

2025 Year Three Report Murphy J. Foster Promise Award Program

Act 457 of the 2021 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2025



BACKGROUND

Act 457 of Louisiana's 2021 Regular Legislative Session created Louisiana's adult financial aid program. Named after former Louisiana Governor Murphy J. "Mike" Foster, this legislation established a \$10.5 million annual state fund to provide workforce training opportunities for Louisiana's working-age adults who have not yet earned a postsecondary credential [legislation can be accessed here: [Act 457 \(2021\)](#)]

The originating legislation supported eligible students enrolled in two-year public postsecondary institutions and accredited proprietary schools approved by the Board of Regents to pursue an associate's degree or a short-term credential aligned with Louisiana's workforce priorities. The M.J. Foster Promise Award Program's (MJFP's) effective date was the 2022–2023 academic year. We have now completed the third year of the program (2024–2025). Since the 2021 Regular Session, multiple legislative instruments have been introduced to adjust and refine the original legislation, which will be covered later in this report.

Award recipients must pursue an associate's degree or shorter-term postsecondary credential tied to specific high-demand, high-wage occupations aligned with Louisiana's workforce priorities. The program funds enrollment in priority majors related to growing industry sectors, including construction, healthcare, information technology, manufacturing, and transportation and logistics ([MJFP Approved Programs](#)).

The M.J. Foster Promise Award Program is critical in helping to reach the goal outlined in the Board of Regents Master Plan, *Louisiana Prospers*, of 60% credential attainment for the state's working-age population by 2030. With the growth of participants and completers in the program, the MJFP Award provides financial support for students to complete their education and training and earn high-demand credentials, ultimately contributing to a significant influx of working-age adults needed for high-value positions in Louisiana's economy.

Program eligibility requirements are as follows: applicants must be Louisiana residents, reach an age threshold, and meet a family income threshold of 300% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL)¹ or be unemployed or underemployed for six months. The awards are available on a first-come, first-served basis and are accessible to the student for three years. The original program covered the cost of tuition and required fees after all other sources of aid (excluding student loans and federal work-study [MJFP Award Information](#)) had been applied; however, Act 284 of the 2023 Legislative Session allows the scholarship to be used before all other sources of aid for an eligible student's first semester of support.

¹A measure of income issued annually by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) determines eligibility for specific programs and benefits such as Medicaid. The 2025 income numbers for the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) are \$15,650 for an individual and \$32,150 for a family of four. [Federal Poverty Level \(FPL\) - Glossary | HealthCare.gov](#)

The award amount of \$3,200 per award year, or \$1,600 per semester, is provided to a student enrolled full time. Part-time students receive a proportional amount. Students can receive a maximum of \$6,400 over three years.

A student may receive the maximum award amount of \$6,400 in one year for certain high-cost programs ([MJFP Award Information](#)) and can use the award funds beginning July 1 through the following June 30.

Compliance with reporting requirements is a condition of an institution's continued eligibility to receive payments from the state on behalf of award recipients, which shall be determined annually by the administering agency.

The originating legislation, Act 457 of 2021, charged the Board of Regents with establishing an Advisory Council to identify qualified programs that provide the high-value credentials supported by this award.

In 2024, Act 102 transferred oversight of the Advisory Council from the Board of Regents to the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC – now LA Works), while maintaining day-to-day program administration under the Board of Regents through the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA) [RS 17:3047.5].

LA Works must:

- Convene the Advisory Council once per year for program updates.
- Review the state's workforce priorities every three years. [RS 17:3047.1]

The Advisory Council is responsible for:

- Identifying at least five industry sectors with high-demand, high-wage jobs that align with state workforce priorities.
- Reviewing associate's-level or below programs at postsecondary and proprietary schools to determine which ones align with high-demand, high-wage jobs.
- Designating those programs that meet workforce priorities as qualified for MJFP funding. [RS 17:3047.1]

The Advisory Council is comprised of the following members, or their designees:

- The Chancellors of LSU Eunice and Southern University Shreveport
- The President of the Louisiana Community and Technical College System
- The Commissioner of Higher Education
- The State Superintendent of Education
- The Secretary of the Louisiana Workforce Commission

- The Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Economic Development
- The Chairman of the Louisiana Workforce Investment Council
- The Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Revenue

Act 152 of the 2025 Regular Legislative Session ([link](#)) further defined the scope of eligible programs. Specifically, it aligned TOPS Tech Early Start and TOPS-Tech-eligible programs with the eligibility criteria established for the M.J. Foster Promise Program, basing eligibility on the list of critical-need programs identified by the Louisiana Workforce Commission. The provisions of this Act apply to awards beginning with the 2025–2026 academic years and beyond.

