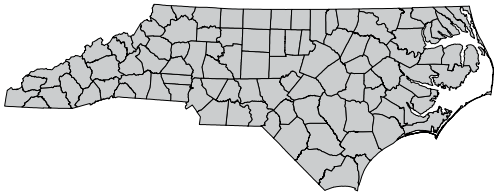


# North Carolina

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



## 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 helps prepare children for future success while academic progress in early school years often predicts later academic challenges.

North Carolina has 2,306 public schools with performance grades. Of these schools, 439 or 19% 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 North Carolina 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.

## OVERVIEW

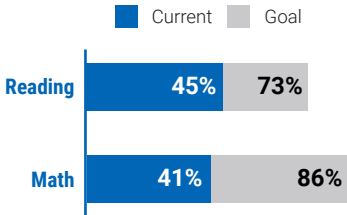
Overall, 46% of 25-44-year-olds in North Carolina have earned an associate degree or higher; 23% have some college, no degree, though 5% may hold a postsecondary credential; and 31% have a high school diploma or less.

2018 Population	10,389,148
2030 Projected Population	11,836,070
K-13 Students (2019)	
Traditional Schools	1,410,673
Charter/Private/Home	347,681
Median Household Income	\$53,922

### How students in North Carolina traditional public schools are currently doing:

To meet state goals, North Carolina needs:

- **16,635 more eligible 4-year-olds** enrolled in NC Pre-K program (goal: 75% enrollment).
- **200,802 more 3-8 graders** earning college-and-career ready scores (level 4 or 5) in reading (goal: 73%).
- **325,547 more 3-8 graders** earning college-and-career ready scores (level 4 or 5) in math (goal: 86%).



To meet state goals, North Carolina needs:

- **10,368 more 9th graders** to graduate within four years (goal: 95%).
- **17,575 more seniors** to complete the FAFSA (goal: 80%).
- **62,972 more students** to attend school regularly (goal: 11% chronic absenteeism).



**74,837 students** took at least one AP exam.



**59,286 students** participated in NC Community College dual enrollment programs.

Among North Carolina high school graduates:

- **61%** enroll in a postsecondary institution within 12 months.
- **78% of students** who enroll persist to their second year.
- **54% of students** who enroll earn a degree or credential within 6 years.

### Largest Postsecondary Institutions in North Carolina, 2018

Rank	School Name	Total Enrollments	Graduate or Transfer in 8 Years
	All Institutions	700,406	66%
1	North Carolina State University	39,136	93%
2	University of North Carolina at Charlotte	33,673	85%
3	East Carolina University	32,477	90%

Note: Detailed data guidance is provided at <http://go.unc.edu/countydata>

Statewide:

Public postsecondary institutions graduate roughly **87,200 students per year**. After 5 years, 68% of 2013 graduates were employed in NC, earning an annual average wage of \$43,260.

82% of postsecondary degrees and credentials conferred by state institutions are aligned with labor market needs. The top gaps are: **Information Technology** (bachelor's); **Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics** (below bachelor's); and **Finance** (bachelor's).

There are **5.2 million 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) **Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products**; and 3) **General and Operations Managers**.

## HIGH IMPACT STRATEGIES

Among North Carolina's 100 counties, these three areas represent the biggest opportunities for our communities to improve future attainment outcomes.



### Pre-K Enrollments

Increasing the number of eligible 4-year-olds enrolled in NC Pre-K is one of the three biggest opportunity areas for 44 counties.



### Dual Enrollment

Increasing participation in an NC Community College dual enrollment program is one of the three biggest opportunity areas for 25 counties.



### FAFSA Completions

Increasing the number of high school seniors completing the FAFSA is one of the three biggest opportunity areas for 21 counties.

# 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](https://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.

 [ncdemography.org](https://ncdemography.org)  
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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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