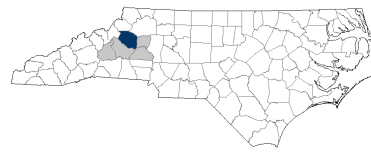


Caldwell County

2030 NC Degree Attainment Goal: 2 million (67%)
2030 Proposed Caldwell County Attainment Goal: 10,959 (50%)



Hickory
 Prosperity Zone Sub-Region
Peer County Type: Rural Metro
Local Education Agencies: 1
Charter Schools: 0

Population Spotlight

2010 Census: 83,029
 2020 Census: 80,652
 Change: -2,377

Growth Rate

-2.9% vs. **9.5%**
 County State

\$50,235
 Median Household Income (2020)

19.0%
 Child Poverty Rate (2020)

87%
 Households with Broadband (2020)

74%
 Home Owners (2020)

72%
 Voter Registration Rate (2021)

4.9%
 Unemployment Rate (2021)

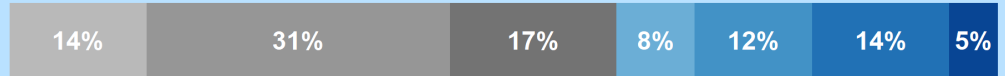
Educational Attainment

Caldwell County residents ages 25-44, 2021

No Degree
61.7%
 11,030

Have Degree or Credential
38.3%
 6,833

Less than high school High school graduate (including GED) Some college, no credential Short-term credential Associate degree Bachelor's degree Graduate or professional degree



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

Top Opportunities for Growth

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



Opportunity Youth

16% of Caldwell County youth ages 16-24 are not working and not in school, above the rural metro county average of 15%.



Math Performance

27% of Caldwell County 3-8 graders earn college-and-career-ready scores in Math, below the rural metro county average of 28%.

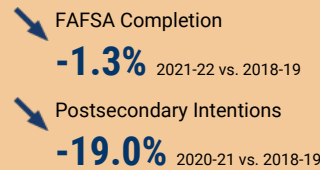
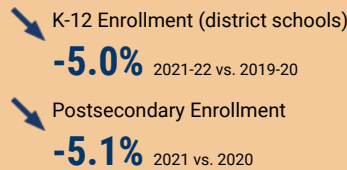


Adult Learners

17% of Caldwell County adults 25-44 have some college, no degree, above the state average of 15%.

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

ACADEMIC READINESS

How students in Caldwell County traditional schools are currently doing:

To meet state goals, each year Caldwell County needs:

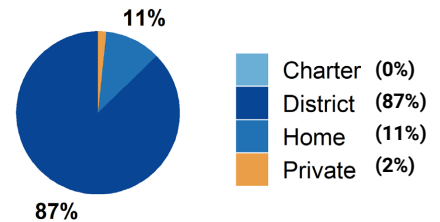
- 59%** of eligible 4-year-olds **enrolled in NC Pre-K program**; 73 more needed to meet state goal of **75%**. 2022
- 26%** of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in **reading**; 2,241 more needed to meet state goal of **73%**. 2022
- 27%** of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in **math**; 2,821 more needed to meet state goal of **86%**. 2022
- 87%** of 9th graders **graduate within four years**; 78 more needed to meet state goal of **95%**. 2021
- 22%** of students are **chronically absent from school**; 1,149 less needed to meet state goal of **11%**. 2021

Caldwell County has a **student-to-school counselor ratio** of 319:1 versus 362:1 in peer counties. 2021

School Choice

12,216 total students were enrolled in K-12 in Caldwell County in the 2021-22 school year.

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



Career and College Preparation

141 high school students took at least one **AP course** (<5%) versus **9%** in peer counties (2021).

477 graduates participated in **Career & College Promise programs (55%)** versus **43%** in peer counties (2021).

Students in Caldwell County completed **429 Career & Technical Education concentrations** in 2021. The top three CTE concentrations completed include Human Services; Health Science; and Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics.