The 2024 Regular Legislative Session enacted multiple laws that substantially revised the M.J. Foster Program.

Act 102 made the following additional changes to MJFP:

- Increased the maximum amount that may be appropriated to \$40 million. Note that this increase only allows for maximum appropriation; it does not require it.
- Provides that the Advisory Council shall be called by the Louisiana Workforce Commission rather than the Board of Regents.

Act 633 gradually reduces the minimum eligibility age for the M.J. Foster Promise Program from 21 to 17. This reduction in the minimum eligibility age will take place in a graduated manner over a period of four years, as follows:

- For the 2024–2025 award year, an applicant must be 20 years or older;
- For the 2025–2026 award year, an applicant must be 19 years or older;
- For the 2026–2027 award year, an applicant must be 18 years or older; and
- For the 2027–2028 award year and thereafter, an applicant must be at least 17 years old.

Overall, for the 2024–2025 award year, 17,905 applicants were evaluated for eligibility to receive program funds. Of the total applicants, 10,552 were eligible, 3,030 were ineligible, and 2,440 were cancelled. Cancellations and withdrawals consisted of students who voluntarily withdrew for various reasons, were not enrolled in an approved program, were not enrolled during the award year, or did not adhere to enrollment deadlines. In total, \$17,425,927 was dispersed (as of July 23, 2025) to students in Year Three, compared to \$9,949,882 to students in Year Two.

Year by year, the numbers for the M.J. Foster Promise program have steadily increased. The number of M.J. Foster Promise recipients went from 1,171 in the first year of implementation to 3,026 in year two, and 6,308 in year three (as of July 2025). The number of M.J. Foster Promise

graduates went from 192 in year one to 1,275 in year two and 2,760 in year three. When looking at the age of M.J. Foster Promise recipients, while each age range has had an increase in numbers, since year one the proportion of recipients under 30 years old has increased while the proportion of recipients over 30 years old has decreased. The number of completions in MJFP-approved programs has steadily increased as well. The number of completions went from 211 in year one to 1,479 in year two and 3,900 in year three.

METHODOLOGY

To gather the requested data for the report, eligible institutions offering the program were identified: Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS) institutions, LSU Eunice (LSUE), Southern University Shreveport (SUSLA), and accredited proprietary schools licensed by the Board of Regents. The dataset for year three of the program includes students enrolled in MJFP-approved majors and validated skills and learning programs (short-term noncredit programs) at LCTCS institutions, LSUE, and SUSLA. In addition, approximately 160 proprietary institutions are licensed in the state; of those, 37 are accredited, and 31 offer credentials that are eligible for the award. BOR worked with these eligible and participating proprietary institutions to gather their enrollment and outcomes data.

Staff worked to identify both program awardees who enrolled in eligible credential programs and credential completers from all eligible institutions. Non-awardees in eligible programs were also identified to provide comparison data whenever possible. BOR, LOSFA, and LA Works relied on previously established intra-agency Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) governing data-sharing to acquire the data required for this report, following all data privacy protocols.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Act 457 (2021) required that the Board of Regents submit a written report to the Legislature to include all the information for the preceding academic year as listed below:

- Demographic information of award recipients, including age, race, gender, and household income.
- The mean length of time required for award recipients to complete a qualified program as compared to other completers of the program who did not receive the award.
- Pre- and post-award employment information, including employment status, annual wages, and employer's industry sector.
- Recidivism rates of award recipients.
- The administering agency shall, with the cooperation and assistance of the state's public two-year postsecondary education institutions and proprietary schools, annually query

each first-time award recipient to determine the extent to which receiving the award influenced the recipient’s decision to enroll in postsecondary education.

Although the 2024 amended statute calls for this report to contain information about students’ eligibility for federal financial aid, changes to federal reporting rules prevent that information from being shared.

All data requested and analyzed are reported in the aggregate only and contain no personally identifiable information.

Program Participant Demographic Information

Act 457 (2021) requires presentation of demographic information of program participants, including age, race, gender, and household income.

