

# Ashe County

**2030 NC Degree Attainment Goal: 2 million (67%)**  
**2030 Proposed Ashe County Attainment Goal: 4,133 (62%)**



Boone-Wilkesboro  
 Prosperity Zone Sub-Region  
**Peer County Type:** Rural Non-Metro  
**Local Education Agencies:** 1  
**Charter Schools:** 0

## Population Spotlight

2010 Census: 27,281  
 2020 Census: 26,577  
 Change: -704

## Growth Rate

**-2.6%** County vs. **9.5%** State

**\$44,543**  
 Median Household Income (2020)

**19.9%**  
 Child Poverty Rate (2020)

**82%**  
 Households with Broadband (2020)

**79%**  
 Home Owners (2020)

**77%**  
 Voter Registration Rate (2021)

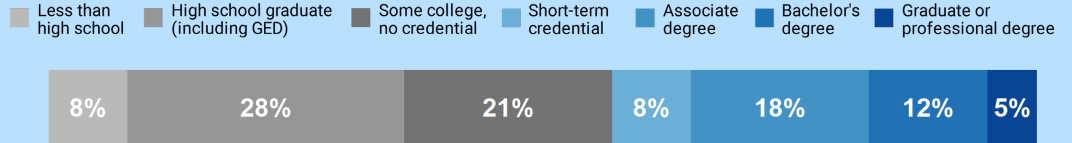
**4.0%**  
 Unemployment Rate (2021)

## Educational Attainment

Ashe County residents ages 25-44, 2021

**No Degree**  
**56.8%**  
 3,247

**Have Degree or Credential**  
**43.2%**  
 2,468



Note: Numbers may add to more than 100% due to rounding

## Top Opportunities for Growth

These three areas represent the biggest opportunities for Ashe County to improve future attainment outcomes.



### Adult Learners

22% of Ashe County adults 25-44 have some college, no degree, above the rural non-metro county average of 17%.



### High School Graduation

85% of Ashe County 9th graders complete high school in 4 years or less, below the rural non-metro county average of 86%.

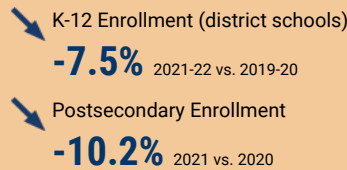


### Postsecondary Completion

56% of Ashe County high school graduates who enroll in postsecondary earn a degree or credential within 6 years, below the state average of 59%.

## Impact of Covid-19 on Education Pipeline

Covid-19 has affected critical transition points along the education continuum.



## Data Disruptions

- College-and-Career-Ready in Reading
- College-and-Career-Ready in Math
- Chronic Absenteeism



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

## ACADEMIC READINESS

### How students in Ashe County traditional schools are currently doing:

To meet state goals, each year Ashe County needs:

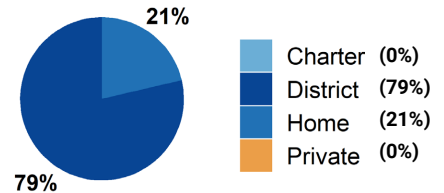
- Ashe County has met the goal for **Pre-K enrollment**. (Goal: **75%**). 2022
- 34%** of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in **reading**; 491 more needed to meet state goal of **73%**. 2022
- 45%** of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in **math**; 508 more needed to meet state goal of **86%**. 2022
- 85%** of 9th graders **graduate within four years**; 22 more needed to meet state goal of **95%**. 2021
- 17%** of students are **chronically absent from school**; 155 less needed to meet state goal of **11%**. 2021

Ashe County has a **student-to-school counselor ratio** of 307:1 versus 318:1 in peer counties. 2021

### School Choice

3,450 total students were enrolled in K-12 in Ashe County in the 2021-22 school year.

Note: This profile focuses on outcomes of students enrolled in district schools.



### Career and College Preparation

**57 high school students** took at least one **AP course** (7%) versus 7% in peer counties (2021).

**109 graduates** participated in **Career & College Promise programs** (52%) versus 49% in peer counties (2021).

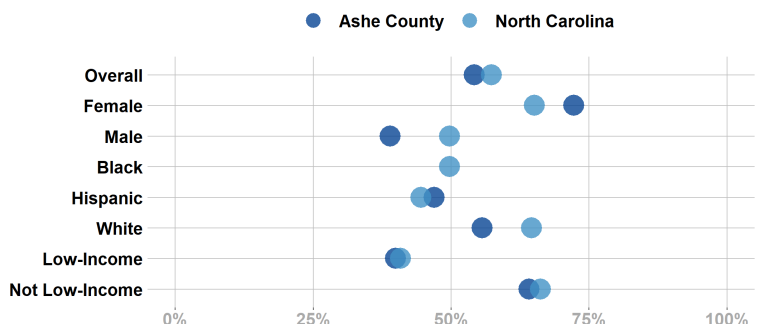
Students in Ashe County completed **78 Career & Technical Education concentrations** in 2021. The top three CTE concentrations completed include Health Science; Manufacturing; and Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics.

