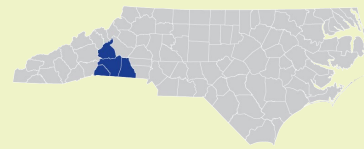# Foothills Regional Commission
Council of Governments
myFutureNC 2024 Attainment Profiles
2030 Proposed Regional Council Attainment Goal: 32,254

Counties in Council of Governments:
Cleveland, McDowell, Polk, Rutherford

Population Spotlight

Growth Rate: **Council of Governments: 1.1%** vs. **State: 2.5%**

County	2020	2022	Change
North Carolina	10,439,414	10,698,973	259,559
Cleveland County	99,521	100,670	1,149
McDowell County	44,577	44,753	176
Polk County	19,330	19,986	656
Rutherford County	64,444	64,963	519

25.4% Child Poverty Rate (2022) **State:** 17.2%

16.6% Opportunity Youth Rate (2022) **State:** 10.9%
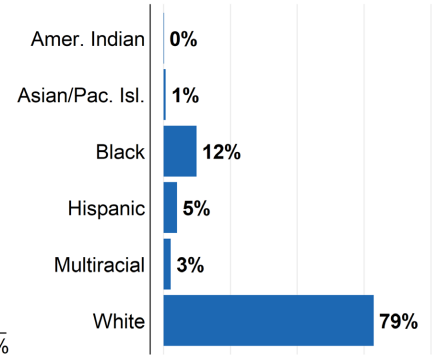
57% Households with Broadband (2022) **State:** 77%

3% Foreign Born (2022) **State:** 9%

Age Structure, 2022
Female   Male

Race/Ethnicity, 2022

Amer. Indian	0%
Asian/Pac. Isl.	1%
Black	12%
Hispanic	5%
Multiracial	3%
White	79%
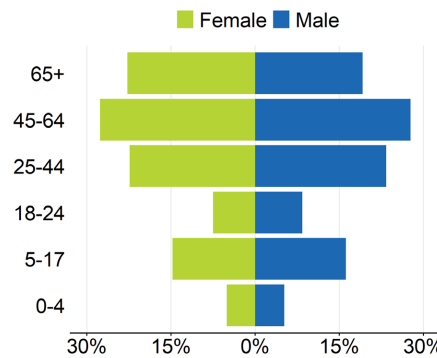
Educational Attainment
Foothills Regional Commission residents ages 25-44, 2022

No Degree 30,754 **59.0%**

Have Degree or Credential 21,407 **41.0%**

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
12%	31%	16%	8%	13%	14%	7%
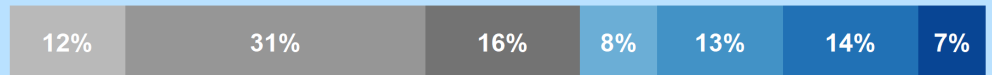
Note: Numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding

LABOR MARKET ALIGNMENT

In Foothills Regional Commission:

247 Individuals served in an ApprenticeshipNC program in 2020

UNC and NC Community College Outcomes:

1,316 graduates in 2020

75% of 2016 graduates were employed in NC in 2021

$35,150 annual average earnings of graduates employed in NC (includes both part-time and full-time jobs)

41% of adults (ages 25-44) in Foothills Regional Commission earned a **family sustaining wage,** 2022

Labor Force Snapshot - 2023 Q2

Total Jobs	75,936
Business Establishments	5,475
Employed	99,451
Unemployed	4,123
Avg. Weekly Wage	$886
Median Household Income	$53,240

Top Industries in Foothills Regional Commission

Industry Name	Average Employment	Average Weekly Wages
Manufacturing	15,779	$1,146
Health Care and Social Assistance	10,232	$1,031
Retail Trade	9,490	$648
Educational Services	7,473	$854
Accommodation and Food Services	6,392	$374

Top Job Sectors in Foothills Regional Commission

Job Sector	Average Employment	Average Weekly Wages
Private	62,032	$871
Local Government	11,253	$951
State Government	2,228	$930
Federal Government	423	$1,161

POSTSECONDARY COMPLETION

Success of Foothills Regional Commission High School Graduates

- **77%** of students who enroll **persist to their second year** versus **83%** for the state. 2022

- **58%** of students who enroll **earn a degree or certificate** within 6 years versus **59%** for the state. 2022

Top destinations of all college-goers, Fall 2023

- **4,161** of all college-goers attended **Cleveland CC**
- **3,059** of all college-goers attended **Isothermal CC**
- **1,765** of all college-goers attended **McDowell TCC**

Adult Learners

Foothills Regional Commission resident enrollments in NC Community Colleges, Fall 2022