Table 1 considers the 6,308 MJFP recipients in 2024–2025 by race and gender (this metric is more than double last year’s number, 3,026). This increase in student recipients can be attributed to the \$7.3 million remaining dollars from the first implementation year, which was re-allocated back into the program. Table 2 groups these 6,308 MJFP recipients by the Regional Labor Market Area (RLMA) of their residence.

Table 1. Race by Gender for MJFP Funding Recipients, 2024–2025

	Female		Male		Gender Not Reported		
Race	Headcount	Percent of Total	Headcount	Percent of Total		Total	Percent of Total
Black, non-Hispanic	2,354	37%	731	12%	3	3,088	49%
White, non-Hispanic	605	10%	236	4%	1	842	13%
Hispanic or Latino	76	1%	15	0%		91	1%
Asian	406	6%	60	1%		466	7%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	34	1%	7	0%		41	1%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	6	0%	3	0%		9	0%
Two or More Races	55	1%	16	0%		71	1%
Race/Ethnicity Unknown	1,371	22%	309	5%	19	1,699	27%
Grand Total	4,908	78%	1,377	22%	23	6,308	100%

Source: LOSFA’s MJFP Recipient File, as of 07/23/2025.

Race/ethnicity categories follow U.S. Census Bureau standards.

Table 2. Regional Labor Market Areas for MJFP Funding Recipients, 2024–2025

Region	Headcount	Percent of Total
Alexandria	387	6%
Baton Rouge	1,735	28%
Houma	345	6%
Lafayette	1,035	17%
Lake Charles	342	6%
Monroe	514	8%
New Orleans	1,161	19%
Shreveport	611	10%
Not Available	178	3%
Grand Total	6,308	100%

Source: BOR's Workforce Validated Skills and Learning, Statewide Student Profile System, LOSFA's MJFP Recipient File, as of 07/23/2025.

Note: Louisiana Parish data unavailable.

Table 3 looks at the age ranges of MJFP funding recipients. Eligible students in 2024–2025 were required to be 20 or older. Of the total MJFP recipients (6,308), just under half (45%) are 30 or older, and 71% are 25 or older. This outcome aligns with the program's original intent: to recruit individuals from older age groups and encourage them to pursue a high-value credential. The data in Table 3 confirms that the program has been successful in reaching this targeted population.

Table 3. Age Ranges for MJFP Funding Recipients, 2024–2025

Age Range	Headcount	Percent
20*	98	2%
21–24	1,716	27%
25–29	1,649	26%
30–39	1,827	29%
40 +	1,018	16%
Total	6,308	100%

Source: LOSFA's MJFP Recipient File, as of 07/23/2025.

*Per Act 633 (2024), this is the first year that 20-year-old students were eligible.

Another data point required by the law to be reported under demographic information is personal income of MJFP recipients. The program requires participants to meet a family income threshold of 300% of the [Federal Poverty Level](#)² or be unemployed or underemployed for six months.

²[Poverty Guidelines | ASPE](#)

Table 4 illustrates the self-reported adjusted gross income levels of recipients. 20% (1,309) of recipients fall into the two lowest income levels (less than \$15,000 per year); 67% (4,218) of recipients make less than \$34,999 per year; and 13% fall into the \$35,000–\$49,999 per year income group. Only 8% of the recipients made \$50,000 or more, and 13% of recipients (809 students) did not report their income.

Table 4. Income by Groups for MJFP Funding Recipients, 2024–2025

Self-Reported Adjusted Gross Income	Headcount	Percent
Less Than \$10,000	717	11%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	592	9%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	1,486	24%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	1,423	23%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	805	13%
\$50,000 and more	476	8%
Did Not Report	809	13%
Total	6,308	100%

Source: LOSFA’s MJFP Recipient File, as of 07/23/25.

Almost 68% of recipients’ self-reported adjusted gross incomes are below the ALICE Household Survival Budget for a single adult in Louisiana (\$29,316), and 98% of self-reported adjusted gross incomes are below the [ALICE Household](#) Survival Budget for a family of four (\$81,432). ALICE is an acronym for **A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mployed households with income above the Federal Poverty Level but below the basic cost of living [[About Us | Overview of ALICE Project \(unitedforalice.org\)](#)]. The ALICE Household Survival Budget is “the bare-minimum cost of household basics (housing, childcare, food, transportation, health care, and a smartphone plan, plus taxes and a small contingency)”.

