

# Jackson County

**2030 NC Degree Attainment Goal: 2 million (67%)**  
**2030 Proposed Jackson County Attainment Goal: 8,264 (69%)**



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

## Population Spotlight

2010 Census: 40,271  
 2020 Census: 43,109  
 Change: 2,838

## Growth Rate

**7.0%** County vs. **9.5%** State

**\$49,488**  
 Median Household Income (2020)

**28.8%**  
 Child Poverty Rate (2020)

**80%**  
 Households with Broadband (2020)

**63%**  
 Home Owners (2020)

**67%**  
 Voter Registration Rate (2021)

**4.5%**  
 Unemployment Rate (2021)

## Educational Attainment

Jackson County residents ages 25-44, 2021

**No Degree**  
**57.3%**  
 5,282

**Have Degree or Credential**  
**42.7%**  
 3,936

Less than high school 15% High school graduate (including GED) 28% Some college, no credential 15% Short-term credential 8% Associate degree 13% Bachelor's degree 15% Graduate or professional degree 7%

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

## Top Opportunities for Growth

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



### NC Pre-K Enrollment

24% of Jackson County eligible 4-year-olds are enrolled in NC Pre-K, below the rural non-metro county average of 68%.



### Chronic Absenteeism

42% of Jackson County students are chronically absent from school, above the rural non-metro county average of 29%.

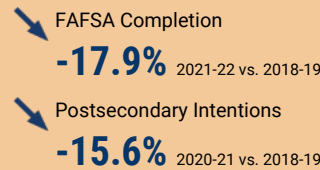
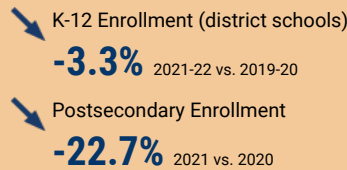


### FAFSA Completion

45% of Jackson County high school seniors complete the FAFSA, below the rural non-metro county average of 55%.

## 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 Jackson County traditional schools are currently doing:

To meet state goals, each year Jackson County needs:

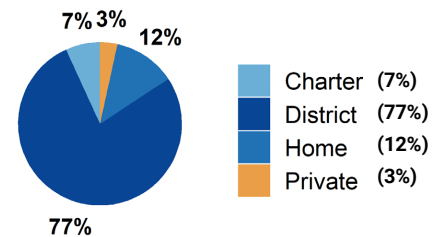
- 24% of eligible 4-year-olds **enrolled in NC Pre-K program**; 115 more needed to meet state goal of 75%. 2022
- 24% of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in **reading**; 747 more needed to meet state goal of 73%. 2022
- 29% of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in **math**; 872 more needed to meet state goal of 86%. 2022
- 93% of 9th graders **graduate within four years**; 7 more needed to meet state goal of 95%. 2021
- 42% of students are **chronically absent from school**; 1,090 less needed to meet state goal of 11%. 2021

Jackson County has a **student-to-school counselor ratio** of 389:1 versus 318:1 in peer counties. 2021

### School Choice

4,475 total students were enrolled in K-12 in Jackson County in the 2021-22 school year.

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



### Career and College Preparation

**71 high school students** took at least one **AP course** (6%) versus 7% in peer counties (2021).

**166 graduates** participated in **Career & College Promise programs** (56%) versus 49% in peer counties (2021).

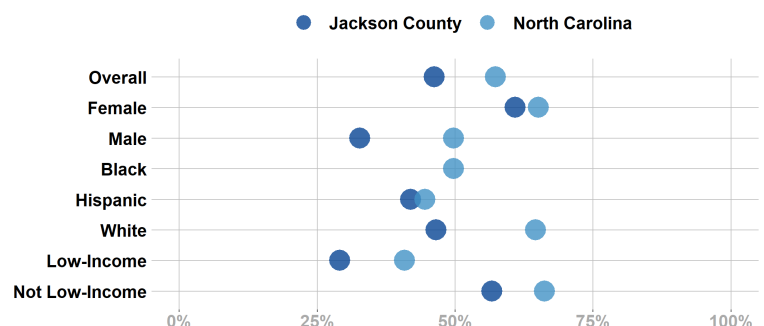
Students in Jackson County completed **75 Career & Technical Education concentrations** in 2021. The top three CTE concentrations completed include Health Science; Agricultural, Food, & Natural Resources; and Manufacturing.

