

Graham County



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

2030 NC Degree Attainment Goal: 2 million (67%)
2030 Proposed Graham County Attainment Goal: 1,248 (60%)

Population Spotlight

2010 Census: 8,861
 2020 Census: 8,030
 Change: -831

Growth Rate

-9.4% County vs. **9.5%** State

\$42,057
 Median Household Income (2020)

17.1%
 Child Poverty Rate (2020)

78%
 Households with Broadband (2020)

81%
 Home Owners (2020)

78%
 Voter Registration Rate (2021)

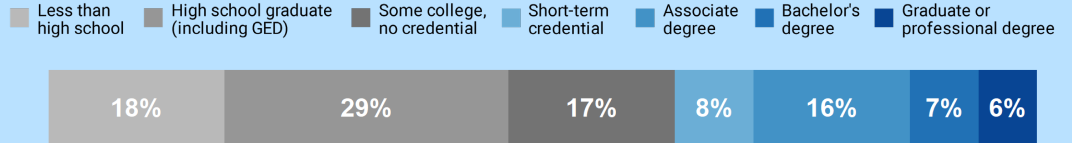
6.9%
 Unemployment Rate (2021)

Educational Attainment

Graham County residents ages 25-44, 2021

No Degree
64.6%
 1,103

Have Degree or Credential
35.4%
 605



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

Top Opportunities for Growth

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



Math Performance

14% of Graham County 3-8 graders earn college-and-career-ready scores in Math, below the rural non-metro county average of 26%.



Reading Performance

17% of Graham County 3-8 graders earn college-and-career-ready scores in Reading, below the rural non-metro county average of 24%.

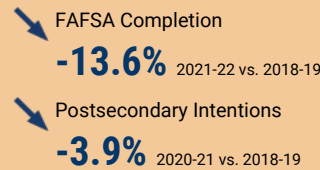
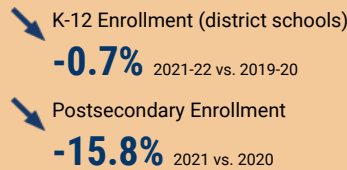


First-Year Persistence

69% of Graham County high school graduates who enroll in postsecondary persist to their second year, below the rural non-metro county average of 73%.

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 Graham County traditional schools are currently doing:

To meet state goals, each year Graham County needs:

- Graham County has met the goal for **Pre-K enrollment**. (Goal: **75%**). 2022
- **17%** of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in **reading**; 280 more needed to meet state goal of **73%**. 2022
- **14%** of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in **math**; 359 more needed to meet state goal of **86%**. 2022
- **92%** of 9th graders **graduate within four years**; 3 more needed to meet state goal of **95%**. 2021
- **16%** of students are **chronically absent from school**; 58 less needed to meet state goal of **11%**. 2021

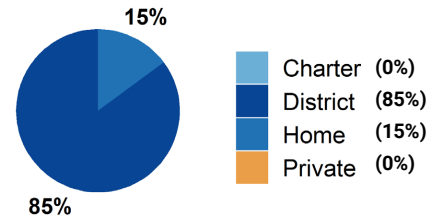


Graham County has a **student-to-school counselor ratio** of 357:1 versus 318:1 in peer counties. 2021

School Choice

1,320 total students were enrolled in K-12 in Graham County in the 2021-22 school year.

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



Career and College Preparation

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

53 graduates participated in **Career & College Promise programs** (**62%**) versus **49%** in peer counties (2021).

Students in Graham County completed **33 Career & Technical Education concentrations** in 2021. The top three CTE concentrations completed include Health Science; Architecture and Construction; and Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics.

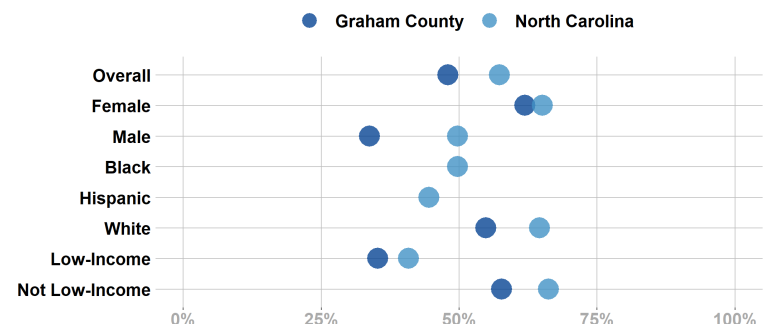
COLLEGE & CAREER ACCESS

- **56%** of seniors **completed the FAFSA** in 2022; 21 more need to complete in 2022 to meet state goal of **80%**. 2022
<https://www.myfuturenc.org/ourwork/first-in-fafsa/>
- **53%** of graduates reported **intentions to enroll** in a postsecondary institution versus 69% in peer counties. 2021
- **46%** of graduates **enrolled in a postsecondary institution** within 12 months versus 50% in peer counties. 2021