These metrics indicate that the M.J. Foster Promise Program clearly helps the students who need the most assistance to get on an academic track to success and a pathway to being financially self-supporting.

Program Completers Information

Table 5 shows the race and gender demographics of the 2,760 students who completed credentials (over twice as many [1,275]) as last year. Table 6 presents the Regional Labor Market Area of residence for the same 2,760 students.

These data align closely with those on recipients and demonstrate that program support is effective across races and genders, enabling students to complete their credentials.

Table 5. MJFP Completers in M.J. Foster Approved Programs by Race and Gender, 2024–2025

	Female		Male		Unreported		
Completers	Headcount	Percent of Total	Headcount	Percent of Total	Headcount	Total for Race	Percent of Total
Black, non-Hispanic	1,304	47%	506	18%		1,810	66%
White, non-Hispanic	442	16%	230	8%	1	673	24%
Hispanic or Latino	50	2%	31	1%		81	3%
Asian	11	0.4%	4	0.1%		15	0.5%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	22	0.8%	6	0.2%		28	1%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	4	0.1%	1	<0.1%		5	0.2%
Two or More Races	41	1%	16	0.6%		57	2%
Race/Ethnicity Unknown	63	2%	27	1%	1	91	3%
Total	1,937	70%	821	30%	2	2,760	100%

Source: BOR's Statewide Completers System, Workforce Validated Skills and Learning, Statewide Student Profile System, LOSFA MJFP files. Race/ethnicity categories follow U.S. Census Bureau standards.

Table 6. Regional Labor Market Areas for MJFP Funding Completers, 2024–2025

Region	Headcount	Percent of Total
Alexandria	214	8%
Baton Rouge	589	21%
Houma	138	5%
Lafayette	562	20%
Lake Charles	164	6%
Monroe	253	9%
New Orleans	511	19%
Shreveport	318	12%
Not Available	11	<1%
Grand Total	2,760	100%

Source: BOR's Workforce Validated Skills and Learning, Statewide Completers System, LOSFA's MJFP files.

Note: Louisiana Parish data unavailable.

Program Completion Information

Table 7 provides the top five programs for MJFP program completions. In this report, counted industry-recognized credentials are limited to completions in the approved MJFP program *Classification of Instructional Programs* (CIP) code list, which is aligned to the five major industry sectors (listed in Table 7). Altogether, 2,760 completers were awarded 3,900 credentials.

In this third year, credential completions increased appreciably from 1,479 in 2023–2024 to 3,900 in 2024–2025. The healthcare profession, a clear need in our state, had the most significant number of completers. Further analysis finds that the top five healthcare program completions were Practical Nursing, Vocational Nursing and Nursing Assistants (981); Allied Health and Medical Assisting Services (463); Registered Nursing, Nursing Administration, Nursing Research and Clinical Nursing (191); Health and Medical Administrative Services (155); and Clinical/Medical Laboratory Science/Research and Allied Professions (143). Other high-completion categories in other industries are Ground Transportation (542) and Precision Metal Working (271).

Table 7. MJFP Completions by Industry

Program Description	2023–2024	2024–2025
Healthcare	965	2,191*
Transportation and Warehousing	310	741
Manufacturing	96	500
Construction	70	260
Information Technology	39	208
Total	1,480	3,900

Source: BOR's Statewide Completers System, Workforce Validated Skills and Learning, LOSFA MJFP files.

*The majority of healthcare program completions (1,933) are in the top five.

Comparing year three MJFP completions by award level (Table 8) to year two data, the increase in completions is noteworthy. There were significant increases from last year to this year in Healthcare, Transportation and Warehousing and Manufacturing (Table 7). This positive trend indicates that MJFP funding is effectively achieving its goal of helping students acquire the necessary skills for those high-demand positions in the workforce. Additionally, the number of students earning stackable credentials of value suggests opportunities for this group of students to continue acquiring expertise in their chosen professions.

Table 8. MJFP Completions by Credential Level

Degree Level	2023–2024	2024–2025
Career Tech Certification	393	2,063
Certificate (One Year)	94	257
Diploma	165	305
Associate's	165	310
Cert. or Diploma < than 100 hours	24	46
Cert. or Diploma 100 to 449 hours	134	78
Cert. or Diploma 450 to 899 hours	326	349
Cert. or Diploma 900 to 1,800 hours	179	492
Grand Total	1,480	3,900

Source: BOR's Statewide Completers System, Workforce Validated Skills and Learning, LOSFA MJFP files.

