

Ashe County

myFutureNC 2025 Attainment Profiles



Boone-Wilkesboro Prosperity Zone Sub-Region
Peer County Type: Rural - Non-Metro

Educational Attainment

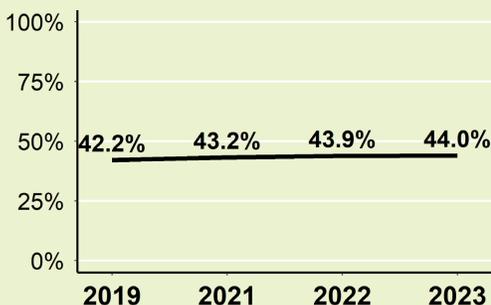
Ashe County residents ages 25-44, 2023

Have Degree or Credential
2,498
44.0%

No Degree
3,181
56.0%

Residents Ages 25-44
5,679

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 Ashe County Attainment Goal: 4,133 (Stretch Goal: 4,177)

2030 State Attainment Goal: 2 million

Population Spotlight

2020 Census: 26,582
2023 Estimate: 27,063
Change: 481

Growth Rate

1.8% County vs. 3.8% State

Race/Ethnicity

Amer. Indian 0.2%
Asian/Pac. Isl. 0.4%
Black 1%
Hispanic 5.8%
Multiracial 1.2%
White 91.2%



\$54,589
Median Household Income (2023)
State: \$70,838



78.4%
Home Owners (2023)
State: 66.3%



73.7%
Households with Broadband (2023)
State: 77.1%



14.5%
Child Poverty Rate (2023)
State: 17.6%



13.8%
Single Parent Households (2023)
State: 17.0%



3.0%
Foreign Born (2023)
State: 9.2%

Top Opportunities for Growth



Family Sustaining Wage

36% of Ashe County adults 25-44 earn a family sustaining wage, below the rural - non-metro county average of 40%.

In Boone-Wilkesboro Prosperity Zone Sub-Region:

79.6%

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

Top Misalignments

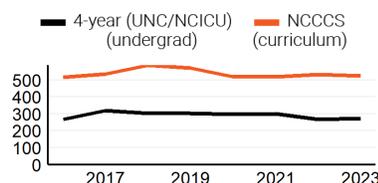
Job Openings vs. Degrees/Credentials

- Health Science Jobs > Creds
- Transportation, Distribution & Logistics Jobs > Creds
- Education & Training Jobs < Creds

Top 3 Five-Star Jobs in Boone-Wilkesboro Prosperity Zone Sub-Region

Job Title	Annual Growth
Nurse Practitioners	3.93%
Occupational Therapy Assistants	2.99%
Logisticians	2.98%

Postsecondary Enrollment for Ashe County Residents



15 Individuals served in an ApprenticeshipNC program in 2023

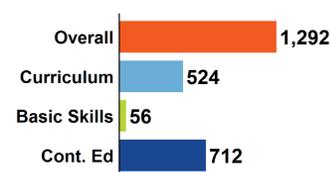
UNC and NC Community College Outcomes:

5,202 graduates in 2020
68.7% of 2016 graduates were employed in NC in 2021
\$44,421 annual average earnings of graduates employed in NC (includes both part-time and full-time jobs), 2021

Top 3 Employers in Ashe County

Employer	Employment Range
Ashe County Board of Education	250-499
Horton Emergency Vehicles Company	250-499
General Electric Company	250-499

Ashe County residents enrolled in NCCCS, Fall 2023



Top 3 industries in Ashe County

Industry	Jobs Percent
Retail Trade	1,238 16.3%
Health Care and Social Assistance	1,108 14.6%
Construction	834 11.0%

Ashe County is served by:

- High Country Workforce Development Board
- High Country Council of Governments

LABOR MARKET ALIGNMENT

POSTSECONDARY COMPLETION

Top Opportunities for Growth



Adult Learners

18% of Ashe County adults 25-44 have some college, no degree, above the rural - non-metro county average of 16%.

Degree Credentials Awarded in PZ Sub-Region, 2023

923 certificate | 534 associate | 4,232 bachelor's

Adult Learners

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

- 33 Basic Skills
- 597 Continuing Education
- 83 Curriculum

18.0% of residents (aged 25-44) have some college but no degree. Peer: 15.9% | State: 11.7%, 2023



7.0% of Ashe County residents have student loan debt, 1.8% of debt holders had student loans in default. 2024

Success of Ashe County High School Graduates

80.0% of students who enroll persist to their second year.

