Orange County

NC goal: 2 million by 2030
2020 County Attainment Profile

Prosperity Zone sub-region
Peer County Type: Suburban
Local Education Agencies: 2
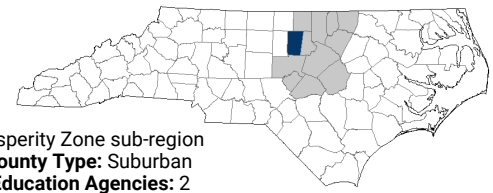
Updated: Aug 04 2021

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.

COUNTY OVERVIEW

Orange County is in the **Raleigh-Durham** Prosperity Zone sub-region. It's one of 16 suburban counties in NC.

Overall, 32% of 25-44-year-olds in Orange County have earned a master's degree or higher as their highest degree; 28% have a bachelor's degree; 6% have an associate degree; 14% have some college, no degree; 13% have a high school diploma; and 7% have less than a high school diploma.

2018 Population	145,574
2030 Population	163,699
K-12 Students (2019)	
Traditional Schools	19,572
Charter/Private/Home	3,325
Median Household Income	$71,920
Child Poverty Rate	11%
Households with Broadband	87%

Building the Foundation: Pre-K to 8

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

Orange County has 30 public schools with performance grades. Of these schools, none were classified as low performing in 2019.

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

To meet state goals, Orange County needs:

• **Orange County has met the goal for eligible 4-year-olds** enrolled in NC Pre-K program (goal: 75% vs. 87%).

• **1,358 more 3-8 graders** earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in reading (goal: 73% vs. 58%).

• **2,878 more 3-8 graders** earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in math (goal: 86% vs. 55%).

Percent of Orange County schools by academic growth status, 2019

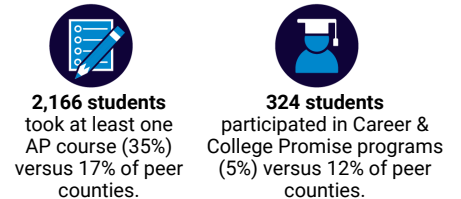|	
Exceeded	**45%**
Met	**45%**
Not Met	**10%**
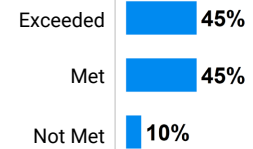
Ready for College & Career

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, Orange County needs:

• **76 more 9th graders** to graduate within four years (goal: 95% vs. 90%).

• **268 more seniors** to complete the FAFSA (goal: 80% vs. 61%).

• **67 more students** to attend school regularly (goal: 11% chronic absenteeism vs. 11%).

2,166 students took at least one AP course (35%) versus 17% of peer counties.

324 students participated in Career & College Promise programs (5%) versus 12% of peer counties.

Students in Orange County completed **457 Career & Technical Education concentrations** in 2019. The top three CTE concentrations completed include Agricultural, Food, & Natural Resources; Health Science; and Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics.

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 Orange County at each stage of the postsecondary pipeline.

Orange County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 292:1.

Among Orange County high school graduates:

• **72% of graduates** enroll in a postsecondary institution within 12 months versus 62% of peer counties.

• **88% of students** who enroll persist to their second year versus 78% of peer counties.

• **71% of students** who enroll earn a degree or credential within 6 years versus 54% of peer counties.

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

2,661 individuals served in an ApprenticeshipNC program.

12,867 Basic Skills enrollments at NC community colleges.

67,583 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.

3.1% of teens ages 16-19 are not working and not in school versus 6.8% of peer counties.

In your Prosperity Zone sub-region:

Public postsecondary institutions graduate **22,190 students per year.** After 5 years, 59% of 2013 graduates were employed in NC, earning an annual average wage of $52,133.

80% of postsecondary degrees and credentials conferred by regional institutions are aligned with labor market needs. The top gaps are: **Information Technology** (bachelor's); **Marketing** (bachelor's); and **Finance** (bachelor's).

There are **1,166,888 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) **Software Developers, Applications**; 3) **General and Operations Managers**.

Opportunities for Growth

Compared to suburban counties and the state, these three areas represent the biggest opportunities for Orange County to improve future attainment outcomes.

CCP Enrollment
5% of Orange County high school students participated in the Career & College Promise program programs, below the suburban county average of 12%.

FAFSA Completion
61% of Orange County high school seniors complete the FAFSA, below the state average of 64%.

Math Performance
55% of Orange County 3-8 graders earn college-and-career-ready scores in Math, below the state goal of 86%.

Largest postsecondary institutions in your Prosperity Zone sub-region

Institution Name	Undergraduate Enrollments 2017-18	Graduate or Transfer in 8 Years
Total Enrollments	**139,487**	**73%**
Wake Technical Community College	29,480	56%
North Carolina State University at Raleigh	27,424	93%
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	19,773	96%
Durham Technical Community College	8,049	58%
Duke University	7,504	95%
North Carolina Central University	7,165	80%
Strayer University-North Carolina	6,998	53%
Central Carolina Community College	6,811	58%
Johnston Community College	5,343	55%
Campbell University	5,183	89%
Vance-Granville Community College	4,014	60%
Meredith College	1,900	92%

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: Durham Tech Promise Fund

With the Durham Tech Promise, recent high school graduates in Durham and Orange counties can receive up to $1,000 each year for two years of tuition and fees.

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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