Time-to-Degree

Program completion data compared time-to-degree for MJFP award recipients in public and proprietary institutions with students in the same programs who did not receive MJFP funding.

Table 9 provides data for students who completed eligible credentials in public postsecondary institutions and proprietary schools in the program's third year. For each credential level, time-to-degree is compared for students who received and did not receive MJFP funding.

Table 9. Time-to-Degree by Credential Level 2022–2023 and 2023–2024

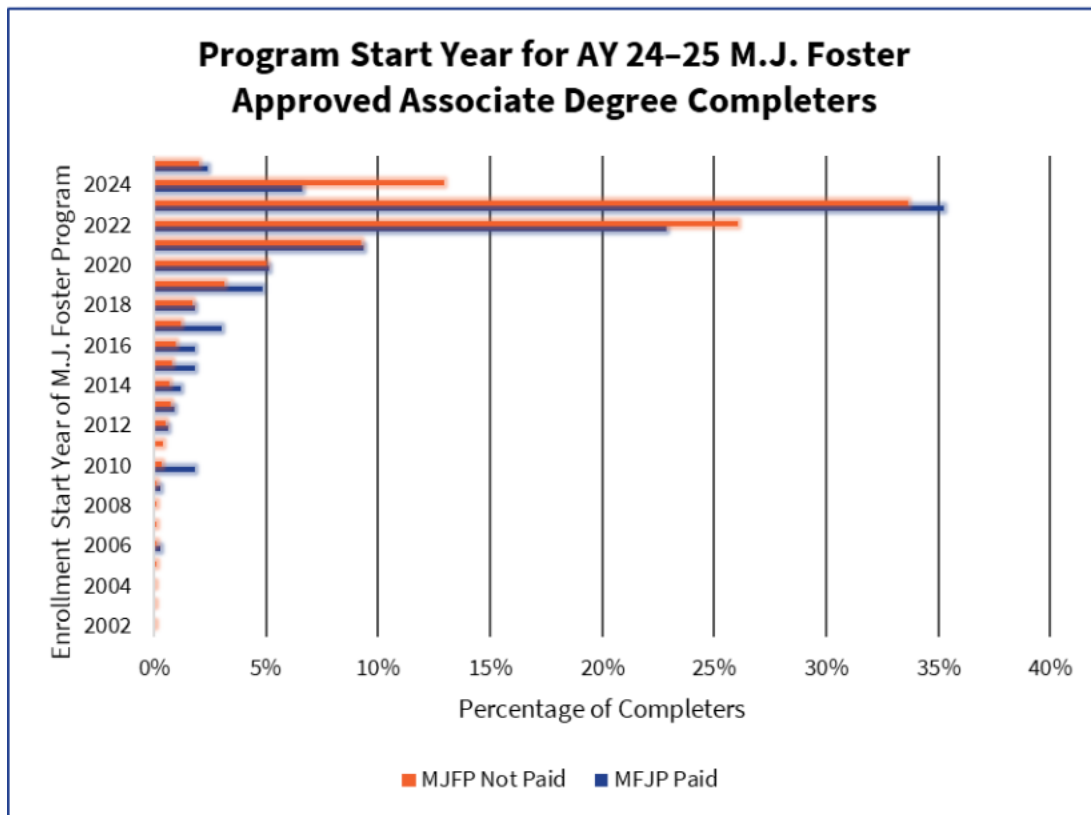
	2023–2024		2024–2025	
Degree Level	MJFP Completions	Non-MJFP Completions	MJFP Completions	Non-MJFP Completions
Career Tech Certification	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.4
Certificate (One Year)	1.7	1.4	1.6	1.4
Diploma	3.0	2.1	3.1	2.1
Associate	4.2	3.2	3.8	3.1
Cert. or Diploma < than 100 Hours	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Cert. or Diploma 100 hours to 449 hours	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.2
Cert. or Diploma 450 hours to 899 hours	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.6
Cert. or Diploma 900 hours to 1,800 hours	1.1	0.9	0.9	1.0
Associate in Occ. Studies	1.9	1.8	1.9	1.8

Source: BOR's Completions, Enrollment Files, Workforce Validated Skills and Learning Data System, LOSFA MJFP files as of 7/23/25.

