

Foothills Regional Commission

Council of Governments (COG)

myFutureNC 2025 Attainment Profiles



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

Educational Attainment

Foothills Regional Commission COG residents ages 25-44, 2023

Have Degree or Credential
22,002
41.8%

No Degree
30,658
58.2%

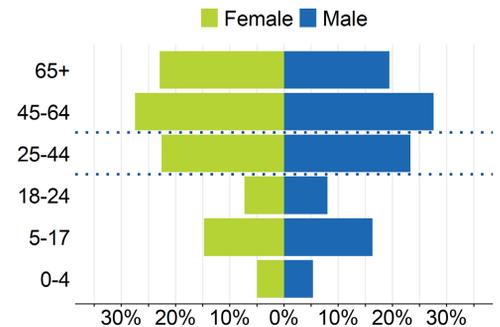
Residents Ages 25-44
52,660

Educational Level Breakdown, 2023

Graduate or Professional degree	6.9%
Bachelor's degree	14.8%
Associate degree	12.6%
Short-term credential	7.5%
Some college, no credential	14.8%
High school graduate (including GED)	32.2%
Less than high school	11.2%

Note: Numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Age Structure, 2023



2030 Proposed Foothills Regional Commission Attainment Goal: 32,254

2030 State Attainment Goal: 2 million

Population Spotlight

2020 Census: 227,889
2023 Estimate: 231,838
Change: 3,949

Growth Rate
1.7% County vs. 3.8% State

Race/Ethnicity, 2023

Amer. Indian	0.2%
Asian/Pac. Isl.	0.8%
Black	11.5%
Hispanic	5.3%
Multiracial	3.7%
White	78.2%

\$55,179
Median Household Income (2023)
State: \$70,838

72.9%
Home Owners (2023)
State: 66.3%

59.9%
Households with Broadband (2023)
State: 77.1%

23.5%
Child Poverty Rate (2023)
State: 17.6%

18.3%
Single Parent Households (2023)
State: 17.0%

3.3%
Foreign Born (2023)
State: 9.2%

LABOR MARKET ALIGNMENT

In Foothills Regional Commission:

420 Individuals served in an ApprenticeshipNC program in 2023

UNC and NC Community College Outcomes:

1,316 graduates in 2020
74.6% 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), 2021

41.1% of adults (ages 25-44) in Foothills Regional Commission earned a **family sustaining wage**. State: 57.6%, 2023

15.7% of youth (ages 16-24) in Foothills Regional Commission were **Opportunity Youth**. State: 10.3%, 2023

78.1% of adults (ages 25-44) in Foothills Regional Commission **participated in the labor force**. State: 84.2%, 2023

Foothills Regional Commission Labor Force Snapshot, 2024 Q2

Total Jobs	76,184	Business Establishments	5,476
Employed	99,307	Unemployed	4,459
Avg. Weekly Wage	\$949		

Top Industries in Foothills Regional Commission, 2024 Q2

Industry Name	Average Employment	Average Weekly Wages
Manufacturing	15,093	\$1,190
Health Care and Social Assistance	10,703	\$1,114
Retail Trade	9,701	\$622
Educational Services	7,143	\$840
Accommodation and Food Services	6,950	\$398

Top Job Sectors in Foothills Regional Commission, 2024 Q2

Job Sector	Average Employment	Average Weekly Wages
Private	62,126	\$916
Local Government	11,408	\$1,113
State Government	2,197	\$998
Federal Government	453	\$1,173

POSTSECONDARY COMPLETION

Degree Credentials Awarded in Foothills Regional Commission, 2023

1,084 certificate | 928 associate | 447 bachelor's

Adult Learners

Foothills Regional Commission Residents Aged 25+ enrolled in NC Community Colleges, Fall 2023

396 Basic Skills
3,679 Continuing Education
1,629 Curriculum

14.8% of residents (aged 25-44) have some college but no degree. State: 11.7%, 2023