- **194** Basic Skills
- **6,456** Continuing Education
- **1,226** Curriculum

Degree Credentials Awarded, 2022

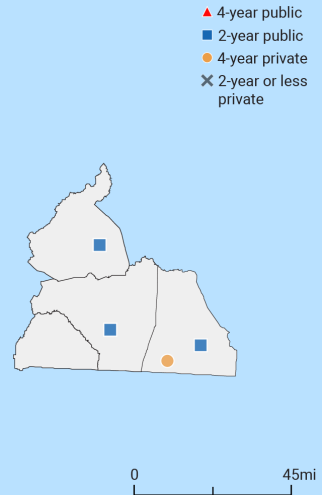**1,422** certificate | **1,012** associate | **522** bachelor's

Postsecondary assets in Foothills Regional Commission

Public, 4-year or above

Public, 2-year
Cleveland Community College, Isothermal Community College, McDowell Technical Community College

Private not-for-profit, 4-year or above
Gardner-Webb University

Private not-for-profit, 2-year

Legend:
- ▲ 4-year public
- ■ 2-year public
- ● 4-year private
- ✕ 2-year or less private

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COLLEGE & CAREER ACCESS

- **60%** of seniors **completed the FAFSA** in 2023, compared to **62%** statewide; 384 more need to complete in 2023 to meet state goal of **80%**. 2023

- **74%** of graduates reported **intentions to enroll** in a postsecondary institution versus **74%** in the state. 2022

- **53%** of graduates **enrolled in a postsecondary institution** within 12 months versus **58%** in the state. 2022

Postsecondary Enrollment Rates in Foothills Regional Commission, 2022

● Foothills Regional Commission ● North Carolina

Group	
Overall	
Male	
American Indian	
Asian	
Black	
Hispanic	
White	
Low-Income	
Not Low-Income	

(0% — 25% — 50% — 75% — 100%)

Note: Outcomes for groups with less than 10 students, <5% or >95% are not displayed.
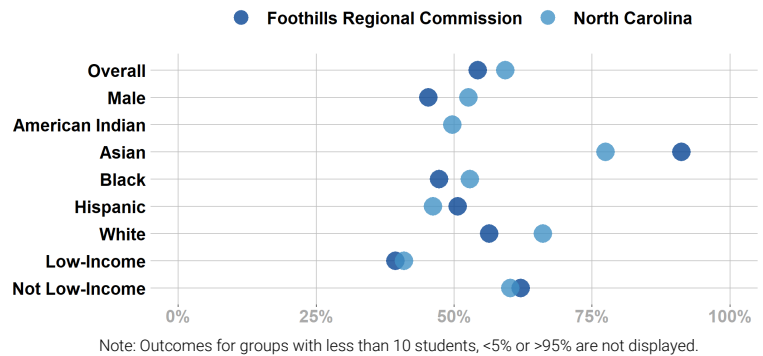
ACADEMIC READINESS

How students in Foothills Regional Commission traditional schools are currently doing:

To meet state goals, each year Foothills Regional Commission needs:

- **72%** of eligible 4-year-olds **enrolled in NC Pre-K program**, compared to **53%** statewide; 42 more needed to meet state goal of **75%**. 2023

- **30%** of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in **reading**, compared to **30%** statewide; 5,663 more needed to meet state goal of **73%.** 2023

- **35%** of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in **math**, compared to **35%** statewide; 6,718 more needed to meet state goal of **86%**. 2023

- **85%** of 9th graders **graduate within four years**, compared to **87%** statewide; 246 more needed to meet state goal of **95%**. 2023

- **30%** of students are **chronically absent from school**, compared to **27%** statewide; 5,922 less needed to meet state goal of **11%**. 2023

- **2%** of students **drop out of high school** (240 total students), compared to **2%** statewide. 2023
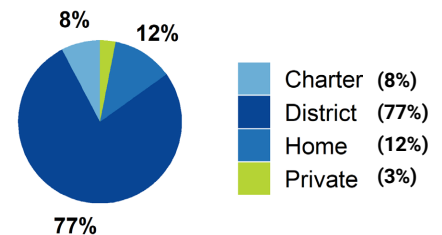
School Choice

37,035 total students were enrolled in K-12 in Foothills Regional Commission in the 2022-23 school year.

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

Pie chart:
- Charter (8%)
- District (77%)
- Home (12%)
- Private (3%)

Access to Postsecondary Credits

Students in Foothills Regional Commission completed **8,472 Career & Technical Education (CTE) credentials (1,021 (12%) were industry-valued credentials) and 1,727 concentrations** in 2023. The top three CTE concentrations completed include Human Services; Agricultural, Food, & Natural Resources; and Manufacturing.

862 high school students took at least one **AP test (10%)** versus **16%** in the state (2023).

1,088 high school students participated in **Career & College Promise programs (52%)** versus **36%** in the state (2023).

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

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

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