MJFP recipients and non-recipients earned credentials designed to be completed in one year or less in similar, if not identical, timeframes. These awards included career and technical certificates and industry-recognized certifications. It is important to note, however, that students completing awards requiring one year or more may have started their programs previously and later returned to complete them.

Students also finished eligible diploma or associate's degree programs that cannot be completed in a single year. For some credentials, the average time to degree for these programs was longer for award recipients than non-recipients (3.1 vs. 2.1 years for diploma earners and 3.8 vs. 3.1 years for associate's degree earners). Further analysis of this population shows that some of these students began their college studies more than 20 years ago (Table 10). This analysis suggests that the funds provided by the MJFP award enabled students who had some college but no degree, and perhaps were unemployed or underemployed, to complete their credentials.

Table 10. Program Start Year for AY 2024–2025 M.J. Foster Approved Associate’s Degree Completers



*The population consists of AY 2024–2025 completers who were used for the time-to-degree calculations. LCTCS’s Workforce Validated Skills and Learning completers were not included as there were no clock hours provided for those awards.

Pre- and Post-Award Employment Information

As an element of this report, we analyze the financial impact of employment on MJFP completions. For this analysis, we examine the data for last year’s graduates. Of the completers from the 2022–2023 & 2023–2024 cohorts matched to LA Works (formerly LWC) data, 439 had reported wages before and after accepting the MJFP Award. The average annual wage pre-award for this group was \$24,624 (Table 11). This is below the ALICE Household Survival Budget for a Single Adult in Louisiana of \$29,316.

Table 11. Pre-MJFP Enrollment Wage/ALICE Data

Pre-Enrollment Annual Salary:			
Median: \$21,800			
Mean: \$24,624			
Completion Years		2022–2023 and 2023–2024	
Below/Above ALICE* for Pre-MJFP Enrollment	Average Wage Within Group	Headcount	Percent
Below ALICE Household Survival Budget for Single Adult (\$29,316)	\$15,982	305	69%
Above ALICE Household Survival Budget for Single Adult (\$29,316)	\$44,297	134	31%
All Matched Students	\$24,624	439	100%

*Pre-wage salaries were calculated as an annual average for all available pre-wage data.

Source: [State Reports](#) | [UnitedForALICE](#)

Of the M.J. Foster completers from 2022 through 2024 matched to LA Works data, 439 had both pre- and post-earnings after completing their credential in the LA Works data set. The average annual salary for this group of 439 completers was \$65,698 (Tables 12 and 13). This equates to a change from 69% below the ALICE Household Survival Budget pre-MJFP support to 87% above post-completion.

Table 12. Post-Completion Annual Salary **	Average Annual Salary Within Group	Headcount	Percent
Below ALICE Household Survival Budget for Single Adult (\$29,316)	\$15,831.64	56	13%
Above ALICE Household Survival Budget for Single Adult (\$29,316)	\$73,104.23	382	87%
All Matched Students	\$65,698.64	439	100%

**Post-wage salaries were calculated by annualizing the highest post-completion quarterly wage.

Source: BOR's Statewide Completers System, Workforce Validated Skills and Learning Data System, LOSFA MJFP files, LA Works Wage Data.

Table 13. Post-Completion Annual Salary **: 	
Median: \$61,856	
Mean: \$65,699	
Annual Salary After Completing MJFP**, 2022–2023 & 2023–2024	
Post-Completion Annual Salaries	Headcount
\$0–\$24,999	49
\$25,000–\$49,999	117
\$50,000–\$74,999	117
\$75,000–\$99,999	92
\$100,000–\$124,999	37
\$125,000–\$149,999	14
\$150,000–\$174,999	7
\$175,000–\$199,999	3
>\$200,000	3
Total	439

**Post-wage salaries were calculated by annualizing the highest post-completion quarterly wage.

Salaries of MJFP students increased by 167% on average after completing their credentials (Table 14). This means that on average an individual's salary more than doubled from the amount before the student received MJFP funds. The median (the mid-point of the data set) increase in salary is \$36,864, and the mean (average) increase in salary is \$41,074. Changes in salary are shown in Table 14.

