

Alexander County

myFutureNC 2025 Attainment Profiles



Hickory
Prosperity Zone Sub-Region
Peer County Type: Rural - Metro

Educational Attainment

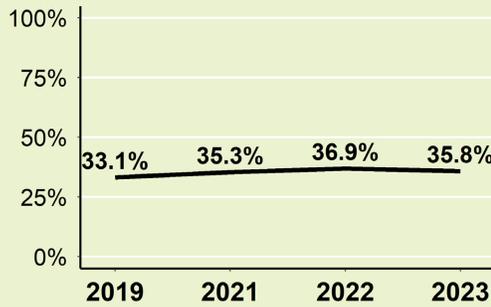
Alexander County residents ages 25-44, 2023

Have Degree or Credential
3,087
35.8%

No Degree
5,540
64.2%

Residents Ages 25-44
8,627

Educational Attainment Trend



Note: 2020 data not shown due to inconsistency

Educational Level Breakdown, 2023



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

2030 Proposed Alexander County Attainment Goal: 4,753 (Stretch Goal: 4,842)

2030 State Attainment Goal: 2 million

Population Spotlight

2020 Census: 36,444
2023 Estimate: 36,473
Change: 29

Growth Rate

0.1% vs. 3.8%
County State

Race/Ethnicity

Amer. Indian 0%
Asian/Pac. Isl. 1.1%
Black 4%
Hispanic 5.4%
Multiracial 3.7%
White 85.8%

\$62,976
Median Household Income (2023)
State: \$70,838

81.7%
Home Owners (2023)
State: 66.3%

64.2%
Households with Broadband (2023)
State: 77.1%

19.7%
Child Poverty Rate (2023)
State: 17.6%

15.3%
Single Parent Households (2023)
State: 17.0%

2.5%
Foreign Born (2023)
State: 9.2%

Top Opportunities for Growth



Labor Force Participation

76% of Alexander County adults 25-44 are in the labor force, below the rural - metro county average of 81%.

In Hickory Prosperity Zone Sub-Region:

68.3%

of postsecondary degrees and credentials conferred by regional institutions are aligned with labor market needs.

Top Misalignments

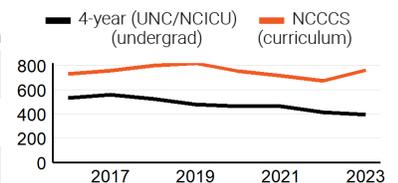
Job Openings vs. Degrees/Credentials

- **Education & Training** Jobs < Creds
- **Health Science** Jobs > Creds
- **Business Management & Administration** Jobs > Creds

Top 3 Five-Star Jobs in Hickory Prosperity Zone Sub-Region

Job Title	Annual Growth
Nurse Practitioners	4.11%
Logisticians	3.20%
Physician Assistants	2.68%

Postsecondary Enrollment for Alexander County Residents



40 Individuals served in an ApprenticeshipNC program in 2023

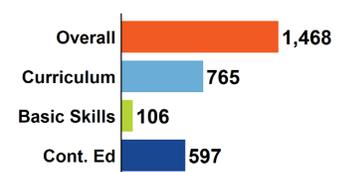
UNC and NC Community College Outcomes:

2,139 graduates in 2020
80.0% of 2016 graduates were employed in NC in 2021
\$37,952 annual average earnings of graduates employed in NC (includes both part-time and full-time jobs), 2021

Top 3 Employers in Alexander County

Employer	Employment Range
Alexander County Schools	500-999
Craftmaster Furniture Inc	500-999
Alexander County	250-499

Alexander County residents enrolled in NCCCS, Fall 2023



Top 3 industries in Alexander County

Industry	Jobs Percent
Manufacturing	2,975 34.7%
Public Administration	886 10.3%
Educational Services	781 9.1%

Alexander County is served by:

- Western Piedmont Workforce Development Board
- Western Piedmont Council of Governments

LABOR MARKET ALIGNMENT

POSTSECONDARY COMPLETION

Top Opportunities for Growth



Adult Learners

17% of Alexander County adults 25-44 have some college, no degree, above the rural - metro county average of 16%.

Degree Credentials Awarded in PZ Sub-Region, 2023

1,394 certificate | 1,970 associate | 380 bachelor's

Adult Learners

Alexander County Residents Aged 25+ enrolled in NC Community Colleges, Fall 2023

50 Basic Skills
580 Continuing Education
135 Curriculum

16.7% of residents (aged 25-44) have some college but no degree. Peer: 16.0% | State: 11.7%, 2023



8.3% of Alexander County residents have student loan debt, 0.0% of debt holders had student loans in default, 2024

Success of Alexander County High School Graduates

83.9% of students who enroll persist to their second year.

