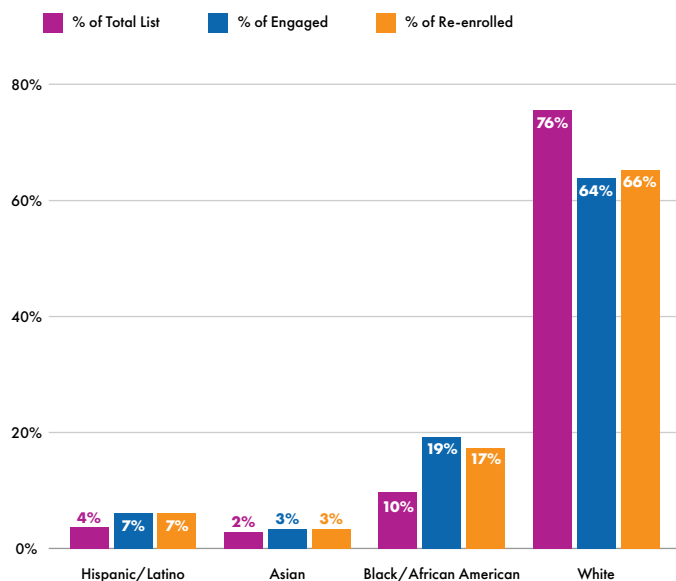
Ages 18–24: Learners ages 18–24 represent 10% of the stopped-out population, yet account for 16% of engaged learners and 22% of re-enrollments. This reinforces the pattern of strong return intent among younger adult learners. However, many institutions only focus re-enrollment efforts on this age group, leaving older learners who stopped out underserved. Through ReUp's partnerships, institutions can reach stopped-out learners of any age and drive significant re-enrollment gains.

Ages 25–34: Learners ages 25–34 comprise 31% of the stopped-out population and represent 42% of engaged learners and 48% of re-enrollments. This group demonstrates high responsiveness to outreach and the strong progression from engagement to re-enrollment. This may indicate that motivations such as career advancement, degree completion, and long-term financial stability are contributing factors.

Ages 35–49: Learners ages 35–49 make up the largest share of the stopped-out population, indicating an opportunity to strengthen how institutions support, connect with, and engage this group. Common barriers for this age group should be considered, with a focus on flexible program options, targeted supports, and messaging aligned to the needs of mid-career adult learners.

Ages 50+: Learners 50 and older account for 15% of the stopped-out population, 9% of engaged learners and 6% of re-enrollments. While re-engagement is lower, continued interest suggests that age-responsive outreach and support models can still meaningfully increase re-enrollment among this group. Many already have significant work experience and could benefit from an added credential.

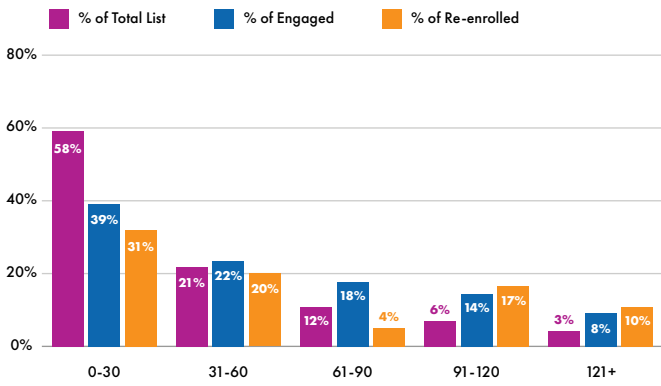
Race and ethnicity



Based on the race and ethnicity data available to ReUp, learners who identify as White make up the majority of the stopped-out MASU population, representing 76% of all learners. Black or African American learners comprise 10% of the total stopped-out learner population, yet represent 19% of those who have engaged with ReUp and 17% of those who have enrolled. This indicates that Black or African American learners are overperforming in both engagement and re-enrollment relative to their population share, demonstrating strong responsiveness to outreach and interest in returning to school. Similarly, Hispanic/Latino learners account for 4% of the MASU population but represent a slightly larger share of engaged and enrolled learners.