56% of Graham 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 Graham County, 2021



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

Success of Graham County High School Graduates

Top destinations of graduates, 2016-2020

- **38%** of college-goers attended a **public 4-year college**
 - **17%** of college-goers attended a **private 4-year college**
 - **45%** 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**
- **69%** of students who enroll **persist to their second year** versus 73% in peer counties. 2021
 - **57%** of students who enroll **earn a degree or credential** within 6 years versus 55% in peer counties. 2021

Adult Learners

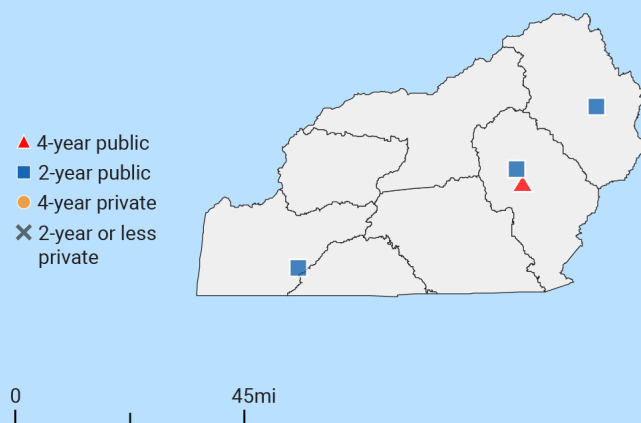
Graham County resident enrollments in NC Community Colleges, 2021

- 8** Basic Skills
- 103** Continuing Education
- 211** Curriculum



5% of Graham County residents have **student loan debt**; **14%** of debt holders had **student loans in default**. 2020

Postsecondary assets in Waynesville-Franklin Prosperity Zone sub-region



Degree Credentials Awarded, 2021

753 certificate | **846** associate | **2,351** bachelor's

In your Prosperity Zone Sub-Region:

81.2%

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

Top areas of misalignment:

- Health Science** (all levels)
- Transportation, Distribution & Logistics** (below bachelor's)
- Education & Training** (above bachelor's)

- 15** Individuals served in an ApprenticeshipNC program in 2020

UNC and NC Community College Outcomes:

- 3,111** graduates in 2020
- 69%** of 2016 graduates were employed in NC in 2021
- \$41,526** annual average earnings of graduates employed in NC (includes both part-time and full-time jobs)

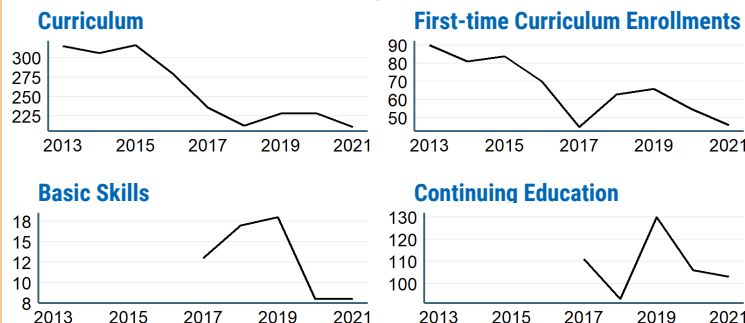
In 2021 your Workforce Development Board served:

- 6,126** in Basic Services
- 3,913** in Career Services
- 212** in Education Services

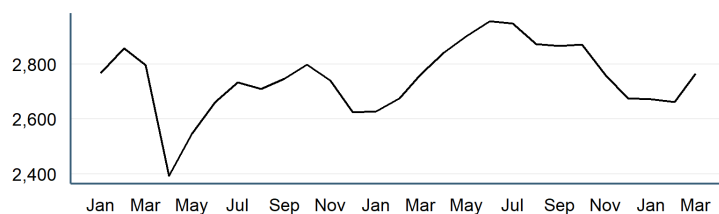


15.4% of young adults ages 16-24 in Graham County were **not working and not in school** versus **15.2%** in peer counties. 2019

Impact of Covid-19 on NC Community College Enrollment



Number of Graham 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 Graham County has been meeting local needs:

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

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

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