COLLEGE & CAREER ACCESS

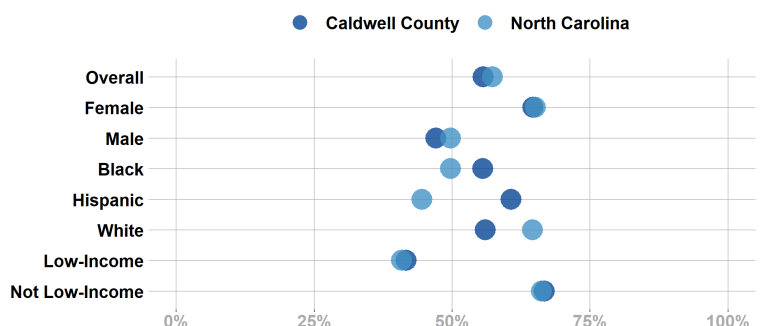
61% of seniors **completed the FAFSA** in 2022; 140 more need to complete in 2022 to meet state goal of **80%**. 2022
<https://www.myfuturenc.org/ourwork/first-in-fafsa/>

64% of graduates reported **intentions to enroll** in a postsecondary institution versus 69% in peer counties. 2021

54% of graduates **enrolled in a postsecondary institution** within 12 months versus 49% in peer counties. 2021

58% of Caldwell County students have **parents with no college degree** (either 2- or 4-year) versus 58% in peer counties.

Postsecondary Enrollment Rates for Select Groups in Caldwell County, 2021



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

Success of Caldwell County High School Graduates


Top destinations of graduates, 2016-2020

- **34%** of college-goers attended a **public 4-year college**
 - **14%** 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**
 - **95%** of college-goers attended an **in-state college**
- **77%** of students who enroll **persist to their second year** versus 73% in peer counties. 2021
 - **62%** of students who enroll **earn a degree or credential** within 6 years versus 57% in peer counties. 2021

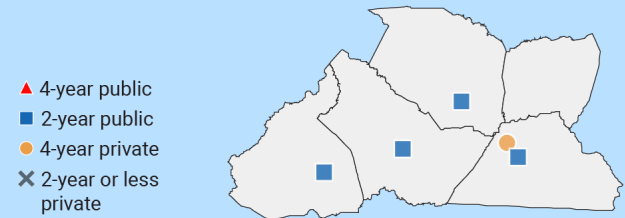
Adult Learners

Caldwell County resident enrollments in NC Community Colleges, 2021

- 146** Basic Skills
- 1,566** Continuing Education
- 2,139** Curriculum

 **10%** of Caldwell County residents have **student loan debt**; **11%** of debt holders had **student loans in default**. 2020

Postsecondary assets in Hickory Prosperity Zone sub-region



Degree Credentials Awarded, 2021

1,578 certificate | **2,135** associate | **352** bachelor's

In your Prosperity Zone Sub-Region:

70.2%

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

Top areas of misalignment:

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


359 Individuals served in an ApprenticeshipNC program in 2020

UNC and NC Community College Outcomes:

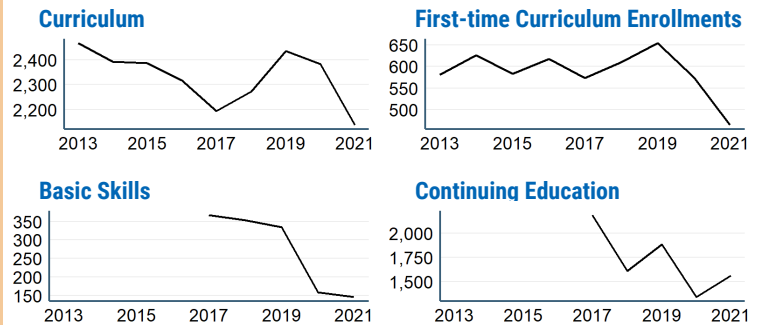
- 2,139** graduates in 2020
- 80%** of 2016 graduates were employed in NC in 2021
- \$37,952** annual average earnings of graduates employed in NC (includes both part-time and full-time jobs)

In 2021 your Workforce Development Board served:

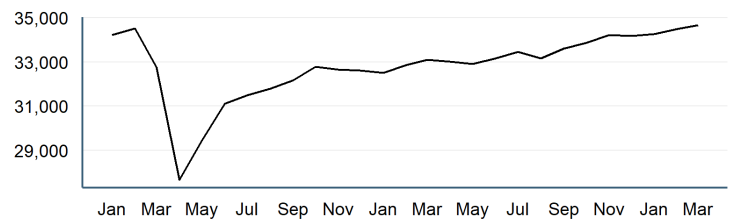
- 7,184** in Basic Services
- 2,684** in Career Services
- 378** in Education Services

 **16.2%** of young adults ages 16-24 in Caldwell 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 Caldwell 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 Caldwell County has been meeting local needs:

https://dashboard.myfuturenc.org/promising-attainment-practices/?wdt_search=Caldwell

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

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