These patterns highlight the importance of tailored strategies, as learners from historically underrepresented groups are actively responding to re-engagement opportunities and signaling a strong commitment to completing their degrees.

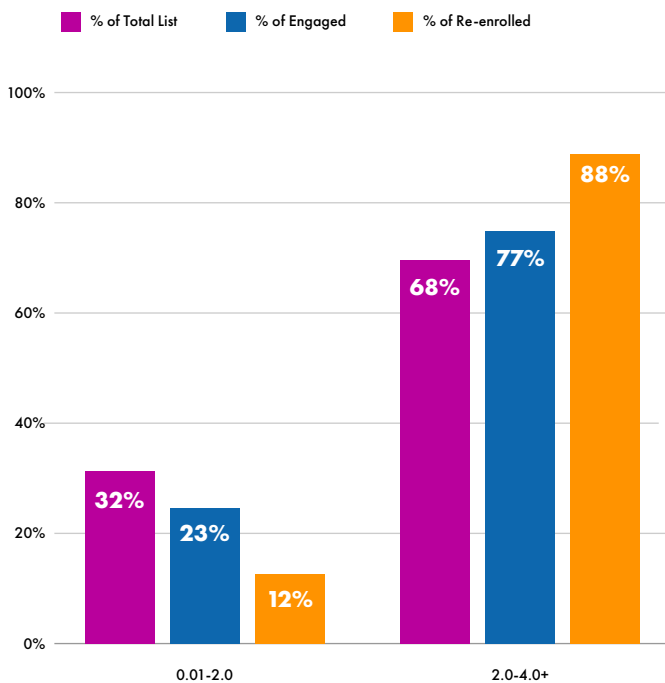
Units



The majority of learners (58%) had fewer than 30 units when they stopped out and account for an even smaller segment of those who engaged and ultimately re-enrolled. This pattern suggests that students with minimal credit progress may feel less motivated to return, in part because they face a longer and more uncertain pathway to degree completion as well as a potentially larger financial undertaking. Despite this, these learners still make up the largest share of those who do return. Their continued presence among the majority of re-engaging and re-enrolling students indicates that, while their original progress in college may have been limited, their underlying interest in completing a degree remains strong.

Unsurprisingly, learners with more accumulated credits appear more inclined to re-engage, likely in part because returning feels more attainable, they are closer to the finish line, have stronger academic confidence, and face a lower perceived financial and time investment.

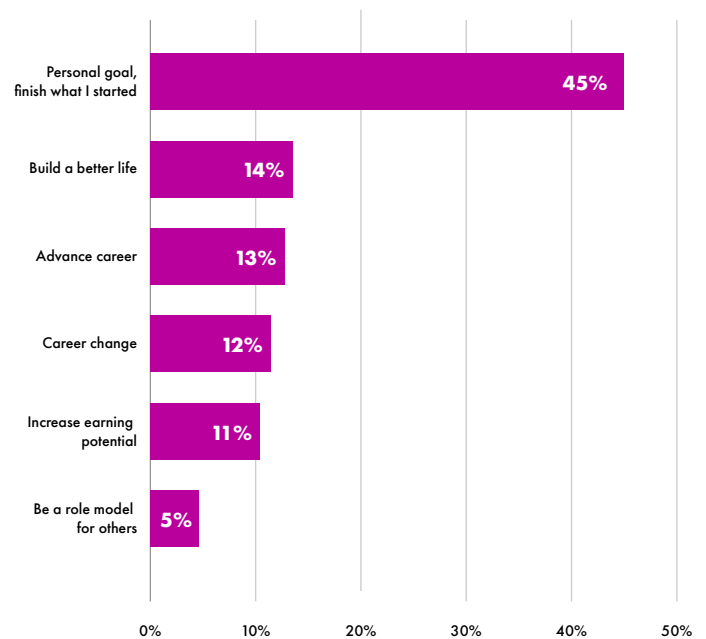
GPA



The majority of the stopped-out population remains in good academic standing, with 68% of learners leaving college with a GPA above 2.0. In addition, their representation among engaged and re-enrolled learners exceeds their share of the overall stopped-out population. This suggests that factors beyond academic performance or standing are driving stopout behavior. Identifying and addressing the non-academic barriers and external challenges these learners face is critical to more effectively supporting their persistence and successful return.