Table 14. Post Completion Salary Bands**

Change in Salary After Completing MJFP, 2022–2023 & 2023–2024	
Salary Increase	Headcount
<\$0	29
\$0–\$4,999	25
\$5,000–\$9,999	26
\$10,000–\$19,999	45
\$20,000–\$29,999	51
\$30,000–\$39,999	66
\$40,000–\$49,999	44
\$50,000–\$59,999	46
\$60,000–\$69,999	38
>\$70,000	69
Total*	439

Source: BOR's Statewide Completers System, Workforce Validated Skills and Learning Data System, LOSFA MJFP files, LA Works Wage Data.

**Post-wage salaries were calculated by annualizing the highest post-completion quarterly wage.

Recidivism Rate Status

The law allows people who have been previously incarcerated to receive MJFP funds provided they have not been convicted of a violent crime. In this third year of the program, BOR continues to work with the Department of Corrections to obtain data concerning the recidivism rates of MJFP recipients. This section of the report focuses on the justice involvement of MJFP students after they have received funds. Of the 1,192 students who received MJFP funds in 2022–2023 and the 3,038 students who received MJFP funds in 2023–2024, only two have subsequently been incarcerated.

Yearly Student Survey

The legislation requires an annual survey of every first-time award recipient to determine how the MJFP award influenced their decision to enroll in college. LOSFA was asked to survey all students who were MJFP recipients. The source for the data below is LOSFA's survey.

The total survey population consisted of 14,607 students who either received an M.J. Foster payment in AY 2024–2025 or were eligible for M.J. Foster at one point. A total of 497 students responded, resulting in a 3.4% response rate, the same as the previous year. Notably, for the

question regarding program awareness (Table 15), students could select more than one answer, and this table reflects higher total responses.

Program Awareness

Students were asked how they first learned about the MJFP program. They were allowed to select multiple responses to this question. As shown in Table 15, the majority of students (67%) reported hearing about the program through word of mouth, either via their institutions, advisors, or family and friends. This finding underscores the importance of socializing this program with college advisors and counselors who have direct contact with students and can inform them of this opportunity.

Table 15. M.J. Foster Promise Survey Results, 2024–2025

How did you hear about the M.J. Foster Promise Program?			
College Advisor, Admissions, or Enrollment Staff	257	44%	
Family, Friends	114	19%	
Personal Web Research for Financial Aid/Scholarships	85	15%	
Social Media	48	8%	
Email from Friends, Colleagues, etc.	36	6%	
Other	20	3%	
Adult Counseling	18	3%	
High School Guidance Counselor	8	1%	
Total Responses^{1**}		586	100%

¹ For the 497 survey respondents, the response rate for this question was 92%.

^{**}Students were able to select multiple responses to this survey question.

Prior College Experience

When asked if they had previously attended college (Table 16), **86%** of respondents reported having attended college before, while **14%** indicated they had not. This ratio was nearly identical to the ratio from the prior year.

Table 16. M.J. Foster Promise Survey Results, 2024–2025

Have You Attended College Before?			
Yes	428	86%	
No	69	14%	
Total Survey Respondents Awarded Funding²		497	100%

² For the 497 survey respondents, the response rate for this question is 100%.

Prior College Credit

Respondents were also asked if they had earned college credit prior to the MJFP award (Table 17). 65% reported having college credit, representing a 5% increase over the prior year. This result is more significant due to the larger response sample (n=413 compared to 258 last year).

Table 17. M.J. Foster Promise Survey Results, 2024–2025

Did You Have College Credit Already?			
	Yes	269	65%
	No	144	35%
Total Survey Respondents Awarded Funding ³		413	100%

³Of the 497 survey respondents, the response rate for this question is 83%.

Influence of MJFP on Enrollment

Students were asked whether the MJFP award influenced their decision to enroll in a postsecondary program (Table 18). The results were evenly split: 50% indicated that the award influenced their decision, while 50% reported it did not.

Table 18. M.J. Foster Promise Survey Results, 2024–2025

Did M.J. Foster Funds Affect your Decision to Enroll in your Program?		
Yes, It Did Influence	206	50%
No, It Did Not Influence	207	50%
Total Survey Respondents Awarded Funding ⁴	413	100%

⁴Of the 497 survey respondents, the response rate for this question is 83%.

Influence of MJFP on Enrollment in Program

Table 19 further displays how enrollment decisions aligned with the influence of MJFP funding. Of the 206 students who reported that MJFP influenced their decision, 61 enrolled in a program (certificate, diploma, or associate's degree), 14 did not, and 131 did not respond. Among the 207 who said MJFP did not influence their decision, 108 still enrolled in a program to complete their credential.