Peer: 79.6% | State: 83.8%, 2023

93.0% UNC | 61.2% NCCCS | NA NCICU

63.3% of students who enroll earn a degree or certificate within 6 years. Peer: 55.5% | State: 60.0%, 2023

26.7% UNC | 22.0% NCCCS | 7.3% NCICU

Top destinations of all college-goers, 2023

- 1,091 of all college-goers attended Wilkes CC
- 132 of all college-goers attended Appalachian State University
- 107 of all college-goers attended Caldwell CC and TI

COLLEGE & CAREER ACCESS

Top Opportunities for Growth

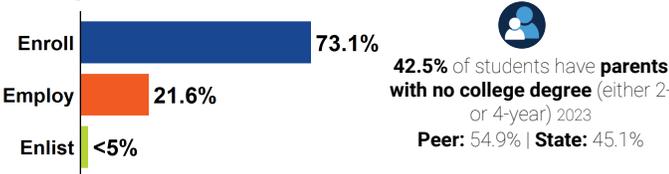


Postsecondary Enrollment

54% of Ashe County seniors enroll in postsecondary education within 12 months of graduation, below the state average of 59%.

55.4% of 2024 high school class completed the FAFSA as of Sept. 27, 2024. 48 more need to complete in 2024 to meet state goal of 80%. Peer: 54.0% | State: 55.0%

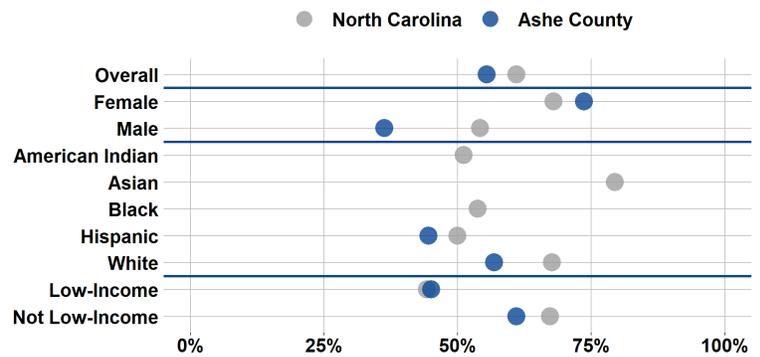
Post High School Graduation Intentions



88.8% of 9th graders graduated within four years. 14 more needed to meet state goal of 95%. Peer: 85.7% | State: 87.3% 2024

53.8% of graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution within 12 months. Peer: 52.6% | State: 59.3% 2023

Postsecondary Enrollment Rates for Select Groups in Ashe County, 2023



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

ACADEMIC READINESS

Top Opportunities for Growth



Reading Performance

34% of Ashe County 3-8 graders earn college-and-career-ready scores in Reading, below the state goal of 73%.

Ashe County has met the goal for Pre-K enrollment. (Goal: 75%). Peer: 71.0% | State: 57.2% 2024

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

Ashe County Traditional Public Schools students:

33.6% of 3-8 graders earned college-and-career-ready scores in reading in 2024. 473 more needed to meet state goal of 73%. Peer: 24.5% | State: 29.8%

49.0% of 3-8 graders earned college-and-career-ready scores in math in 2024. 445 more needed to meet state goal of 86%. Peer: 30.3% | State: 36.5%

15.7% of students were chronically absent from school in 2024. 128 fewer needed to meet state goal of 11%. Peer: 27.7% | State: 25.7%

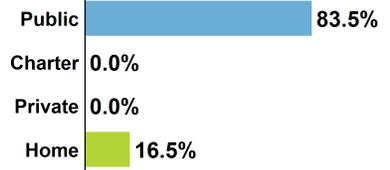
Ashe County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 288:1 compared to 332:1 in peer counties. 2024

2.1% of students drop out of high school (20 total students), compared to 2.1% statewide. 2023

School & Student Overview (2024 school year)

Traditional Public School District(s): 1
 Traditional Public School(s): 6
 Charter School(s): 0
 Private School(s): 0
 Home School(s): 286

3,126 total K-12 students enrolled in schools.



Pathways to College and Career

Students in traditional public schools completed 2,121 Career & Technical Education (CTE) credentials and 169 concentrations. 121 (5.7%) of credentials were industry-valued in 2023. The top three CTE concentrations: Manufacturing; Agricultural, Food, & Natural Resources; and Health Science.

92 (10.4%) high school students took at least one AP, IB, or CIE exam. State: 16.8% (2023).

124 (59.9%) 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/