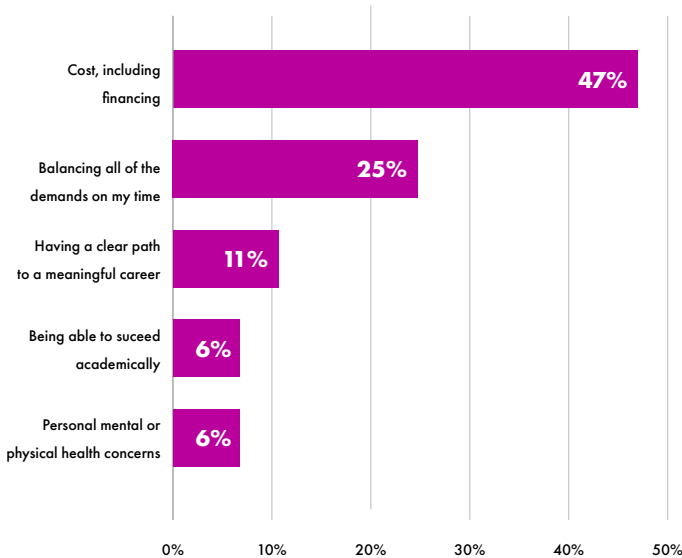
In contrast, learners with GPAs of 2.0 or below make up 32% of the stopped-out population and are underrepresented among engaged and re-enrolled learners. This pattern suggests that academic performance remains a significant predictor of re-enrollment. Learners with lower GPAs often face more barriers to returning to higher education. Implementing GPA forgiveness or academic amnesty programs could serve as a promising strategy to encourage these learners to re-enroll and progress toward degree completion.

Top motivations



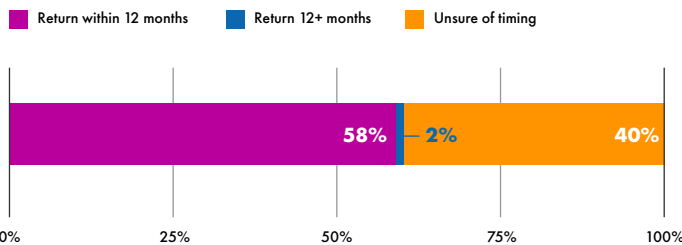
Learners who engaged with ReUp expressed strong motivation to complete their degrees, with 45% saying they want to finish what they started. A combined 49% of learners are motivated by career-focused purposes, such as building a better life, career advancement, career change, or increasing their earning potential. This indicates that career advancement remains a primary driver of adult re-enrollment.

Top barriers



When asked about barriers, 47% cited cost as their biggest barrier to returning. This illustrates the external challenges stopout learners face despite their desire to progress. Financial strain is widespread, with the majority of college students experiencing some level of financial stress, and there is a well-established link between financial pressure and individuals not returning to school. Support with financial aid, paired with success coaching, can play a pivotal role in helping returning learners overcome these challenges.

Timeline to return



Among learners who shared their re-enrollment plans, 58% indicated they intend to return within the next 12 months, representing a strong group of high-intent learners. An additional 40% of MASU learners reported being unsure about when they will return, suggesting they may benefit from additional guidance as they weigh personal, academic, or financial considerations. Only 2% indicated plans to return in a year or more.

On average, it takes learners in the MASU programs an average of 32 touchpoints (text, email, or meetings) before re-enrolling. This underscores the importance of a sustained, flexible engagement strategy that supports learners over time and meets them when they are most prepared to return.

Conclusion:

This overview of learner insights underscores a shared responsibility across the state, institutions, and the broader SCNC ecosystem to create conditions where adult learners can confidently re-engage, persist, and complete their educational goals. With this data, stakeholders can build a more responsive and sustainable system that strengthens Michigan's workforce, communities, and economic future.

**RE
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