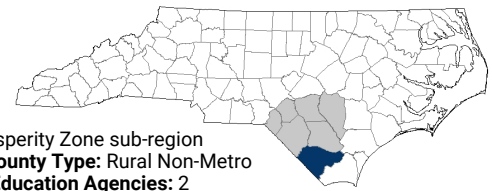


Columbus County

NC goal: 2 million by 2030
2020 County Attainment Profile



Updated: Aug 04 2021

INTRODUCTION

From birth to career, there are many opportunities to develop strategies and interventions to increase attainment and improve workforce alignment. Below are some key areas and indicators that highlight where interventions may be possible to improve overall educational attainment outcomes.

Building the Foundation: Pre-K to 8

High-quality early learning and strong academic progress in early years helps prepare children for future success.



Columbus County has 20 public schools with performance grades. Of these schools, 5 or 25% were classified as low performing in 2019.

COUNTY OVERVIEW

Columbus County is in the **Fayetteville-Lumberton** Prosperity Zone sub-region. It's one of 50 rural non-metro counties in NC.

Overall, 4% of 25-44-year-olds in Columbus County have earned a master's degree or higher as their highest degree; 9% have a bachelor's degree; 9% have an associate degree; 31% have some college, no degree; 31% have a high school diploma; and 17% have less than a high school diploma.

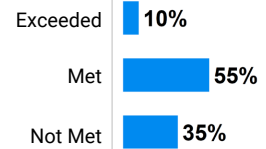
2018 Population	56,424
2030 Population	56,219
K-12 Students (2019)	
Traditional Schools	7,671
Charter/Private/Home	1,545
Median Household Income	\$36,862
Child Poverty Rate	36%
Households with Broadband	61%

How students in Columbus County traditional public schools are currently doing:

To meet state goals, Columbus County needs:

- **Columbus County has met the goal for eligible 4-year-olds** enrolled in NC Pre-K program (goal: 75% vs. 82%).
- **1,121 more 3-8 graders** earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in reading (goal: 73% vs. 40%).
- **1,811 more 3-8 graders** earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in math (goal: 86% vs. 33%).

Percent of Columbus County schools by academic growth status, 2019



Ready for College & Career

High school completion is a crucial step on the pathway to postsecondary success or the beginnings of a career. Activities that prepare students to navigate the transition to postsecondary include gaining experience in college-level coursework and applying for financial assistance.

To meet state goals, Columbus County needs:

- **67 more 9th graders** to graduate within four years (goal: 95% vs. 86%).
- **191 more seniors** to complete the FAFSA (goal: 80% vs. 48%).
- **641 more students** to attend school regularly (goal: 11% chronic absenteeism vs. 19%).



128 students took at least one AP course (5% versus 9% of peer counties).



630 students participated in Career & College Promise programs (24%) versus 22% of peer counties.

Students in Columbus County completed **219 Career & Technical Education concentrations** in 2019. The top three CTE concentrations completed include Health Science; Agricultural, Food, & Natural Resources; and Hospitality & Tourism.

Postsecondary Access and Success

These metrics capture student progression and educational attainment from high school graduation to postsecondary completion. They indicate relative strengths and weaknesses of Columbus County at each stage of the postsecondary pipeline.



Columbus County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 365:1.

Among Columbus County high school graduates:

- **56% of graduates** enroll in a postsecondary institution within 12 months versus 57% of peer counties.
- **75% of students** who enroll persist to their second year versus 73% of peer counties.
- **41% of students** who enroll earn a degree or credential within 6 years versus 49% of peer counties.

In your Prosperity Zone sub-region, 2018-19:

1,621	individuals served in an ApprenticeshipNC program.
6,792	Basic Skills enrollments at NC community colleges.
32,293	Continuing Education enrollments at NC community colleges.

Labor Market Outcomes

Lack of technical skills and lack of education are among the primary reasons why NC employers struggle to fill vacancies. These metrics capture labor market outcomes among recent graduates, the alignment between postsecondary degree production and labor market demand, and future job demands.



