

# Western Piedmont

## Council of Governments (COG)

myFutureNC 2025 Attainment Profiles



**Counties in Council of Governments:**  
Alexander, Burke, Caldwell, and Catawba Counties

### Educational Attainment

Western Piedmont COG residents ages 25-44, 2023

**Have Degree or Credential**  
37,298  
43.6%

**No Degree**  
48,195  
56.4%

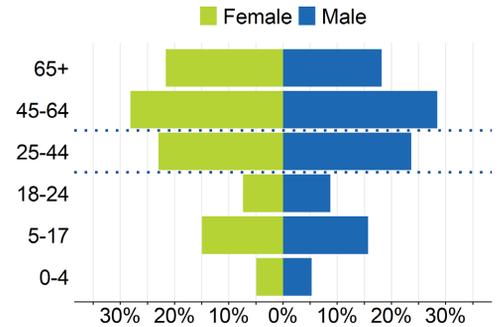
**Residents Ages 25-44**  
85,493

### Educational Level Breakdown, 2023

Graduate or Professional degree	6.2%
Bachelor's degree	16.8%
Associate degree	13.1%
Short-term credential	7.5%
Some college, no credential	16.4%
High school graduate (including GED)	28.3%
Less than high school	11.6%

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

### Age Structure, 2023



2030 Proposed Western Piedmont Attainment Goal: 49,137

2030 State Attainment Goal: 2 million

### Population Spotlight

2020 Census: 365,270  
2023 Estimate: 370,030  
Change: 4,760

**Growth Rate**  
1.3% County vs. 3.8% State

### Race/Ethnicity, 2023

Amer. Indian	0.1%
Asian/Pac. Isl.	2.9%
Black	6.2%
Hispanic	8.8%
Multiracial	3.4%
White	78.4%

**\$59,292**  
Median Household Income (2023)  
State: \$70,838

**74.3%**  
Home Owners (2023)  
State: 66.3%

**68.8%**  
Households with Broadband (2023)  
State: 77.1%

**20.8%**  
Child Poverty Rate (2023)  
State: 17.6%

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

**5.3%**  
Foreign Born (2023)  
State: 9.2%

### In Western Piedmont :

**591** Individuals served in an ApprenticeshipNC program in 2023

#### UNC and NC Community College Outcomes:

**1,951** graduates in 2020  
**80.2%** of 2016 graduates were employed in NC in 2021  
**\$37,805** annual average earnings of graduates employed in NC (includes both part-time and full-time jobs), 2021

**46.3%** of adults (ages 25-44) in Western Piedmont earned a **family sustaining wage**. State: 57.6%, 2023

**16.4%** of youth (ages 16-24) in Western Piedmont were **Opportunity Youth**. State: 10.3%, 2023

**81.2%** of adults (ages 25-44) in Western Piedmont **participated in the labor force**. State: 84.2%, 2023

### Western Piedmont Labor Force Snapshot, 2024 Q2

Total Jobs	153,613	Business Establishments	9,268
Employed	166,532	Unemployed	7,030
Avg. Weekly Wage	\$983		

### Top Industries in Western Piedmont , 2024 Q2

Industry Name	Average Employment	Average Weekly Wages
Manufacturing	39,675	\$1,098
Health Care and Social Assistance	21,991	\$1,160
Retail Trade	16,785	\$652
Accommodation and Food Services	13,635	\$384
Educational Services	9,704	\$903

### Top Job Sectors in Western Piedmont , 2024 Q2

Job Sector	Average Employment	Average Weekly Wages
Private	131,528	\$971
Local Government	15,725	\$1,032
State Government	5,713	\$1,080
Federal Government	648	\$1,260

LABOR MARKET ALIGNMENT

POSTSECONDARY COMPLETION

### Degree Credentials Awarded in Western Piedmont , 2023

1,192 certificate | 1,787 associate | 373 bachelor's

### Adult Learners

Western Piedmont Residents Aged 25+ enrolled in NC Community Colleges, Fall 2023

600 Basic Skills  
4,912 Continuing Education  
1,787 Curriculum

16.4% of residents (aged 25-44) have some college but no degree. State: 11.7%, 2023

