

Rutherford County



Asheville
Prosperity Zone Sub-Region
Peer County Type: Rural Non-Metro
Local Education Agencies: 1
Charter Schools: 2

2030 NC Degree Attainment Goal: 2 million (67%)
2030 Proposed Rutherford County Attainment Goal: 9,547 (55%)

Population Spotlight

2010 Census: 67,810
2020 Census: 64,444
Change: -3,366

Growth Rate

-5.0% County vs. **9.5%** State

\$44,004
Median Household Income (2020)

25.2%
Child Poverty Rate (2020)

83%
Households with Broadband (2020)

72%
Home Owners (2020)

72%
Voter Registration Rate (2021)

6.5%
Unemployment Rate (2021)

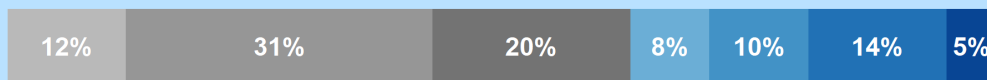
Educational Attainment

Rutherford County residents ages 25-44, 2021

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

No Degree
63.3%
9,032

Have Degree or Credential
36.7%
5,234



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

Top Opportunities for Growth

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



NC Pre-K Enrollment

60% of Rutherford County eligible 4-year-olds are enrolled in NC Pre-K, below the rural non-metro county average of 68%.



School Counselors

Rutherford County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 349:1, above the rural non-metro county average of 318:1.

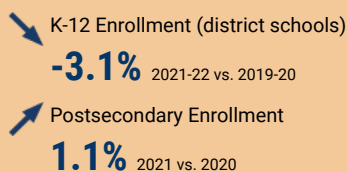


Adult Learners

18% of Rutherford County adults 25-44 have some college, no degree, above the rural non-metro county average of 17%.

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 Rutherford County traditional schools are currently doing:

To meet state goals, each year Rutherford County needs:

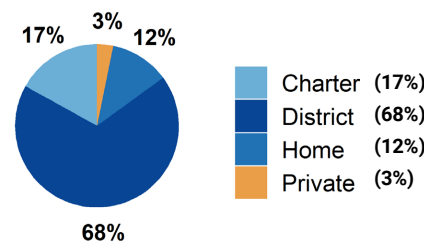
- 60%** of eligible 4-year-olds **enrolled in NC Pre-K program**; 67 more needed to meet state goal of **75%**. 2022
- 27%** of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in **reading**; 1,550 more needed to meet state goal of **73%**. 2022
- 29%** of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in **math**; 1,910 more needed to meet state goal of **86%**. 2022
- 88%** of 9th graders **graduate within four years**; 40 more needed to meet state goal of **95%**. 2021
- 27%** of students are **chronically absent from school**; 1,206 less needed to meet state goal of **11%**. 2021

Rutherford County has a **student-to-school counselor ratio** of 349:1 versus 318:1 in peer counties. 2021

School Choice

10,798 total students were enrolled in K-12 in Rutherford County in the 2021-22 school year.

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



Career and College Preparation

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

268 graduates participated in **Career & College Promise programs (50%)** versus 49% in peer counties (2021).

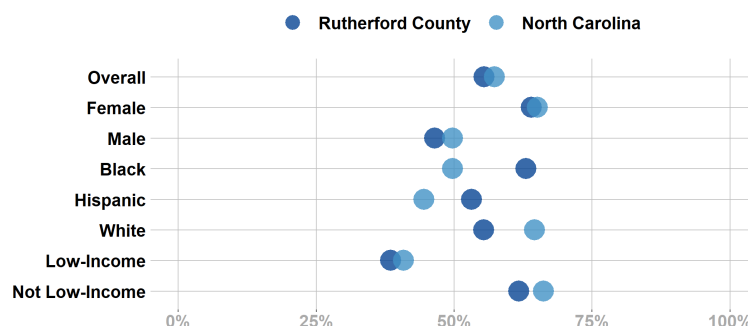
Students in Rutherford County completed **367 Career & Technical Education concentrations** in 2021. The top three CTE concentrations completed include Human Services; Architecture and Construction; and Agricultural, Food, & Natural Resources.