Peer: 80.1% | State: 83.8%, 2023

95.0% UNC | 71.1% NCCCS | 95.0% NCICU

62.6% of students who enroll earn a degree or certificate within 6 years. Peer: 57.5% | State: 60.0%, 2023

30.3% UNC | 18.0% NCCCS | 10.0% NCICU

Top destinations of all college-goers, 2023

- 1,017 of all college-goers attended Catawba Valley CC
- 128 of all college-goers attended Mitchell CC
- 108 of all college-goers attended Caldwell CC and TI

COLLEGE & CAREER ACCESS

Top Opportunities for Growth

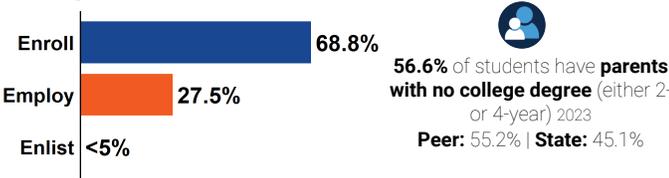


FAFSA Completion

45% of Alexander County high school seniors complete the FAFSA, below the rural - metro county average of 52%.

44.8% of 2024 high school class completed the FAFSA as of Sept. 27, 2024. 105 more need to complete in 2024 to meet state goal of 80%. Peer: 52.0% | State: 55.0%

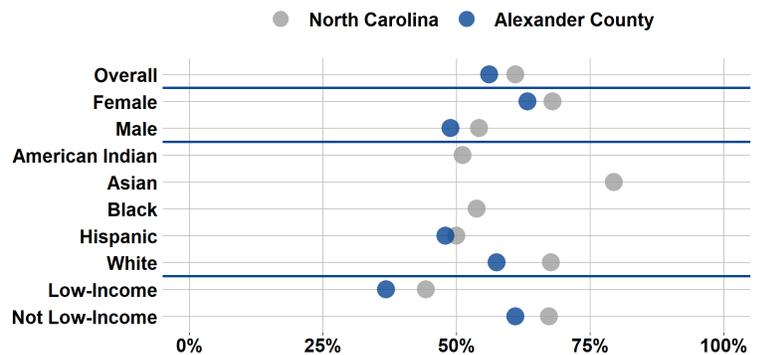
Post High School Graduation Intentions



83.0% of 9th graders graduated within four years. 43 more needed to meet state goal of 95%. Peer: 85.7% | State: 87.3% 2024

54.4% of graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution within 12 months. Peer: 52.0% | State: 59.3% 2023

Postsecondary Enrollment Rates for Select Groups in Alexander County, 2023



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

ACADEMIC READINESS

Top Opportunities for Growth



NC Pre-K Enrollment

37% of Alexander County eligible 4-year-olds are enrolled in NC Pre-K, below the rural - metro county average of 62%.

37.0% of eligible 4-year-olds enrolled in NC Pre-K program in 2024. 70 more needed to meet state goal of 75%. Peer: 61.7% | State: 57.2%

Note: Enrollment numbers only include students served by the NC Pre-K Program and may not represent all Pre-K offerings available.

Alexander County Traditional Public Schools students:

28.8% of 3-8 graders earned college-and-career-ready scores in reading in 2024. 855 more needed to meet state goal of 73%. Peer: 25.3% | State: 29.8%

38.7% of 3-8 graders earned college-and-career-ready scores in math in 2024. 915 more needed to meet state goal of 86%. Peer: 32.3% | State: 36.5%

19.0% of students were chronically absent from school in 2024. 353 fewer needed to meet state goal of 11%. Peer: 27.4% | State: 25.7%

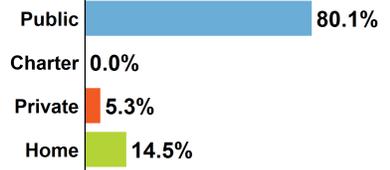
Alexander County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 248:1 compared to 352:1 in peer counties, 2024

2.6% of students drop out of high school (40 total students), compared to 2.1% statewide, 2023

School & Student Overview (2024 school year)

Traditional Public School District(s): 1
Traditional Public School(s): 11
Charter School(s): 0
Private School(s): 2
Home School(s): 464

5,293 total K-12 students enrolled in schools.



Pathways to College and Career

Students in traditional public schools completed 2,193 Career & Technical Education (CTE) credentials and 334 concentrations. 363 (16.6%) of credentials were industry-valued in 2023. The top three CTE concentrations: Human Services; Architecture and Construction; and Agricultural, Food, & Natural Resources.

106 (7.6%) high school students took at least one AP, IB, or CIE exam. State: 16.8% (2023).

147 (48.5%) 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/