Table 19. M.J. Foster Promise Survey Results, 2024–2025

Yes, the MJFP Funds Influenced my Decision to Enroll		206
I did not enroll in a certificate/diploma/associate's degree program or a short-term workforce training program.		14
I enrolled in a certificate/diploma or a short-term workforce training program.		26
I enrolled in an associate's degree program.		35
No response		131
No, the MJFP Funds Did Not Influence my Decision to Enroll.		207
Did you enroll in a program to finish your degree? No		31
Did you enroll in a program to finish your degree? Yes		108
Did you enroll in a program to finish your degree? No response		68

Influence of MJFP on Type of Credential Sought

Overall, 80% of respondents (Table 20) reported enrolling in a program to complete a credential or degree that they had begun previously.

Table 20. M.J. Foster Promise Survey Results, 2024–2025

Did you enroll in an associate's degree program or a workforce training program?		
Yes, I enrolled in an associate's degree program	64	46%
Yes, I enrolled in a certificate/diploma or a short-term workforce training program	54	39%
No, I did not enroll in a certificate/diploma/associate's degree program or a short-term workforce training program	22	16%
Total Survey Respondents Awarded Funding⁵	140	100%

⁵ Of the 497 survey respondents, the response rate for this question is 28%.

Influence of MJFP on Degree Attainment

Finally, students were asked whether they enrolled specifically to complete a degree they had already started (Table 21). Of the 264 who responded, 80% reported enrolling to finish a degree already begun. This proportion was consistent with last year's results, but the sample size more than doubled, providing a stronger data point.

Table 21. M.J. Foster Promise Survey Results, 2024–2025

Did you enroll in a program to finish your degree?			
	Yes	212	80%
	No	52	20%
Total Survey Respondents Awarded Funding ⁶		264	100%

⁶Of the 497 survey respondents, the response rate for this question is 53%.

CONCLUSION

Implications/Recommendations

The Murphy J. “Mike” Foster Promise Award Program was created to expand access to workforce education and training for adult learners by providing financial support in high-value fields. Eligible recipients can receive up to three years of funding to pursue an associate’s degree, diploma, or short-term stackable credential.

Now in its third year, the program continues to demonstrate measurable progress in reaching and serving its intended population. 6,308 students received funds to support their education, double last year’s total. Part of that increase is due to the additional \$7.3 million that were available for student support. Those funds are not available in the current budget. Consequently, it is anticipated that demand will far outstrip the available resources this year.

While many of those students who received funds are still pursuing their credentials, 2,760 completed a credential. The law allows students to earn multiple stackable credentials in a qualified program. In total, in 2024–2025, 6,308 recipients collectively completed 3,900 credentials. Our analysis demonstrated that some of these students began their academic journey in 2002, yet had not completed their credentials. These completions represent not only individual achievements but also momentum toward long-term workforce readiness.

Of those students who received funds, 67% were from lower socio-economic brackets, 45% were 30 or older, and 78% were female. Program participation is concentrated in high-demand fields. This year, students earned credentials in Healthcare (2,191 credentials), Transportation and Warehousing (741 credentials), and Manufacturing (500 credentials), the top three programs by enrollment. These outcomes represent not only personal achievements but also meaningful contributions to Louisiana’s workforce readiness.

In addition to analyzing this year’s cohort, we also examined the financial impact of post-MJFP employment for the 2022–2023 and 2023–2024 cohorts. For those cohorts, analysis shows that on average, the credential earned enabled a completer to increase their salary by more than \$36,864 (median), clear evidence of the award’s role in improving economic mobility. To further underscore the significance of this, the analysis showed that completers increased their salaries

from 69% below the ALICE Household Survival Budget pre-MJFP to 87% above post-completion, representing a post-completion salary average of \$65,698.64, clear evidence of the award's role in improving economic mobility, and creating a true path to sustainable prosperity.

The Board of Regents will continue to monitor progress, track outcomes, and evaluate the long-term impact of MJFP. Future analyses will assess not only the recipient's success but also the broader economic benefits for families and communities. This evidence suggests that the program has significant potential to strengthen Louisiana's workforce and expand opportunities for adult learners, thus becoming a cornerstone of the state's workforce and economic development strategy.