### Success of Western Piedmont High School Graduates

82.8% of students who enroll persist to their second year. State: 83.8%, 2023

93.8% UNC | 72.1% NCCCS | 90.4% NCICU

61.6% of students who enroll earn a degree or certificate within 6 years. State: 60.0%, 2023

30.8% UNC | 17.7% NCCCS | 8.5% NCICU

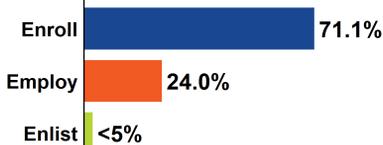
### Top destinations of all college-goers, 2024

- 6,515 of all college-goers attended **Catawba Valley CC**
- 3,765 of all college-goers attended **Caldwell CC and TI**
- 3,020 of all college-goers attended **Western Piedmont CC**

COLLEGE & CAREER ACCESS

51.2% of 2024 high school class completed the FAFSA as of Sept. 27, 2024. 1,007 more need to complete in 2024 to meet state goal of 80%. State: 55.0%

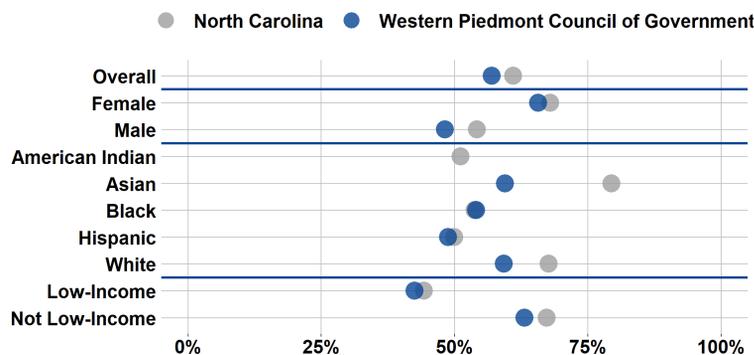
### Post High School Graduation Intentions, 2023



87.4% of 9th graders graduated within four years. 313 more needed to meet state goal of 95%. State: 87.3% 2024

55.3% 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

61.1% of eligible 4-year-olds enrolled in NC Pre-K program in 2024. 266 more needed to meet state goal of 75%. State: 57.2%

### Western Piedmont Traditional Public Schools students:

26.9% of 3-8 graders earned college-and-career-ready scores in reading in 2024. 12,634 more needed to meet state goal of 86%. State: 29.8%

37.1% of 3-8 graders earned college-and-career-ready scores in math in 2024. 7,673 more needed to meet state goal of 73%. State: 36.5%

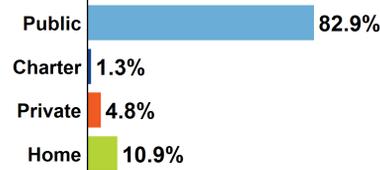
21.5% of students were chronically absent from school in 2024. 5,241 fewer needed to meet state goal of 11%. State: 25.7%

1.8% of students drop out of high school (306 total students), compared to 2.1% statewide. 2023

### School & Student Overview (2024 school year)

Traditional Public School District(s): 6  
Traditional Public School(s): 106  
Charter School(s): 2  
Private School(s): 21  
Home School(s): 3,805

57,344 total K-12 students enrolled in schools.



### Pathways to College and Career

Students in traditional public schools completed 21,472 Career & Technical Education (CTE) credentials and 2,370 concentrations. 3,184 (14.8%) of credentials were industry-valued in 2023. The top three CTE concentrations: Human Services; Health Science; and Architecture and Construction.

1,499 (9.7%) high school students took at least one AP, IB, or CIE exam. State: 16.8% (2023).

1,805 (48.8%) 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/](https://dashboard.myfuturenc.org/county-data-and-resources/)