15.4% of teens ages 16-19 are not working and not in school versus 8.9% of peer counties.

In your Prosperity Zone sub-region:

Public postsecondary institutions graduate **5,110 students per year**. After 5 years, 64% of 2013 graduates were employed in NC, earning an annual average wage of \$36,969.

75% of postsecondary degrees and credentials conferred by regional institutions are aligned with labor market needs. The top gaps are: **Health Science** (above and below bachelor's); **Information Technology** (bachelor's); and **Finance** (bachelor's).

There are **258,519 job openings** projected between 2017-2026. The top 3 in demand jobs with median wages of \$50,000 or more are: 1) **Registered Nurses**; 2) **Business Operations Specialists, All Other**; 3) **General and Operations Managers**.

Opportunities for Growth

Compared to rural non-metro counties and the state, these three areas represent the biggest opportunities for Columbus County to improve future attainment outcomes.



Postsecondary Completion

41% of Columbus County high school graduates who enroll in postsecondary earn a degree or credential within 6 years, below the rural non-metro county average of 49%.



FAFSA Completion

48% of Columbus County high school seniors complete the FAFSA, below the rural non-metro county average of 55%.



Disconnected Youth

15% of Columbus County youth ages 16-19 are not working and not in school, above the rural non-metro county average of 9%.

Largest postsecondary institutions in your Prosperity Zone sub-region		
Institution Name	Undergraduate Enrollments 2017-18	Graduate or Transfer in 8 Years
Total Enrollments	52,924	54%
Fayetteville Technical Community College	18,684	43%
Fayetteville State University	6,522	77%
University of North Carolina at Pembroke	6,252	79%
Sandhills Community College	5,329	39%
Richmond Community College	3,107	56%
Robeson Community College	2,631	60%
Methodist University	2,149	83%
Sampson Community College	2,049	27%
Southeastern Community College	1,887	54%
Bladen Community College	1,643	51%
Platt College-Miller-Motte-Fayetteville	1,504	43%
St. Andrews University	756	68%

Notes:

Enrollments reflect degree- or credential-seeking undergraduate enrollments. The graduate or transfer rate is drawn from IPEDS and represents the share of students who either graduate with a degree or credential from the institution or transfer to another institution within 8 years. The 8-year outcome is the only measure that includes information on transfer out. Detailed data guidance is provided at <http://go.unc.edu/countydata>

Local Cross-Sector Promising Practice: Southeastern Community College Project PRIME

Project PRIME is designed to provide comprehensive training and employment assistance for individuals to fill new jobs in the polymer/plastics extrusion industry. Components include customized training, short-term occupational skills training, soft skills, health and safety training, articulation to associate degrees, transferable third-party credentials, on-the-job training, linkages with the Columbus Career and College Academy (CCA), and paid internships for high school and college students. This project serves unemployed, underemployed, and dislocated workers, as well as enrolled students.

We identified this example of an emerging cross-sector promising practice in partnership with local leaders. If you have additional examples you'd like to share with myFutureNC, please respond to this [short survey](#).

For more information about each indicator, including data sources and methodology, visit:


dashboard.myfuturenc.org/county-data-and-resources/

ABOUT CAROLINA DEMOGRAPHY

Located within the Carolina Population Center at UNC-Chapel Hill, we use data and other available research to help you put a face or a story on the population-level changes facing your community. Our analysts provide a full array of demographic data and research services to inform decision making, evaluation, and policy across North Carolina, where we serve organizations and people in all 100 counties.

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ABOUT MYFUTURENC

MyFutureNC is a statewide nonprofit organization focused on educational attainment and is the result of cross-sector collaboration between North Carolina leaders in education, business, and government. Our mission is to prepare North Carolina for the future by empowering individuals, strengthening communities, and ensuring our economic viability in a global economy.

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