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PRESS RELEASE
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Survey finds 42% of Floridians have changed college plans due to COVID-19

Even as education grows in importance, it's increasingly out of reach for Floridians

TAMPA, FL — A new survey commissioned by the Florida College Access Network (FCAN) found that most Floridians have experienced job loss, pay cuts, or a reduction of hours due to COVID-19, and more than a third believe they'll need additional training or education to find work at the same pay level.

Yet 42% of Floridians who are currently enrolled in college or a postsecondary training program said they have changed their plans, including taking time off or transferring to another school. This is the case for recent and soon to be high school graduates as well: more than 1 in 4 reported changed plans such as postponing enrollment, attending a school closer to home, or switching to a more affordable option.

"These findings are troubling because education is the key to getting Floridians back to work in well-paying, in-demand jobs," said Laurie Meggesin, FCAN's executive director. "If Floridians are having to put off education, it will be harder for our economy to recover."

A full 58% of those surveyed said they have suffered job loss, reduced hours or pay cuts. And 35% said they would need additional education or training to find work with the same wages or income.

Particularly hard hit are Floridians with the lowest education levels: Floridians with a high school degree or less report the highest combined rates of job loss, pay cuts or reduced work hours due to COVID-19.

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“As our policymakers and business community grapple with the economic fallout of COVID-19, it’s critical that they help Floridians access the education and training they need – now more than ever,” Meggesin said. “State leaders have already committed to helping displaced workers with opportunities to earn rapid credentials. We also need to ensure that Floridians get the needed support to complete the college degrees so critical to Florida’s long-term prosperity.””

FCAN this week issued an [infographic](#) detailing the survey results. The survey of 1,500 Florida voters was conducted for FCAN by Sachs Media Group May 9-10 with a 2.2% margin of error and a 95% confidence level.

About Florida College Access Network

Florida College Access Network (FCAN) is Florida’s first collaborative network committed to ensuring all Floridians have the opportunity to achieve an education beyond high school and prosper in Florida’s dynamic economy. We envision a Florida working together where education is the pathway to economic mobility for all. For more information, visit floridacollegeaccess.org.

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