## COLLEGE & CAREER ACCESS

- 45% of seniors **completed the FAFSA** in 2022; 87 more need to complete in 2022 to meet state goal of 80%. 2022  
<https://www.myfuturenc.org/ourwork/first-in-fafsa/>
- 69% of graduates reported **intentions to enroll** in a postsecondary institution versus 69% in peer counties. 2021
- 44% of graduates **enrolled in a postsecondary institution** within 12 months versus 50% in peer counties. 2021

**54%** of Jackson 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 Jackson County, 2021



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

POSTSECONDARY COMPLETION

## Success of Jackson County High School Graduates


### Top destinations of graduates, 2016-2020

- **49%** of college-goers attended a **public 4-year college**
  - **7%** of college-goers attended a **private 4-year college**
  - **44%** of college-goers attended a **public 2-year college**
  - **<5%** of college-goers attended a **private 2-year college**
  - **91%** of college-goers attended an **in-state college**
- **72%** of students who enroll **persist to their second year** versus 73% in peer counties. 2021
  - **65%** of students who enroll **earn a degree or credential** within 6 years versus 55% in peer counties. 2021

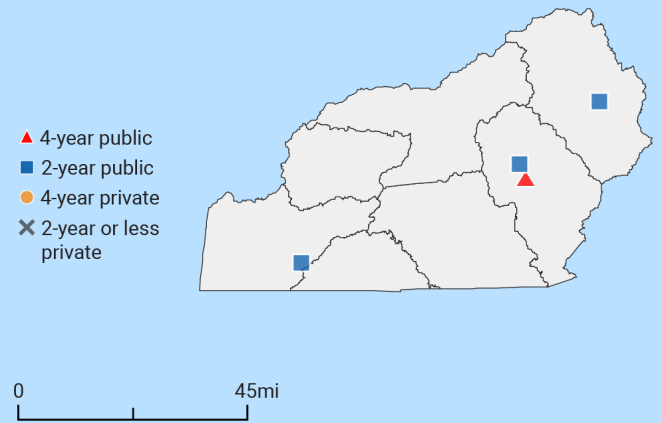
## Adult Learners

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

- 47** Basic Skills
- 621** Continuing Education
- 867** Curriculum

 **12%** of Jackson County residents have **student loan debt**; **8%** 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

LABOR MARKET ALIGNMENT

## 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:

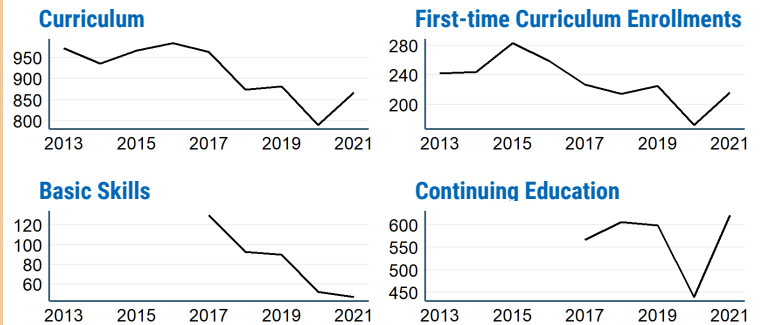
- 3,111** graduates in 2020
- 69%** of 2016 graduates were employed in NC in 2021
- \$41,526** annual average earnings of graduates employed in NC (includes both part-time and full-time jobs)

### In 2021 your Workforce Development Board served:

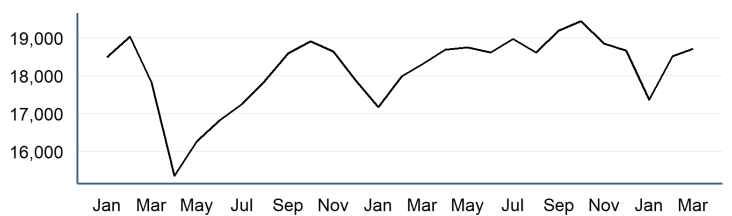
- 6,126** in Basic Services
- 3,913** in Career Services
- 212** in Education Services

 **8.9%** of young adults ages 16-24 in Jackson 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 Jackson 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 Jackson County has been meeting local needs:**

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

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/)