COLLEGE & CAREER ACCESS

- 54%** of seniors **completed the FAFSA** in 2022; 141 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
- 54%** of graduates **enrolled in a postsecondary institution** within 12 months versus 50% in peer counties. 2021

55% of Rutherford 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 Rutherford County, 2021



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

Success of Rutherford County High School Graduates

Top destinations of graduates, 2016-2020

- 28% of college-goers attended a **public 4-year college**
 - 13% of college-goers attended a **private 4-year college**
 - 59% of college-goers attended a **public 2-year college**
 - <5% of college-goers attended a **private 2-year college**
 - 93% of college-goers attended an **in-state college**
- 75% of students who enroll **persist to their second year** versus 73% in peer counties. 2021
 - 59% of students who enroll **earn a degree or credential** within 6 years versus 55% in peer counties. 2021

Adult Learners

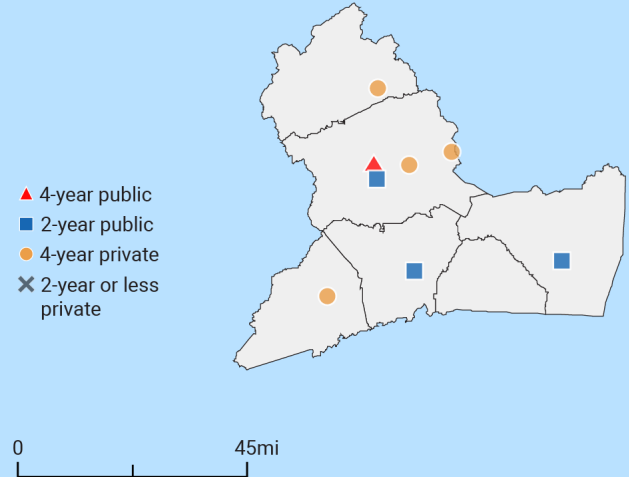
Rutherford County resident enrollments in NC Community Colleges, 2021

- 157 Basic Skills
- 1,072 Continuing Education
- 1,619 Curriculum



11% of Rutherford County residents have **student loan debt**; 6% of debt holders had **student loans in default**. 2020

Postsecondary assets in Asheville Prosperity Zone sub-region



Degree Credentials Awarded, 2021

1,557 certificate | 1,492 associate | 1,388 bachelor's

In your Prosperity Zone Sub-Region:

71.6%

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)
- Finance** (bachelor's)

636 Individuals served in an ApprenticeshipNC program in 2020

UNC and NC Community College Outcomes:

- 3,023** graduates in 2020
- 69%** of 2016 graduates were employed in NC in 2021
- \$35,824** annual average earnings of graduates employed in NC (includes both part-time and full-time jobs)

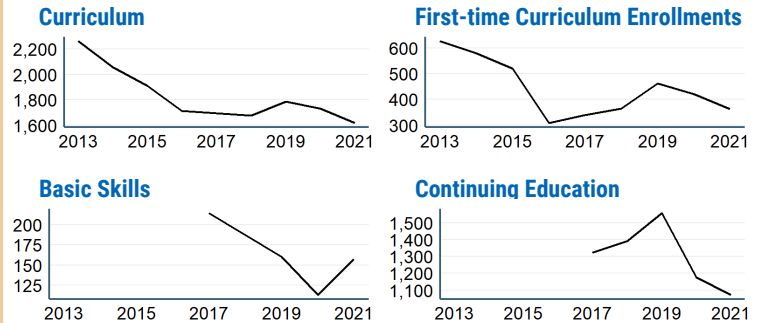
In 2021 your Workforce Development Board served:

- 6,325** in Basic Services
- 2,960** in Career Services
- 200** in Education Services

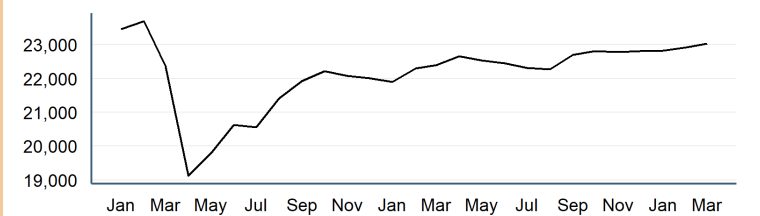


13.7% of young adults ages 16-24 in Rutherford County were **not working and not in school** versus 15.2% in peer counties. 2019

Impact of Covid-19 on NC Community College Enrollment



Number of Rutherford 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 Rutherford County has been meeting local needs:

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

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

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