## COLLEGE & CAREER ACCESS

- 55%** of seniors **completed the FAFSA** in 2022; 42 more need to complete in 2022 to meet state goal of **80%**. 2022  
<https://www.myfuturenc.org/ourwork/first-in-fafsa/>
- 77%** of graduates reported **intentions to enroll** in a postsecondary institution versus 69% in peer counties. 2021
- 52%** of graduates **enrolled in a postsecondary institution** within 12 months versus 50% in peer counties. 2021

**49%** of Ashe County students have **parents with no college degree** (either 2- or 4-year) versus 59% in peer counties.

### Postsecondary Enrollment Rates for Select Groups in Ashe County, 2021



Note: Outcomes for demographic groups with fewer than 10 students are not displayed.

## Success of Ashe County High School Graduates

### Top destinations of graduates, 2016-2020

- 37% of college-goers attended a **public 4-year college**
  - 10% of college-goers attended a **private 4-year college**
  - 52% of college-goers attended a **public 2-year college**
  - <5% of college-goers attended a **private 2-year college**
  - 88% of college-goers attended an **in-state college**
- 78% of students who enroll **persist to their second year** versus 73% in peer counties. 2021
  - 56% of students who enroll **earn a degree or credential** within 6 years versus 55% in peer counties. 2021

## Adult Learners

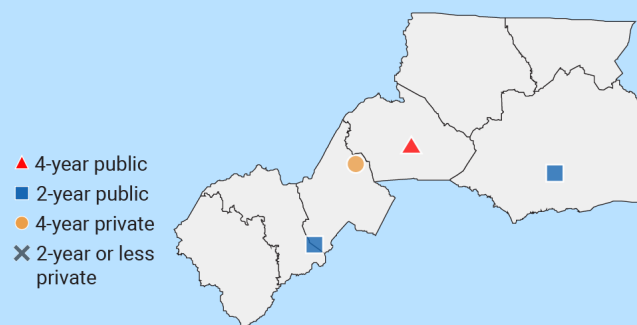
### Ashe County resident enrollments in NC Community Colleges, 2021

- 44 Basic Skills
- 435 Continuing Education
- 518 Curriculum



8% of Ashe County residents have **student loan debt**; 7% of debt holders had **student loans in default**. 2020

## Postsecondary assets in Boone-Wilkesboro Prosperity Zone sub-region



### Degree Credentials Awarded, 2021

1,077 certificate | 547 associate | 4,433 bachelor's

## In your Prosperity Zone Sub-Region:

**84.0%**

of postsecondary degrees and credentials conferred by regional institutions are **aligned with labor market needs**.

### Top areas of misalignment:

- Health Science** (below and above bachelor's)
- Transportation, Distribution & Logistics** (below bachelor's)
- Business Management & Administration** (bachelor's)

17 Individuals served in an ApprenticeshipNC program in 2020

### UNC and NC Community College Outcomes:

- 5,202 graduates in 2020
- 69% of 2016 graduates were employed in NC in 2021
- \$44,421 annual average earnings of graduates employed in NC (includes both part-time and full-time jobs)

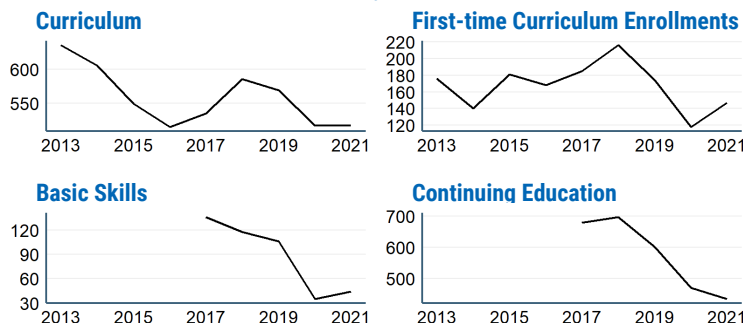
### In 2021 your Workforce Development Board served:

- 3,616 in Basic Services
- 1,617 in Career Services
- 245 in Education Services

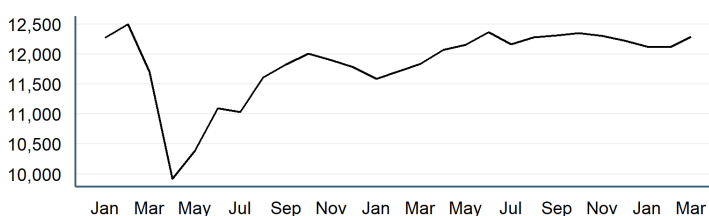


5.6% of young adults ages 16-24 in Ashe County were **not working and not in school** versus 15.2% in peer counties. 2019

## Impact of Covid-19 on NC Community College Enrollment



## Number of Ashe County residents employed, January 2020 to March 2022



## Promising Attainment Practices

The new **Promising Attainment Practices Database** is a curated, searchable, and filterable collection of about 250 county, region, and state-level initiatives and programs that directly address various components of the state's attainment challenge. The Database allows local and regional initiative leaders and other stakeholders to identify groups across the state who are developing or operating initiatives designed to boost attainment.

Follow link to discover how Ashe County has been meeting local needs:

[https://dashboard.myfuturenc.org/promising-attainment-practices/?wdt\\_search=Ashe](https://dashboard.myfuturenc.org/promising-attainment-practices/?wdt_search=Ashe)

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

[dashboard.myfuturenc.org/county-data-and-resources/](https://dashboard.myfuturenc.org/county-data-and-resources/)