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.

Buncombe County
NC goal: 2 million by 2030
Overview of postsecondary attainment pipeline

COUNTY OVERVIEW
Buncombe County is in the Asheville sub-prosperity zone. It’s one of 16 suburban counties in NC. Overall, 50% of 24-44-year-olds in Buncombe County have earned an associate degree or higher, 21% have some college, no degree, and 28% have a high school diploma or less.

Building the Foundation: Pre-K to 8
High-quality early learning helps prepare children for future success while academic progress in early school years often predicts later academic challenges.

Buncombe County has 50 public schools with performance grades. Of these schools, 4 or 8% were classified as low performing in 2019.

Ready for Postsecondary
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.

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 Buncombe County at each stage of the postsecondary pipeline.

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.

In your sub-prosperity zone:
Public postsecondary institutions graduate roughly 2,800 students per year. After 5 years, 69% of 2013 graduates were employed in NC, earning an annual average wage of $33,116.

71% of postsecondary degrees and credentials conferred by regional institutions are aligned with labor market needs. The top gaps are: Health Science (all levels); Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics (below bachelor’s); and Finance (bachelor’s).

There are 255,000 job openings projected in the next 10 years. The top 3 in demand jobs with average wages of $50,000 or more are: 1) Registered Nurses; 2) General and Operations Managers; 3) Sales Representatives, Services, All Other.

HIGH IMPACT STRATEGIES
Compared to suburban counties, these three areas represent the biggest opportunities for Buncombe County to improve future attainment outcomes.

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

To meet state goals, Buncombe County needs:
• 473 more eligible 4-year-olds enrolled in NC Pre-K program (goal: 75% enrollment).
• 3,154 more 3-8 graders earning college-and-career ready scores (level 4 or 5) in reading (goal: 73%).
• 5,357 more 3-8 graders earning college-and-career ready scores (level 4 or 5) in math (goal: 86%).

To meet state goals, Buncombe County needs:
• 181 more 9th graders to graduate within four years (goal: 95%).
• 454 more seniors to complete the FAFSA (goal: 80%).
• 767 more students to attend school regularly (goal: 11% chronic absenteeism).

Among Buncombe County high school graduates:
• 58% enroll in a postsecondary institution within 12 months versus 62% of peer counties.
• 79% of students who enroll persist to their second year versus 78% of peer counties.
• 58% of students who enroll earn a degree or credential within 6 years versus 54% of peer counties.

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

To meet state goals, Buncombe County needs:
• 1,619 students took at least one AP exam.
• 1,955 students participated in NC Community College dual enrollment programs.

Largest Postsecondary Institutions in Your Sub-Prosperity Zone, 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>School Name</th>
<th>Total Enrollments</th>
<th>Graduate or Transfer in 8 Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Institutions</td>
<td>24,199</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College</td>
<td>10,492</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>University of North Carolina at Asheville</td>
<td>4,397</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Blue Ridge Community College</td>
<td>2,812</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Detailed data guidance is provided at http://go.unc.edu/countydata
WE NEED TO CLOSE THE EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT GAP IN NORTH CAROLINA.

That starts with an ambitious goal: ensuring that by 2030, 2 million North Carolinians ages 25-44 have a high-quality postsecondary degree or credential.

For more information about each indicator, including data sources and methodology, visit dashboard.myfuturenc.org

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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