Success of Foothills Regional Commission High School Graduates

79.5% of students who enroll persist to their second year. State: 83.8%, 2023

90.6% UNC | 69.2% NCCCS | 88.4% NCICU

56.6% of students who enroll earn a degree or certificate within 6 years. State: 60.0%, 2023

25.5% UNC | 18.4% NCCCS | 7.5% NCICU

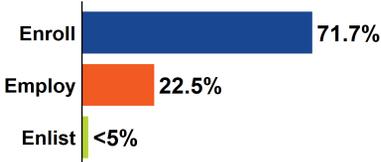
Top destinations of all college-goers, 2024

- 3,822 of all college-goers attended Cleveland CC
- 3,251 of all college-goers attended Isothermal CC
- 2,003 of all college-goers attended McDowell TCC

COLLEGE & CAREER ACCESS

49.2% of 2024 high school class completed the FAFSA as of Sept. 27, 2024. 594 more need to complete in 2024 to meet state goal of 80%. State: 55.0%

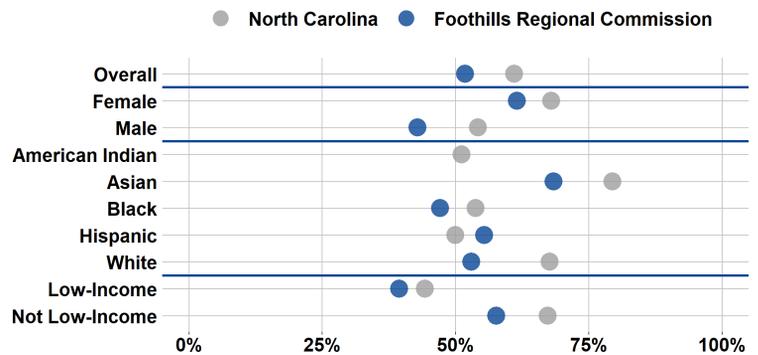
Post High School Graduation Intentions, 2023



85.5% of 9th graders graduated within four years. 225 more needed to meet state goal of 95%. State: 87.3% 2024

50.1% of graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution within 12 months. State: 59.3% 2023

Postsecondary Enrollment Rates for Select Groups in COG, 2023



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

ACADEMIC READINESS

Foothills Regional Commission has met the goal for Pre-K enrollment. (Goal: 75%) State: 57.2% 2024

Foothills Regional Commission Traditional Public Schools students:

27.9% of 3-8 graders earned college-and-career-ready scores in reading in 2024. 7,436 more needed to meet state goal of 86%. State: 29.8%

35.4% of 3-8 graders earned college-and-career-ready scores in math in 2024. 4,805 more needed to meet state goal of 73%. State: 36.5%

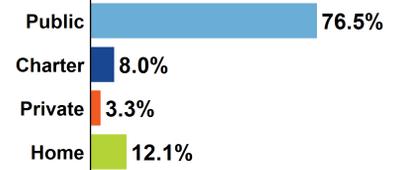
27.9% of students were chronically absent from school in 2024. 5,101 fewer needed to meet state goal of 11%. State: 25.7%

2.5% of students drop out of high school (240 total students), compared to 2.1% statewide. 2023

School & Student Overview (2024 school year)

Traditional Public School District(s): 4
Traditional Public School(s): 68
Charter School(s): 3
Private School(s): 18
Home School(s): 2,797

37,013 total K-12 students enrolled in schools.



Pathways to College and Career

Students in traditional public schools completed 8,472 Career & Technical Education (CTE) credentials and 1,727 concentrations. 1,021 (12.1%) of credentials were industry-valued in 2023. The top three CTE concentrations: Human Services; Agricultural, Food, & Natural Resources; and Manufacturing.

855 (9.8%) high school students took at least one AP, IB, or CIE exam. State: 16.8% (2023).

1,037 (49.6%) high school graduates participated in Career & College Promise programs. State: 36.0% (2024).

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

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